

WRITING PORTFOLIO

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SUMMARY:

THIS PORTFOLIO CONTAINS A VARIETY OF EXAMPLES OF MY PROFESSIONAL WRITING, BOTH FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND FOR CLIENTELE. BELOW, IN DESCENDING CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER, YOU WILL FIND:

- ◆ A BOOK REVIEW FEATURED IN THE ATLANTA JOURNAL CONSTITUTION (JANUARY, 2017)
- ◆ SOCIAL MEDIA CLIPS FROM A MEDIA CAMPAIGN FOR CLEAR VOICE P.R. CLIENT “NO MAS! CANTINA” (AUGUST 2016)
- ◆ A MEDIA PLACEMENT SUMMARY OF CLEAR VOICE CLIENT “TRICK 3D”, INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE CLEAR SEO KNOWLEDGE (JULY 2016)
- ◆ “HITTING A HOME RUN”, ORIGINAL COPY FOR CLEAR VOICE P.R. (JUNE 2016)

Atlanta Journal Constitution: Review (JAN 2017)

Juniper: The Girl Who Was Born Too Soon

<http://www.myajc.com/entertainment/books--literature/juniper-harrowing-humorous-story-premature-birth/PF2iV5nzaUqjFrCihwluML/>

“Tell me a story,” Juniper French asks her parents, “tell me about when I was a baby.”

This is her tale: “*Juniper: The Girl Who Was Born Too Soon*,” a heartfelt, humorous tribute to her parents’ desperate fight for the salvation of a daughter born 24 weeks premature — the most vulnerable and least viable time a child can be born. This is a tale not only of parenthood, but of the supreme love and dedication that it asks of those who wish to pursue it.

At the outset, the story seems so simple: A couple meets, falls in love, gets married, and tries to start their family — though the latter is much harder to obtain than the rest. There are no lack of obstacles. In a seamless back-and-forth narrative, authors and journalists Kelley and Thomas French share their arduous struggle to conceive, the personal strain of undergoing in vitro fertilization, and a long climb towards parenthood, all to realize their long-held, cherished dream of a daughter.

For the lucky, this was the hardest part; for the Frenches it was only the beginning.

What follows is a candid chronicle of a parent’s worst nightmare —the Sisyphean task of keeping a premature child alive. Kelley undergoes a troublesome and complicated pregnancy, constantly bedridden and sick, then a stalled labor, and then the final terrifying, nearly fatal birth of “a glass shrimp” with skin so fragile that the beat of her heart was visible.

Baby Girl French had arrived, all 20 ounces of her.

Neither writer shies away from the questions no parent wants to ask themselves: Do they persist and save their daughter, despite the fact that she might not be able to live a fulfilled life; despite the fact she may hate them for it; despite the constant rollicking wave of risen-then-dashed hopes and the toll it would take on their marriage?

The answer is an unequivocal yes. Though the answer may not be simple, even for Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, it is present in all of life’s little intricate moments. Kelley fills an iPod with womb noises to play for her daughter, to make her feel safe and loved; Thomas arrives every day to read “*Harry Potter*” to a baby drowning in wires and machinery, so she could hear his voice. They surrender their lives to a state of flux as every day presents new challenges to the survival of their daughter.

Their story is told chapter by chapter, alternating between parents in turn. The narrative is wonderfully interwoven, pairing each writer’s unique voice with the other’s: Kelley’s, full of admirable candidness and honesty – she leaves little of her experiences left unsaid – as well as endearingly funny asides and all-too-human worries and concerns; and Thomas’s, ever observant, level-headed and thoughtful, ascribing significance to everyday events that one doesn’t often

consider. Both writers know their craft well, and it reflects in their natural back-and-forth, speaking to their strengths not only in their profession but in their partnership as well. Where Kelley feels, Thomas reacts, and where Thomas reflects, Kelley acts instinctively. Theirs is a unified front, fortified by their indelible sense of humor, their abilities to look at the reality of their situations and speak of them openly, without pretention, and their love for their child, so fraught with problems.

