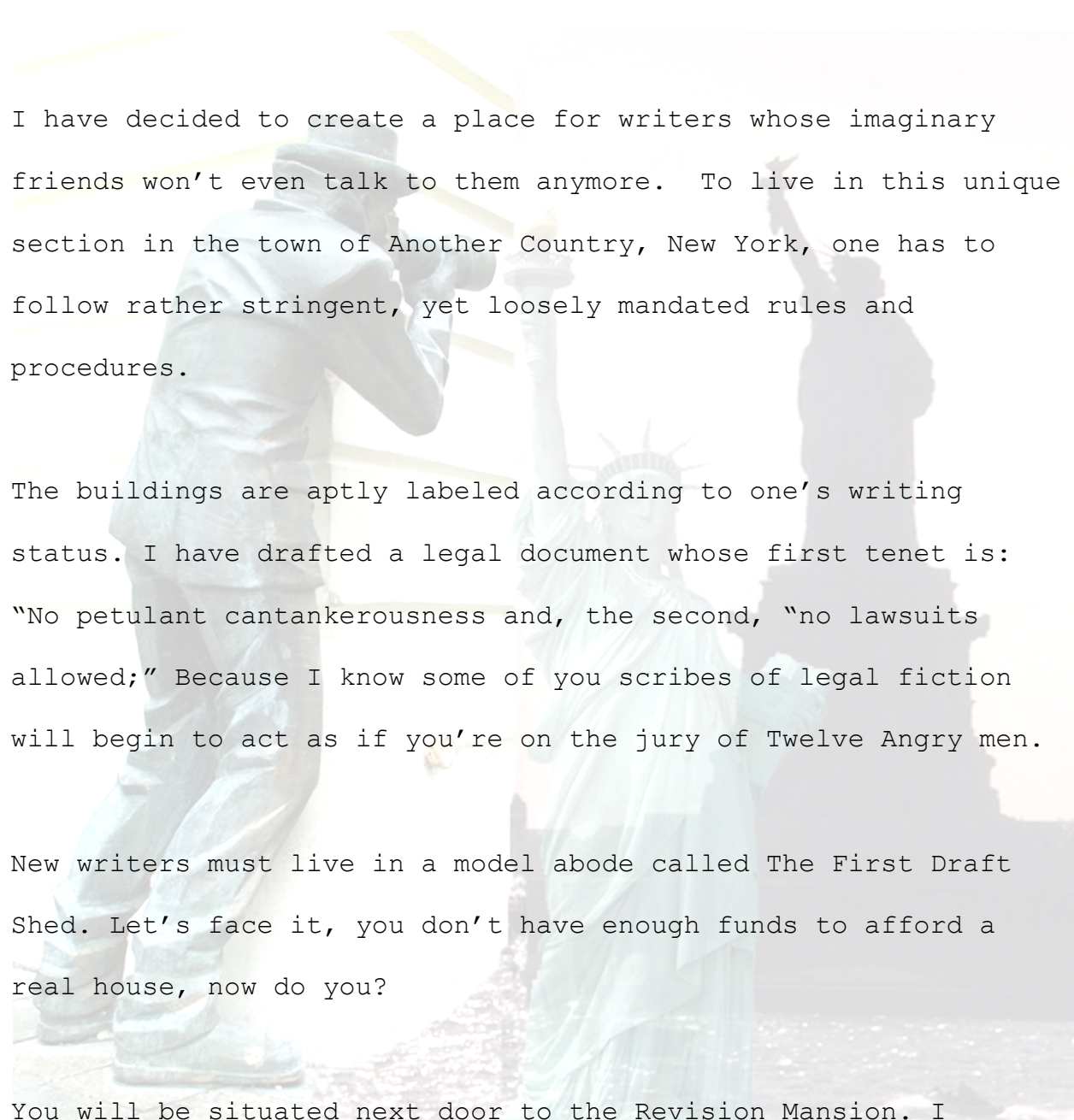


## The Writer's Block Community Project

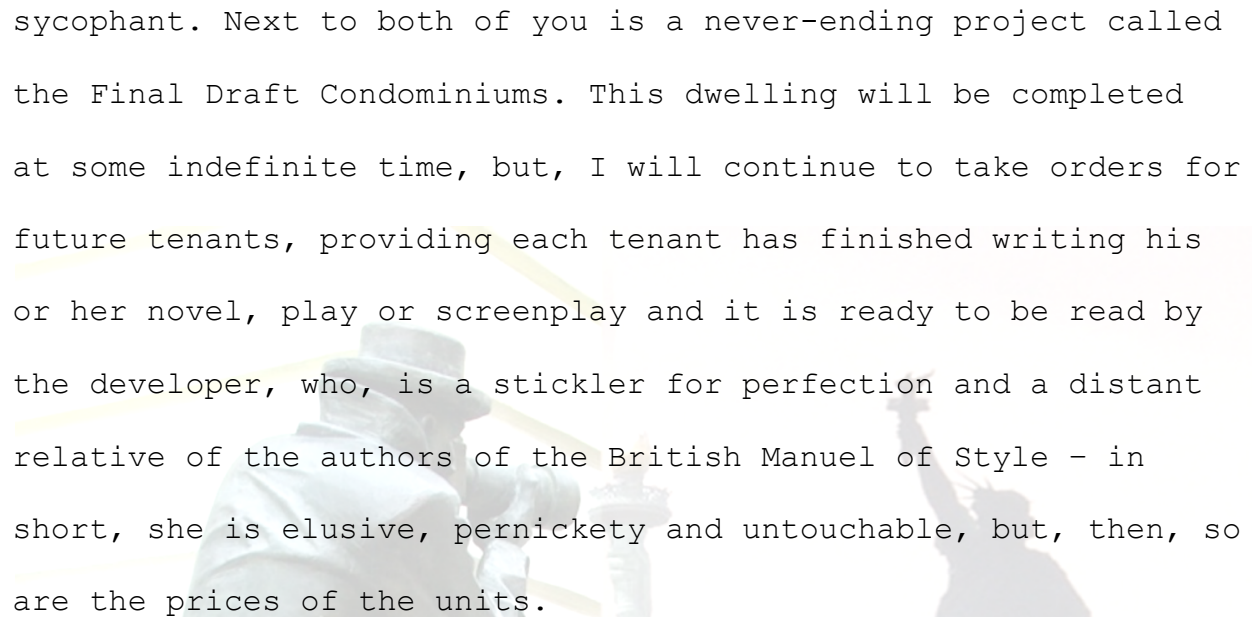


I have decided to create a place for writers whose imaginary friends won't even talk to them anymore. To live in this unique section in the town of Another Country, New York, one has to follow rather stringent, yet loosely mandated rules and procedures.

The buildings are aptly labeled according to one's writing status. I have drafted a legal document whose first tenet is: "No petulant cantankerousness and, the second, "no lawsuits allowed;" Because I know some of you scribes of legal fiction will begin to act as if you're on the jury of Twelve Angry men.

New writers must live in a model abode called The First Draft Shed. Let's face it, you don't have enough funds to afford a real house, now do you?

You will be situated next door to the Revision Mansion. I encourage you to make friends with the inhabitants as they have perfected the rewriting process to such a point that they've gotten themselves out of the sheds, so, cozy up and become a



sycophant. Next to both of you is a never-ending project called the Final Draft Condominiums. This dwelling will be completed at some indefinite time, but, I will continue to take orders for future tenants, providing each tenant has finished writing his or her novel, play or screenplay and it is ready to be read by the developer, who, is a stickler for perfection and a distant relative of the authors of the British Manual of Style - in short, she is elusive, pernickety and untouchable, but, then, so are the prices of the units.

