

Writing by Anne Fischer - 2023

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Pale pink and baby blue. Soft cotton, gentle on her skin. White lacy fringe softly trims the sleeves and throat. Like Queen Anne's Lace. Delicate and airy, light and fragile. But that's just the flower. The rest of the plant is not so dainty, as any gardener could tell you. Queen Anne's Lace has a deep, fleshy tap root. It's related to the carrot you know, and can be just as stubborn to pull out of the ground. And it's so very prolific - tiny seeds that can grab ahold and grow in even the harshest conditions - springing up in dry roads, parking lots, virtually any wasteland. Queen Anne's Lace even feeds the butterflies. And talk about strong - butterflies can migrate thousands of miles. Don't underestimate the strength of pretty things. Pastels and soft pinks and lace. Curly hair tied up with a satin bow. Painted toenails in strappy heels. Rosy lips and cheeks. Underneath is a tap root that's stubborn as hell.

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Bitter Batter

Bitter Batter. Bitter Batter. That's fun to say, she thought to herself. Words are toys I can play with in my head. It's like that tongue twister my brother tried to teach me...something about baby buggy bumpers. What's a baby buggy bumper? Is it something that keeps a baby buggy from tipping over? Or

running into things? Or is it really just a bumper on a very small buggy - a baby buggy?

Bitter Batter, Bitter Batter...she turned each word over and around on her tongue before letting it escape from her mouth. Say it fast -BitterBatterBitterBatter!! Say it slowly and dramatically - Biiiiittter Baaaattter.

How much of the meaning of our words weren't in the words at all, she wondered, but in the way we put them out into the air? The way we enunciate each syllable, the tone of our voices, the way our eyes grow large and excited or shrink down small and narrow or half close sleepily - these all reveal what we mean, even if the words don't match. To really communicate, she decided, to truly connect with someone, you have to listen between the words. Sometimes you have to ignore the words altogether and just look at their eyes or listen to their soul.

She knew that most people do not understand this. That most people hear only words, cold and flat, and they bring those cold flat words inside of themselves, devoid of the context with which they were expressed.

Bitter Batter. Bitter Batter. Nonsense words can say so much, if you learn to really listen.