Juniper experiences extraordinary complications with basic body functions from her intestines and her lungs to her kidneys and her eyes. She seemingly endures endless surgeries and illnesses.

“She was perpetually dying, then not dying, then dying again. Slowly, we discovered that the only escape was to create a world for her beyond the box.”

Her parents rarely leave her side and when they do, they tape a photo of themselves to her incubator so she’ll never be alone. Their story could so easily be lost to the tragedy of it all, to overwhelming sadness and helplessness, but instead, like its characters, it perseveres.

Parenthood often brings out the best and worst qualities. In Thomas and Kelley French it’s manifested in their love, their faith in their daughter and themselves, and their humor, all in plentiful presence.

The Frenches’ wonderful wit provides much light amid all the darkness. At one point, Kelley is told her daughter’s head might become shaped like a toaster because of the way her skull was developing. “If she ended up with a head like a kitchen appliance, well, kids look so great in hats,” she quips.

As Juniper grows, they dress her up in costumes like Harry Potter, Aretha Franklin. The story of Juniper’s dark struggle is offset by the Frenches’ resistance to despair and delight in light-hearted jokes. And every ailment is rewarded with rewarded moments when Juniper grabs their finger, when she opens her eyes, survives another day, another surgery.

The book’s epitaph may puzzle some; a quote from Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*: “We are unfashioned creatures, but half made up...do not lend [aid] to perfectionate our weak and faulty natures.” The reference to the famous novel instantly harkens to images of a monster, something unnatural and inhuman. Neither of these ascriptions, however, apply. There is nothing monstrous here about Juniper French, a baby created from love, and cared for by parents who worked so hard to bring her into this world. Their dedication to her is staggering in its raw intensity—despite the challenges, the weaknesses, the negatives of their experiences, the Frenches were going to wait for their daughter to come home with them, and the imperfectness of their situation made them stronger for it. Indeed, they have no aspirations towards perfection; if their story was faultless, if Juniper was a fairytale child, perfect from birth, then there would not be as much meaning in it, for the fight itself inscribes greatness into the Frenches, and their daughter.

“A story is a promise ... a promise that the end is worth waiting for. That is Thomas’ much-uttered mantra, and Juniper proves it to be true. Their story is a remarkable account, a truly moving and indomitable work, and in giving all for their daughter, they reveal the best in themselves. At the close of the book, Juniper asks for her parents to tell her a story. ‘Watch’, she says, ‘you might be mad, but this might be amazing.’ And Juniper French is absolutely right.

Clear Voice P.R.: Twitter Campaign (AUG 2016)

 **No Mas! Cantina**
@NoMasCantina

Looking for some good eats? Tune in to [@FOX5Atlanta](#) at 9:15! [#castleberryhill](#) [#nomas20th](#)

Paul Milliken  [@PaulFromFox5](#)
Here are the birthday specials at [@NoMasCantina](#) this month...
[@GoodDayAtlanta](#) [#fox5atl](#) [#NoMas20](#)



 **No Mas! Cantina**
@NoMasCantina

Join us live in our artisan market and [#hacienda](#) with [@GoodDayAtlanta](#) - let's start the lesson! [#castleberryhill](#)



 **No Mas! Cantina**
@NoMasCantina

Celebrate our 20th by learning how to make our famous 'Cuatro Leches' cake with [@PaulFromFox5](#)! [#gimmeapieceofthat](#)



 **No Mas! Cantina**
@NoMasCantina

Tune in now [@FOX5Atlanta](#) for an interview with our fabulous exec chef Melody Voirin! [#cuatroleches](#) [#mexicancuisine](#)



Clear Voice P.R.: Trick 3D Media Placement Summary (JULY 2016)

Trick 3D is a multi-award winning computer graphics studio based in Atlanta. They are best-known for their animation in the popular CBS holiday film “An Elf’s Story”, but has also collaborated with various large-scale productions such as Christopher Nolan’s Batman trilogy, Delta Airlines, and Cartoon Network.

Although the studio has numerous high-profile projects, they, like many, face a problem of enhancing their brand’s visibility. The priority at present is to cultivate and establish a successful public presence with an increase in media coverage and a steady flux of visitors to the website.