A number of business services are located next to the unfinished condominium project for your convenience: Nathaniel Hawthorne's Legal Services, Defamation is a specialty; Orwell's Psychic Fortune Telling is at number 1984 Pigs Farm Lane; The Fahrenheit Fire Department, located at 451 Burning Book Road, is directly across from the Baldwin House with its Fire Next Time ambiance.

For those patriotic writers who have a desire to cease their selfish quest to finish some, allegedly, great war novel, steeped in history at a coffee shop and, instead, want to do his/her civic duty, in preservation of some democratic concept, there is the Slaughterhouse Five Un-Armed Service Recruiting Station, situated diagonally across from the Waiting for Godot House of Wishship, no, there is no spelling error, Mr. Beckett,

the creator, was diabolically opposed to the term 'worship'. Residents seem to enter the Godot edifice, but few ever depart the very passageway from which they've entered. I suspect the majority of them are escaping via a tunnel, which leads onto Sartre's Expressway. Let them meander, what do I care, they'll soon realize, hell is other people. Besides, the Sartre causeway has No Exit.

Speaking of tough roads, I know how hard it is for writers with young offspring, thus I encourage such to take full advantage of the Oliver Twist Child Care Center on Dickens Street, offering 24/7 nurturing for little ones in dire need of relief from over coddling by helicopter parents who should be writing, not smothering yet another whining Saul Bellows in diapers.

