

# GNOETRY

By  
JoAnn Welch  
and  
the machine

Beard of Bees  
Chicago  
Number 28  
December, 2005

# Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>ii</b>
<i>He walked through the air...</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>I felt easy and...</i>	<b>1</b>
<i>I had him here. And...</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>I'll come on business...</i>	<b>2</b>
<i>I looked at it like...</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>I thought it time to...</i>	<b>3</b>
<i>Sir, for the lady...</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>Some minutes before...</i>	<b>4</b>
<i>The undertaker...</i>	<b>5</b>
<i>They shook their heads. Was...</i>	<b>5</b>

## Preface by Eric Elshtain

Over the 2005 Thanksgiving holiday, I invited my 11-year-old niece, JoAnn Welch, to use Gnoetry0.2. After a single demonstration, she took the reins and composed the ten haiku that make up this short chapbook she decided to title, simply, *Gnoetry*.

She'd sit for a while at my desk, then run into the room with another wonderful haiku that she'd recite for the entire family. Here are her answers to my questions about her compositional process:

*When you were using the Gnoetry program, what did you look for in the final haiku?*

I did the regeneration thing until I found something I could work with. Then all I did was regenerate until I found something good.

*What did you use the "regeneration" tool for?*

For finding words that went along with the other words in my haiku, or things that I liked.

*How much "regeneration" did you use?*

I highlighted the whole first thing it gave me and regenerated once or twice till I got something I could use. I looked for words that would fit with everything else.

*Were any of the haiku left just the way they came out at first?*

No.

*He walked through the air. . .*

He walked through the air,  
fell straight upon the ground. But  
he couldn't help it.

**Sources**

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

*I felt easy and. . .*

I felt easy and  
natural, and in a good  
reason. So I was.

**Sources**

Jules Verne, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*

*I had him here. And. . .*

I had him here. And  
it might have been a dream, to  
Usher, but you know.

**Sources**

Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

Edgar Allen Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher*

*I'll come on business. . .*

I'll come on business,  
if you please, for I've got a  
friend in company.

**Sources**

Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*

*I looked at it like. . .*

I looked at it like  
a devil, but you look at  
it with dignity.

**Sources**

Jules Verne, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*  
Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*

*I thought it time to. . .*

I thought it time to  
tell what could that mean? But you  
shall learn nothing more.

**Sources**

Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

*Sir, for the lady. . .*

Sir, for the lady,  
perhaps you would be no less  
a perturbation.

**Sources**

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*

*Some minutes before. . .*

Some minutes before  
noon, Captain Nemo came, in  
spite of November.

**Sources**

Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

Jules Verne, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*

*The undertaker. . .*

The undertaker,  
in his final burst of tears  
came to a heap, no!

**Sources**

Edgar Allen Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher*  
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*  
Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*

*They shook their heads. Was. . .*

They shook their heads. Was  
the one you named, being of  
a second or worse?

**Sources**

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*



JOANN PAULETTE WELCH is in 6th grade at Meigs Magnet Middle School in Tennessee. She was “interested in using Gnoetry” when she came to Chicago for Thanksgiving in November 2006. She says of the software: “It was relatively easy to use and fairly fun too. It was interesting to see what words the regeneration tool would give me. You wouldn’t believe some of the crazy things from books it gave me to go with what I already had.”

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