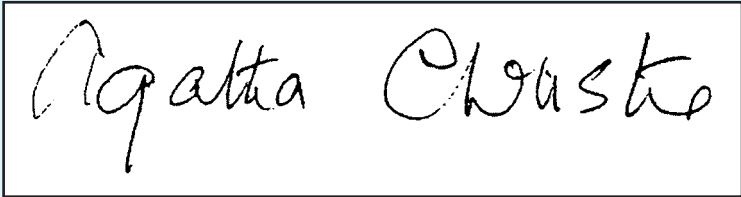


WHAT'S IN A NAME

Agatha Christie



Connective strokes linking the “h” and “r” of her last name reveal her facility in expressing herself. She was a quick thinker with a mind that was open to new ideas. Although a procrastinator, once she got going, she worked efficiently.

Downward curved “t” crossings disclose her ability to exert self control over some aspect of her personality. Her emotions ran deep. She was very insightful and had a need

for solitude.

Mimi Levin, a handwriting analyst, lectures in the Palm Beach County area and does in-depth personality profiles, compatibility screening and personnel screening. She can be reached by writing to her at 5451 Verona Drive, Boynton Beach, FL 33437.



Mimi Levin

A Lesson Learned

Thank you for reminding me, citizens of Iraq. Thank you for reminding me, I do not have to risk my life when I vote. I do not have to fear a bomb exploding at my feet or retribution later. I do not have to fear what others think. I vote without the threat of violence. This week you taught me what it is like to vote in spite of fear and violence.

And I could not help but ask myself, would I have had the courage to do the same. If it were that difficult. If I had to walk past armed guards and bodies already blown apart. If I had to walk miles to reach the polling places. If I had to wear a purple finger that would identify me that day and the day after. That I had voted. For my friends to see and those who were my enemies.

Over 60% of those registered voted that day in Iraq. Much higher a percentage than in my own country. It was a stunning experience to watch young men and women walk so many miles to vote. And little children walking with them. And women so very old and so very young. In dress much different than I would see in voting booths in my own country. What were they thinking on their journey? Were they wondering if they would reach their destination alive? If this vote, this one act of democracy, would give them all they dreamed of or possibly cost them their lives. Did they stay awake the night before, making this decision, not knowing how many of their friends or family would do the same?

Their voting minimized anything I had ever thought about the vote. I had treasured it, exercised the right to vote, and been aware how valuable my vote was to me and my country. But I had never voted under the conditions that threatened the citizens of Iraq. Never did I think my vote would cost my life.

On election day, my thoughts were trivial in comparison. When to vote? Whom to vote for. Would there be a long line? And sometimes, why bother. But the citizens of Iraq changed all

that for me. Their election was a matter of life and death. Would they vote at a school that would be bombed? Would they be targeted on their way to or coming back from their vote? Or the next day, would that finger marked so prominently be a signal for others to retaliate.

The people of Iraq knew something about the vote that I had not learned during my 71 years. They knew they had been deprived of a freedom that I enjoyed every day, and never thought about. They knew that they had been denied choices that I had been given at birth. They had waited fifty years, through one regime after another, enduring, yet hoping that perhaps their lives might be different. It was on their faces. Determination. Resolve. Nothing was going to stop them. Whatever their vote cost them, they were willing to pay the price. Nothing was assured. Not peace the day after. Not even change was guaranteed. But they voted anyway. That day became theirs forever. And mine also.

And later, they would dance in the streets, holding up signs of celebration, rejoicing. It was as if they had successfully climbed a mountain or crossed an ocean. It was as if they had spun around the moon, their accomplishment shared with the entire world. For all of us to see and learn from.

The people of Iraq have taught me something I will never forget. About the courage to vote in the face of death. My vote has never asked that of me. I hope it never does.

Harriet May Savitz is the author of 20 books and has taught creative writing courses. Her books include *The Lion-hearted*, *On The Move and Run*, *Don't Walk and Growing Up At 62*, an adult inspirational book. All books can be ordered through Amazon.com.

She lives in Bradley Beach, New Jersey. Visit her website at www.harrietmay.savitz.com



Harriet May Savitz

You must be getting older...

- When you get out of the shower, are you relieved the mirror is steamed up?
- You think you know the difference between a CD and a DVD but you don't own any.
- You'll take Betty Grable over Madonna any day of the week.

How A Bowl of Cereal Can Make A Difference

Life may be a bowl of cherries, but it's a bowl of cereal that could have the greatest impact on a busy people's lifestyle. For example, only about 38 percent of women eat breakfast every day, with "lack of time" cited as the most common reason for skipping this important meal. What these women may not realize is that eating breakfast can help them be more productive by increasing their attention spans and focus throughout the day.



— NAPS

A man is not old until regrets take the place of dreams. — John Barrymore



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Do You Have A Medication Case?

If you were taking Vioxx when Merck pulled it from the shelves Sept. 30, 2004 under pressure from the FDA, chances are good that your doctor switched you over to Celebrex or Bextra.

All three drugs comprise most of the market for COX-2 inhibitors, prescribed for pain relief from arthritis and other painful conditions. Just as Vioxx was pulled because evidence demonstrated taking Vioxx tripled your chance of getting a heart attack or stroke, reports revealed the manufacturer had known this since 2000, if not before. Through the fall, more evidence emerged of increased heart attack risk with Celebrex and Bextra as well.



Theodore Babbitt

You would think Pfizer might examine its conscience and figure out the right thing to do. Instead, Pfizer cranked its marketing machine into high gear. On Jan. 20, 2005, Pfizer announced that Celebrex sales rose 24 percent in the last quarter to \$1 billion, and Bextra climbed 57 percent to \$417 million. The week before, the government had warned Pfizer to fully disclose the risks of the drugs, saying that its ads left out risk informa-

tion or made unsubstantiated claims. That warning should end the marketing blitz.

Where does this leave you? And do you have a case? If anything, the emerging pattern of neglect and denial by the drug manufacturers should make your case stronger rather than weaker. Grave corporate negligence generally does. If you or a loved one took any of these three drugs and suffered a heart attack or stroke, you should call a lawyer, whether you're 35 or 85.

Still, there is no guarantee of success, let alone a pot of gold at the end of the day. Merck and Pfizer have deep resources with which to fight hard. Find a lawyer with the determination, experience and resources to stick by your case without flinching. It's an investment of your time, but it's your only weapon.

Theodore Babbitt is founding partner of Babbitt, Johnson, Osborne & Le Clairche in West Palm Beach, which has represented catastrophically injured people since 1968. Mr. Babbitt has been listed consistently in the publication *Best Lawyers of America*. Contact their law firm at 561-684-2500 for more information or visit the web site at www.babbitt-johnson.com

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