Two streets over is the Bleak House Publishing Firm, no soliciting allowed; anyone caught leaving writing materials for review on the doorsteps, in the mailbox or tossed down the chimney, will be punished, for this is not only a crime, but an egregious offense to the owner's taste in literature - which isn't ever going to be for your writing. I am not sure just who the Bleak House publishes, but I do know of several six-figure deals being had, as well as, a number of those novels having been turned into movies, which may be viewed on the left wall of

said house, every Monday at seven PM for a fee of seventeen dollars.

Along with a "No Trespassing" sign is the following warning, written in Courier Twelve, double-space: "No, I Do Not Want to Read Your Fucking Novel" - displayed on the right side of the house. Enjoy the cinematic experience of fellow, successful published writers, whoever they may be.

After you've been caught trespassing on this property more than a hundred and fifty-one times, you will be remanded to the Invisible Man Department of Disassociation and Reconditioning. Female writers taking umbrage to the name of this facility have the choice of utilizing the Jane Eyre's Institute for Mental Clarity and Moral High Ground.

Married couples, seeking guidance may attend the Anna Karenina Center for Family Growth and Well-being, it hasn't been as popular as I had expected, but, then, good families are good in their own way, and bad ones may simply need to seek advice from anyone but, Anna.

On the theme of family, the community, may I remind you, is grounded on the premise of grammar purity; therefore, a squad of

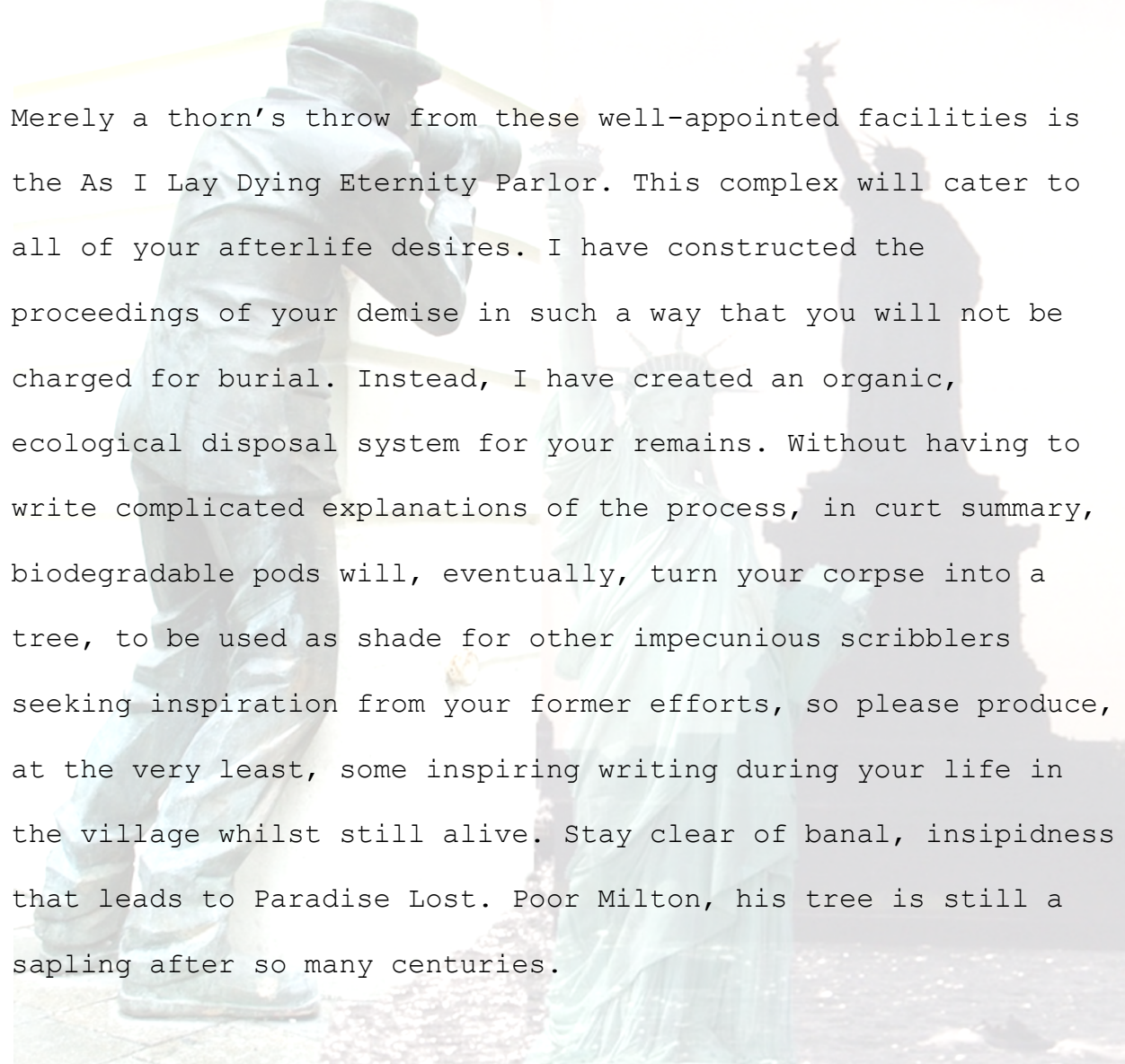
grammar enforcement has been established to maintain writing perfection and to ensure your eventual publishing success - should you finish anything, anything at all.

