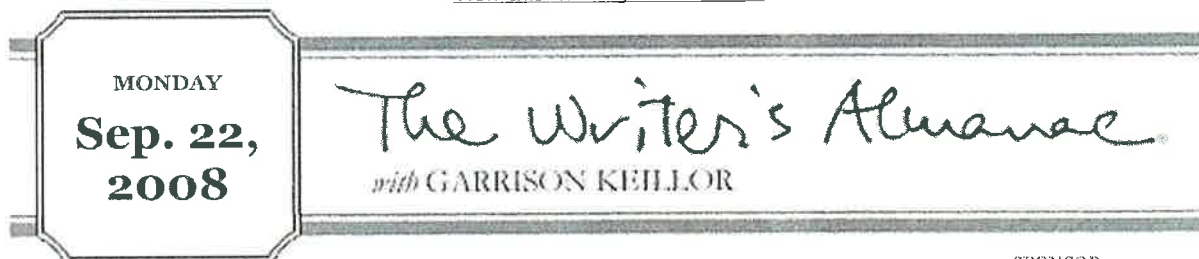


**John Stoffel - The Writer's Almanac for September 22, 2008**

**From:** "The Writer's Almanac" <newsletter@americanpublicmedia.org>  
**To:** <jstoffel@hccsc.k12.in.us>  
**Date:** 9/22/2008 3:12:37 AM  
**Subject:** The Writer's Almanac for September 22, 2008

- Subject/Verb Agreement

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🔊 **LISTEN**

## Windows is Shutting Down

by [Clive James](#)

Windows is shutting down, and grammar are  
On their last leg. So what am we to do?  
A letter of complaint go just so far,  
Proving the only one in step are you.

Better, perhaps, to simply let it goes.  
A sentence have to be screwed pretty bad  
Before they gets to where you doesnt knows  
The meaning what it must be meant to had.

The meteor have hit. Extinction spread,  
But evolution do not stop for that.  
A mutant languages rise from the dead  
And all them rules is suddenly old hat.

Too bad for we, us what has had so long  
The best seat from the only game in town.  
But there it am, and whom can say its wrong?  
Those are the break. Windows is shutting down.

"Windows Is Shutting Down" by Clive James from *Opal Sunset: Selected poems, 1958-2008*. © W.W. Norton & Company, 2008. Reprinted with permission. ([buy now](#))

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**John Stoffel - The Writer's Almanac for October 13, 2010**

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**Subject:** The Writer's Almanac for October 13, 2010

*Punctuation*

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x	
WEDNESDAY <b>Oct. 13, 2010</b>	x The Writer's Almanac with Garrison Keillor
x	



## accidents

by [Marcia Popp](#)

i broke a vase at my great-grandfather's house when i was five here  
 come sit on my lap  
 he said don't feel bad about that vase i didn't like it anyway you helped  
 me get rid of it i  
 knew better but let him comfort me while i felt secretly bad inside did  
 you know that my  
 own mother said i was her worst boy no i said that can't be true oh yes  
 he said and she was  
 right i made accidents happen all the time i didn't really mean to do  
 bad things they just  
 came upon me when i wasn't paying attention when i was five my  
 brother and i chased the  
 goose in the barnyard until it fell over dead we propped her up in the  
 fence so she would  
 appear to be interested in the grass on the other side what happened  
 my father noticed  
 that the goose did not move all day we got spanked should i get  
 spanked too for the vase  
 not in my house he said.

"accidents" by Marcia Popp, from *Comfort in Small Rooms*. © Black Zinnias Books, 2009. Reprinted with permission. ([buy now](#))

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Details / Descriptions!  
Visualize

# Vegetable Love

by Barbara Crooker

Feel a tomato, heft its weight in your palm,  
~~think of buttocks, breasts,~~ this plump pulp.  
 And carrots, mud clinging to the root,  
 gold mined from the earth's tight purse.  
 And asparagus, that push their heads up,  
 rise to meet the returning sun,  
 and zucchini, green torpedoes  
 lurking in the Sargasso depths  
 of their raspy stalks and scratchy leaves.  
 And peppers, thick walls of cool jade, a green  
 hush.  
 Secret caves. Sanctuary.  
 And beets, the dark blood of the earth.  
 And all the lettuces: bibb, flame, oak leaf, butter-  
 crunch, black-seeded Simpson, chicory, cos.  
 Elizabethan ruffs, crisp verbiage.  
 And spinach, the dark green  
 of northern forests, savoyed, ruffled,  
 hidden folds and clefts.

