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Beastiary of Collective Fingers

Students of Beverly Pidgeon

College of DuPage

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Beastiary of the Collective Fingers*

09

1
Security for babies,
A height disadvantage, but proud,
Leads the pack,
Solicits transportation,
Signals superiority.
Needs never to accessorize.

2
Head of the household.
Responsible and involved.
Come here.
Over there.
Look up.
Your next.
The strength and foundation.
Digs for the gold.

3
A finger with a message.
A mind of its own.
It stands with dignity above the rest,
Carries messages to the world
While others look up to it.
For balance, security, peace of mind.

04

1
Evolutionary marvel.
Interested in home improvement.
But the hammer seeks to crown it.
Short, fat, clumsy,
yet it finds the ride,
Sizes up an artist's scale,
Sounds the C-note.
Helpmate to siblings,
Pushing the plunger on the syringe.

2
Him, her, that, there,
That, those, it, here.
One,
Hey you!
Challenges opponents, accuses wrongdoers,
Eases the loneliness with the touch on the dial.
Brightens the outlook with the flip of the switch.
Types all alone, leaving its secrets in the errors.

29

1
Lower, misshapen, self-conscious,
Wants to be part of the crowd,
but in the end hangs loose.
Helps in the snap,
Flicks your Bic,
gets farther than your feet.
Tom Thumb stuck it in a pie.
With brawn, takes down its opponent.

2
Neighbor, best companion to the thumb.
Strong, bold, independent,
It's accuser and prosecutor of all.
Mute, it can tell time,
One at a time.
The backbone of all handgun fortunes
And misfortunes.
The judge of good housekeeping.
With its twin, stifles the deafening.
4
In ancient times, the gateway to the heart.
Not now. The heart is enclosed in barbed wire.
Vulcan stance is all its worth.
Weak, useless, a fish flailing out of water.
Speechless, intrusive.
If lost, never missed.

5
Small, dependent, loyal like an infant.
Yet tough, suffers without complaint.
Musical, finding high notes and low notes.
Sophisticated at high tea.

4
Lovers adorn it, give it eternity.
It sneaks to the S on the typewriter,
Quietly, quietly,
And comforts by beginning
"Security."

5
Dainty cousin of the small toe,
Grows the most elegant nail.
Alone, it fits in the ear.
Easiest to break, but lovable,
Even caught in your sleeve,
Telling you of its helplessness.

3
Long, strait, hungry,
Looks for food on everyone's plate.
The branch.
Cleans the way for sound,
Tip of the tree, edge of the knife.
Rigid billboard.
Calls forth the Revulsion.
Can see the parade in spite of the crowd.
Defiant. Dwells in an airless void and
Screams from every window.

4
Where to find commitments.
But sometimes it lies.
Ashamed, it seeks cover in gloves,
Helps mine for gold and silver.
Because of its guilt, it never accuses.
Sometimes in the night it quivers in nakedness
And cries for lost love.

5
Little brother, sister, small, lonely,
Smiling, remembering its youth.
Hovers, a graceful hummingbird at tea.
The crutch of society,
Yet an outsider.
Maintains submission,
denies its sorrow.

*These poems were written by the members of Beverly Pidgeon's fall quarter 1991 English 102 Composition classes, sections 04, 09, and 29. The model used is the poem "Beastly for the Fingers of My Right Hand" by Charles Simic. Each class divided into five groups, each of which wrote about an assigned digit.