In 2015, the studio partnered with Clear Voice LLC to improve their social visibility. With Clear Voice’s help, the website experienced an increase in visitation¹.

At the onset in the Sept-Oct 2015 period, Trick 3D’s Twitter presence revealed low total searches (711 total, of which there is 48% organic + 31% referral + 21% direct), but experienced an increase in referral traffic through Clear Voice’s earned media efforts. Trick 3D soon began being featured more visibly in Twitter, Hypepotamus, Atlanta Journal Constitution, and Tech Crunch, with an average of four media picks per month.

In January 2016, there was a 55% increase in the overall number of website sessions and 50% more page views over December 2015, with the addition of important media picks on Atlanta’s FOX5 channel. February 2016 showed a bounce rate decrease of 14%, +16 media picks, and an estimated 61.7K views and exposure to Trick 3D, as well as an overall increase in Twitter followers, from 139 in September 2015, to 350 in February 2016.

At present, in June 2016, there has been 350K estimated views of various compounded media relating to Trick 3D from their website and social media presence, with a domain authority score of 93/100, thus demonstrating a clear increase in website traffic and proper application of SEO procedures.

¹ “organic search and direct traffic to the website are up over last month, by 19% and 6% respectively” (Nov 2015)

“Hitting A Home Run With A New Hire”: Blog Post for Clear Voice P.R. (JUNE 2016)

So you’ve just added a player to the roster, and you’re all ready to get that sparkly new press release out to let the world know your first draft pick! While announcing the addition of a new team player, take the chance to also give an update about your company and where the winds are blowing. New Hire releases are a great, easy way to get the good word out and provide a quick update on where your company is at.

Step 1: Who’s On First?

A New Hire is just what it says on the tin—you’ve brought someone new on board to contribute to your business. Wonderful! The beginning of the release should be all about them—who are they? Where are they from, and what credentials do they bring? Don’t worry about bragging rights, they were hired for a reason, so shine on you crazy diamond!

TIP: A well-photographed, professional, and high-res picture can do wonders. That picture taken in your kitchen of you in your PJs is cute for IG, but not for an official press release. The C-suite doesn’t need to know about your sweet, sweet Lisa Frank onesie (but we do).

Step 2: Any Series Titles?

Accomplishments, Growth, Revenue, Awards

Announcing that you’ve hired someone is always great news, but even better is the chance you get to brag a little about what you and your company has been up to lately. Have you won any awards? Passed any quotas? Has your revenue stream become a white-water rapid? Tell everyone all about it! Investors like to see momentum and a new hiring announcement means so much more for your company than it seems—it means there’s a lot going on behind the scenes (or in the dugout), so put it up on the Jumbotron! (but not the Kiss Cam—that just makes for an awkward staff party.)

Step 3: Batting Average

You’ve got the rookie of the year. You’ve got the title. Now—perhaps the most important thing—you need proof to back you up. The easiest way to do that other than marching all the way to the exec’s office is to ask a client for a quick and kind word. Quotes from clientele are a simple, straight-forward way to prove your company is doing good work—especially if they’re happy with what you’re doing. Start pooling together your Dream Team of who you think are your strongest clients who are also willing to disclose their opinions about your work—you’re going to need your best players to hit this thing out of the park! A glowing review is good for everybody!

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Step 4: Game Plan

Once you've got your team all set, it's time to write a plan for your press release. Every coach has their clipboard, their gameplays, their strategies—there's nothing like it when a plan comes together! (Insert cigar-chomping, ass-kicking A-Team photo here.)

When you're drafting the outline for your release, it's important to remember the end game: you're demonstrating the fact that your company is doing well, and one of the ways it's doing that is by hiring some fresh blood. What does this mean for you? How does this fit into your company's narrative, its stated goals, its *raison d'être*? If you've got the MVP, the World Series Title, and a great season standing, then what does that speak to for your team? Celebrate your commitment to excellence, your drive, the values that you hold near and dear, and whatever else it is that your company brings to the table.