And basil, sweet basil, nuzzled  
 by fumbling bees drunk on the sun.  
 And cucumbers, crisp, cool white ice  
 in the heart of August, month of fire.  
 And peas in their delicate slippers,  
 little green boats, a string of beads,  
 repeating, repeating.  
 And sunflowers, nodding at night,  
 then rising to shout hallelujah! at noon.

All over the garden, the whisper of leaves  
 passing secrets and gossip, making assignations.  
 All of the vegetables bask in the sun,  
 languorous as lizards. - analogy  
 Quick, before the frost puts out  
 its green light, praise these vegetables,  
 earth's voluptuaries,  
 praise what comes from the dirt.

Sargasso =  
see full of tangled seaweed  
by Bermuda

"And" conversation

**John Stoffel - The Writer's Almanac for April 18, 2011**

**From:** "The Writer's Almanac" <newsletter@americanpublicmedia.org>  
**To:** <jstoffel@hccsc.k12.in.us>  
**Date:** 4/18/2011 1:40 AM  
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*Rich in  
Similes  
Metaphors*

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**LISTEN**

## Where Dreams Come From

by [Marge Piercy](#)

A girl slams the door of her little room  
 under the eaves where marauding squirrels  
 scamper overhead like herds of ideas.  
 She has forgotten to be grateful she has  
 finally a room with a door that shuts.

She is furious her parents don't comprehend  
 why she wants to go to college, that place  
 of musical comedy fantasies and weekend  
 football her father watches, beer can  
 in hand. It is as if she announced I want  
 to journey to Iceland or Machu Picchu.  
 Nobody in their family goes to college.  
 Where do dreams come from? Do they  
 sneak in through torn screens at night  
 to light on the arm like mosquitoes?

Are they passed from mouth to ear  
 like gossip or dirty jokes? Do they  
 sprout from underground on damp  
 mornings like toadstools that form  
 fairy rings on dewtipped grasses?

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No, they slink out of books, they lurk  
in the stacks of libraries. Out of pages  
turned they rise like the scent of peonies  
and infect the brain with their promise.  
I want, I will, says the girl and already

she is halfway out the door and down  
the street from this neighborhood, this  
mortgaged house, this family tight  
and constricting as the collar on the next  
door dog who howls on his chain all night.

"Where Dreams Come From" by Marge Piercy, from *The Hunger Moon: New and Selected Poems, 1980-2010*. © Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. Reprinted with permission. ([buy now](#))

**It is the birthday** of the man who inspired the word "beatnik" in the 1950s: poet **Bob Kaufman (books by this author)**, born Robert Garnell Kaufman, in New Orleans, Louisiana (1925). Kaufman's mother was a Roman Catholic woman from Martinique who loved to play the piano and buy books at auctions. His father was a German Jew; "my Negro suit has Jew stripes," Kaufman often said of his lineage. Details of his life are hazy because he didn't keep a diary or leave behind any letters, and while he completed three volumes of poetry, he preferred to recite his poems in coffee houses rather than write them down.


As a teenager, he joined the Merchant Marine. In his 20 years as a sailor, he circled the globe nine times and survived four shipwrecks. On his first ship, the *Henry Gibbons*, he became friends with the first mate, who lent him books and encouraged him to read.

It was at sea when he first read about the Beat poets, many of whom also had maritime ambitions. Gary Snyder wanted to experience the culture in port cities around the world, and he worked as a seaman during the summer of 1948 and again in the mid-1950s. When Jack Kerouac, as a freshman at Columbia, failed chemistry and lost his scholarship, he joined the Merchant Marine to make money to re-enroll. Allen Ginsberg was suspended from Columbia for fighting with his dormitory housekeeper, and he followed Kerouac into the Merchant Marine. (Ginsberg tried marijuana for the first time on his

 Good Poems,  
American Places

A generous selection of poems from *The Writers Almanac* in which poets express their love of American scenes — Kenneth Rexroth in the High Sierras, May Swenson in New York, Maxine Kumin's horse farm in New Hampshire, Jim Harrison on the Arizona desert, Barbara Hamby's ode to hardware stores, road poems, poems about big cities and the vast plains and the ocean shore, including chapters entitled "Good Work," "A Sort of Rapture," "2x2x2," "Out West," and "On the Avenue".

**Today's Excerpt:**  
From *SHOW BUSINESS*

 "[Piano Dreams](#)" by  
[Marcia F. Brown](#)

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