Any infraction of the grammar rules will result in incarceration in the Animal Farm Grammarian Penal & Detention Center. You will have the right to counsel. If you can't afford one, and few writers do, the court will appoint one from the Catch 22 Legal Team. You can't come in front of the judge without an attorney and the attorney is unable to represent you until you have first come in front of a judicial court. I am so proud of the justice system that's in place.

If you are able to be released from grammar jail, as well as, a successful judicial hearing, which your attorney will be working tirelessly to this end, on your behalf, the Othello Counseling and Rehabilitation Center is free to former inmates. Though I have heard some controversial reports on Iago, the senior therapist, I urge former grammar infraction detainees to take full advantage of this institution; did I mention, there's no charge?

If you have the funds, and would rather pay for your re-entry into the writing community, the King Lear Mental Health

Consortium might be a better fit. The place is run by three sisters who inherited it from their father, who, himself suffered a fatal expiration, after having gone mad. I think a strong female figure could be a welcome relief from Iago's tough love strategies.



Merely a thorn's throw from these well-appointed facilities is the As I Lay Dying Eternity Parlor. This complex will cater to all of your afterlife desires. I have constructed the proceedings of your demise in such a way that you will not be charged for burial. Instead, I have created an organic, ecological disposal system for your remains. Without having to write complicated explanations of the process, in curt summary, biodegradable pods will, eventually, turn your corpse into a tree, to be used as shade for other impecunious scribblers seeking inspiration from your former efforts, so please produce, at the very least, some inspiring writing during your life in the village whilst still alive. Stay clear of banal, insipidness that leads to Paradise Lost. Poor Milton, his tree is still a sapling after so many centuries.

The afterlife building is located at the back of the alley near the House of Usher. Often times, residents become more frightened upon seeing the Usher property, with its magnificent

gothic architectural dominance, than the mortuary. I would tear it down, but the children so enjoy its creepiness and ghoulish ambiance at Halloween, it would be a shame to see it Fall.

Writer's with enough wealth, resources and ghastly opulence, who even dare to utter an inquiry about etiquette protocols for their progeny, are advised to enroll them in the Dorothy Parker Finishing School of Manners and Excruciating Behaviors. I must warn, though, this institution's lawsuits have continuously exceeded its enrollment. I think enrollees might have been smart to have taken note of the school's motto: "Don't Look at Me in that Tone of Voice". To me, this doesn't even relay a sense of diplomacy, let alone decent manners.

Mannerism is a tool to productivity I say, however, writers seeking an affordable mortgage also need impeccable credit. But, let's face it, if you were already well-appointed financially, you wouldn't be tapping keys on a keyboard. Thus, rethinking everything, it has come to my attention that writers tend to lean towards poverty. Though money doesn't buy happiness, neither does insolvency, therefore, I've partnered with the Great Expectations Finance and Loan Services Corporation, Inc., for those with less than stellar credit, or, more judiciously, zero credit. Sheds are conveniently priced so that you may

purchase one for as little as ten dollars a month and nothing down.

It's the architect's judgment that if you can write at small tables in crowded coffee shops, you can subsist rather well within a space of three-hundred and seven square feet. The sheds have vaulted ceilings to give them a sense of imagined space, really, just use your imagination. A door and a porch for gazing into the abyss or bird watching offer ample visualization for inspiration.

The Leaves of Grass Lawn Service is in charge of keeping the landscape pristinely beautiful. Transportation is handled by West-East Divan, at 1819 Railroad Avenue, who has done an exceptional job. Public transport is clean, on time and economically priced. But a small criticism from some riders is that the trains and buses all have a destination to Stuttgart. I'm hard pressed to figure out just where that is and why they've been directed to this place. Each time I have questioned the rather scholastic philosophical company, it has simply submitted this statement, which connoted a tad of condescension: "There is nothing insignificant in the world. It all depends on the point of view."

Use your imagination and enjoy the ride, you're a writer, not a tourist. Your purpose is to churn out exciting, meaningful prose, because, "the decline of literature indicates the decline of a nation." Our community's survival is dependent upon your great writing. After all, wasn't that the reason for the creation of this place?

