Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Michael Martone
Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Abstract
I am in quality control. I am quality control. I control quality here at the Pink Pearl factory. My job is to write out something, anything, on this piece of paper, and, then, test the eraser, a random nub from the lot, and erase, erasing every word. So, I use my test, this simulation, to write to you. I write this to you who worry that there will be evidence, a record, of our secret. "I just don't want anybody hurt," you write to me. "Destroy this," you write at the end of the note where you wrote "I just don't want anybody hurt." I'm an expert, making language disappear.

Keywords
redundant, copy, boring, dull

Cover Page Footnote
Note: "This story is exclusively available in the anthology, Winesburg, Indiana, published by Breakaway Books, an imprint of Indiana University Press, in the spring of 2015. Available wherever fine books are sold, borrowed, or used as dowry."
I am in quality control. I control quality here at the Pink Pearl factory. My job is to write out something, anything, on this piece of paper, and, then, test the eraser, a random nub from the lot, and erase, erasing every word. So, I use my test, this simulation, to write to you. I write this to you who worry that there will be evidence, a record, of our secret. “I just don’t want anybody hurt,” you write to me. “Destroy this,” you write at the end of the note where you wrote “I just don’t want anybody hurt.” I’m an expert, making language disappear. No more phone calls. “Your number will show up on the bill,” you say when you call. “Strike me,” you whisper, “from the call log on your phone.” I control quality. I am qualified. I make space. Gaps. I erase erasures. “We must,” you say, “not get carried away,” “Delete ‘Delete’.” “You are driving me crazy,” you write in the email, my email dangling down below where I have typed that you drive me crazy not from what you write but the way you hold my head, your fingers rubbing through my hair, how I spread open your lips with my tongue, its tip touching that nub, your pink pearl, sanding it flat, the stubble of my beard, iridescent irritant. “Rubbed raw,” I write. Abrasion. My hand in your mouth. You gagged silent. No one should know any of this. Ever. We must control ourselves. Not write down anything. No evidence. Forget even this. Nothing left but some
crumbs rubbed clean, brushed from the empty, empty, empty, empty paper.
Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Inspector 4

I am in control. I control. I control here the Pink Pearl write out something, anything, on this piece test the eraser, a random nub erase, erasing every word. my test, this simulation, to write to you. I write this to you who worry there will be evidence, a record, our secret. "I just don’t want hurt," you write to me. "Destroy this," you write at the end you wrote "I just don’t want hurt." I’m making language disappear. No phone calls. "Your number will show up," you say when you whisper, "from the call I control I make space. Gaps. I erase erasures. "We must," you say, "get carried away "Delete ‘Delete’." " driving me crazy," you write dangling down below where I have typed you you write the way you hold my head, your fingers rubbin through my hair, I spread your lips my tongue, its tip touching that nub, your pink pearl, sand it flat, the stubble , iridescent irritant. "Rubb raw," I write. Abrasion. My hand in your mouth. gagged silent. No one know any of this. Ever. We control ourselves. write
down evidence. Forget even this. Nothing left some

some crumbs rubbe clean, brush from the empty, empty, , empty

paper.
November 30, 2012

Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Inspector 4

I'm in control. I cant. cant here
the Pink Pearl write out me, any i,
this piece test the eraser, random nub
erase, eras every wo. my test is
simulation, to rite you. I rite you worry there
will be our secret. "I just want
hurt," me. Destroy this at the end
I just want I'm
making language disappear. No "Your will
show up you say. Strike me you whisper,
call I control
I make Gaps. erase erasures. We must get
carried away "Delete 'Delete'. " me crazy, you
dangling down below where I typed
you you the way you hold my
head, fingers rubbi through hair, I spread lips
my tongue, tip touch that nub, your pink pearl, sand it
flat, the stub scent irritant. Rub raw I
it Abrasion. hand in mouth gag silent. No one
now any of this. Ever. We rol ourselves. writ
do evidence Forget this Nothing some
crumbs rubb clean, bush o the empty, empty, empty paper.
November 30, 2012

Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Inspector 4

in c nt . I c nt . c nt here
Pink Pearl rite me , an i ,
this pie the eraser, rand nu
erase, era eve wo.
test is simulation,
you. I you worry there
will our secret. just want
me. Destroy the end
I just want
language disappear. No I . You will
show up you. Strike me you
whisper, I control

call I control
I make Gaps. erase sure . We must get
away ‘Delete’.” “ me you
dangling below I typed
you you the you
hold my
head, fingers rub rough air, I re
d lips
tongue, tip touch that ink pearl,
sand it
at, stub scent
irritant. Rub aw I
it ion. hand in mouth gag silent. No
on

now this. Ever.
We our it
do id Forget Nothing

o

crumbs rub lean, us o , empty, ,
paper.
Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Inspector 4

in . I . her
Pink Pearl it me , an i ,
is i , he erase , and
erase , eve . test
on, you. I you the
will
our secret. us want
me.
I us want
disappear. No . You will
show you me you ,
call I
make erase . us
away ' let.' " me you
below I
you you you
my
fingers rub air, I
tongue, tip at pearl
irritant.
I
it i . and i out gag i . o o
now this . We o
it
dog et Nothing
rub us o,
empty, paper.

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
November 30, 2012

Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

Inspector 4

Pink
Pearl me , , erase , erase , test you. you
our secret. us .

disappear.
show me you

I erase us away . " " me you you

rub you air, I pearl
irritant.

is. .

Published by Digital Commons @ Butler University, 2012
rub

empty, paper.

Pages: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

← older
Winesburg, Indiana: Inspector 4

November 30, 2012

Inspector 4

erase, erase, secret. disappear.

show, erase away ""

rub, pearl out
rub

empty, paper.
Michael Martone was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and grew up there. As Fort Wayne was the site of, at least, nine forts (three each of French, British, and American fortifications, not to mention fortified villages of the Shawnee and Miami tribes), there was fostered in Martone a keen attraction to walls, fences, barriers of all kinds so much so that he was marked (as he matured) with what can only be thought of as a fetish for such structures which now (years later) expresses itself in his vast collection of examples he displays at his West End house in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. There, the visitor might find field stone walls (dry and mortared, finished and rough), vertical wood-picket fences with various finials and knurls, bamboo stave, horizontal clapboard running fence (reproduced in crosshatching or herring bone patterns), chain-link cyclone mesh, chicken wire, wrought-iron worked, brick, concrete block, red cedar plank snow-fencing, a four yard section of the right field fence bought at auction during the demolition of Yankee Stadium, corrugated galvanized steel, split-rail, adobe, dry-wall, wattle and beam, electrified, a slab from the Berlin wall with graffiti spelling out “wall” in German, and several versions of “invisible” pet fencing. Martone has a real fondness for star fortification (also known as trace italienne) and has in his backyard reconstructured the walled city of Neuhasel in Lower Hungry with its ravelins and redoubts, bonnettes and lunettes and tenaillons and counterguards and crowworks hornworks and curvettes and fausse brayes and scarps and cordons and banquettes and counterscarps and the long grassed glacis suitable for picnics. He also has the largest collection of barbed wire in west central Alabama, including an example of contemporary razor and concertina wire. Martone has also written the authorized biography of Joseph F. Glidden (of DeKalb, Illinois), widely regarded as the man who perfected Lucien B. Smith’s original design of the famous agricultural fencing.