

# And So Wit Begins...

by Ashley Poulter

My writing career began with sitting around the tree eating Christmas presents.

It was my first flop I guess you could say. I wrote a story in school I personally thought was amazing. Sure, my letters took up two of the large-lined paper we used in third grade but it was still more legible than anything else I'd written. And this masterpiece took me an entire Saturday afternoon to write while closed off in solitary confinement, also known as my room.

My sisters were in the living room playing with their Barbie's. Their perfectly quaffed, finely dressed Barbie's that I never achieved with my own dolls. With my Barbie's house nicknamed "Trash Dump Boulevard," there wasn't much of a chance for me to fit in with that scene. So I tended to sit in my room with Pandy the Panda (unique, I know) and pretend our blue carpet was the ocean and my white bed was an island. Often it was when my sisters slammed into the bedroom trying to ram my ankles with their polished, usually with spit, Barbie convertibles.

I sauntered into the living room with my illegible piece of paper, oversized yellow pencil clutched in my fat fingers — I was a very chubby child with the motor skills of Shamu. I used the giant yellow pencils well into the sixth grade — and all the pride I could muster at that age. And trust me; it was a lot of pride. Mom was curled up on the couch with a good Harlequin while the twin terrors continued their storyline involving some sort of Barbie betrayal with Ken (our Ken's being the New Kids on the Block Dolls. Ken dolls were too expensive and the rat tails on the New Kid's were far more entertaining.)

"I wrote a story so please read it," I grunted while throwing my nugget-like physique up onto the couch where Mom sat.

"You did?" Mom praised excitedly. She was always the best at making me feel like the next Dr. Seuss. Reaching over she

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snatched the flimsy sheet of paper from my chubby death grip and began looking over the paper.

Unfortunately my sisters had smelt blood. Like the two tiny tiger sharks they were, each had maneuvered themselves behind the couch and was reading slowly over my Mom's shoulder. Not knowing they were there I couldn't stop what followed. And still follows me, actually.

Tara was the first to howl with laughter. Nicole soon followed, just because Tara did, and both were rolling on the floor within moments. This was nothing to laugh at, I thought. My very short novel wasn't funny in the least. I'd taken a hard look at family traditions and wrote what I knew. Sure, I may have had a few misspelled words in there but it wasn't enough to cause this sort of reaction.

"This sentence doesn't really fit in there, Ashley." Mom pointed a finger at one line in particular. Squinting at the line I read it one time over and realized my error. I realized my error way too late to save myself. "We sit around our tree and eat our presents," I read aloud to my mother's sympathetic face.

At this point in the episode I began to, of course, cry. My twin sisters were still rolling around on the floor like hyenas and, bless my wonderful mother, she couldn't quite keep a straight face either.

With an angry sob I waddled back to my bedroom without the novel or fat pencil. From that day forward I vowed never to write again. I'd made a sham of my ability and to make matters worse, another thing my sisters could hold over my head. I snuggled down next to Pandy on my island of disappointment. They'd be sorry one of these days, I vowed.

