

Mysterious 'Mr. Crane' worth knowing

Mr. Crane, If You Please by Anthony Blossingham, Writers Club Press, New York, 2001, \$11.95
By KEELY KALESKI WYGNONIK
STAFF WRITER

Out of sight, out of mind, the mysterious Mr. Crane is lurking somewhere. You never know when he'll turn up — "he's the Boogie man in a black suit..." A dangerous one who gets away with murder.

Anthony Blossingham draws the reader into this mystery that takes place in Acadia, Mich.

"The character of Mr. Crane was developed over 14 months, when I first thought of a merciless Hitman with a touch of honor," said Blossingham, who has written poetry, song lyrics, short stories and feature articles for the *Traverse City Record Eagle*. "The secret I've found to my personal experience of writing a novel is to keep yourself entertained by the story. Finally, enjoy yourself. It's supposed to be fun, an obsession. If you aren't excited about writing your novel, go outside or find someone to fall in love with."

It's obvious, from his first novel, that Blossingham is a man who loves words and knows how to weave them into a cleverly told story. There's a bit of Motown soul, love found and lost.

Having just graduated from high school, Jacob George James, against his father's wishes, packs his duffel bag and leaves the family farm in Minnesota.

Jacob thought of his hometown, Bishop Springs, as "Purgatory; it was a place of indecision and limbo. He couldn't choose anything there because none of it mattered to him."



Anthony Blossingham

Mr. Crane, if you please.

Mysterious: The mysterious Mr. Crane is infamous in the small Michigan town of Acadia, where the author's first fictional novel is set.

He's saved enough money for a bus ticket, and trip to Acadia, a town that has no problem with aspiring young authors like him-

self. He's working on a novel about a homicide detective from a big city who moves out to a farming town to solve big crimes.

It had stopped being interesting, and become a burden.

In town, he meets his cousin Jilly, who like himself had no appetite for farming. James gets a job at the neighborhood bar. The owner, Frank Simona cautions James about Mr. Crane from the beginning — his darkened booth is untouched, and roped off from other patrons.

In between customers, Frank spins tales about some of Acadia's more colorful characters, especially the notorious Mr. Crane. James is enthralled.

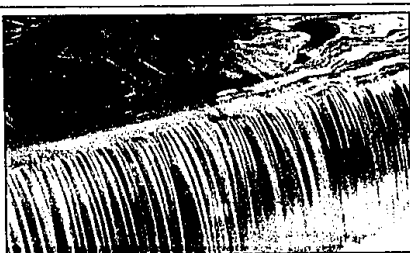
Is Mr. Crane fact or fiction? Is he still running around Acadia and Michigan with an "axe to grind?"

Blossingham keeps readers guessing, and in between tells a story of growing mutual respect and friendship between Frank and Jacob. There are misdeeds with death, and decisions that change Frank and Jacob's life.

"Take care not to be rude to tall gentlemen strangers if you should choose to visit Acadia," cautions Blossingham. "Remember one thing for when you go on your nightly Acadia walks. Nothing kills like rudeness."

Mr. Crane, If You Please, can be ordered at your local bookstore, or Amazon.com. Visit the publisher's Web site www.iunivers.com for more information.

Keely Kaleski Wygnonik is assistant managing editor of features for the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*. She can be reached at (248) 901-2587 or (734) 953-2105 or via e-mail kwynonik@oc.homecomm.net. Local authors can send books for review to her attention at the *Observer & Eccentric Newspapers*, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, MI 48150.



Picture this: Bond Falls in Michigan's upper peninsula provided Monte Nagler the opportunity to capture this miniature landscape on film. This was one of the many pictures within a picture that he was able to make.

Focus on miniature landscapes

Too often photographers try to shoot the broad panoramic view while ignoring landscape details. Within every large landscape are hundreds of smaller ones just waiting to be captured by your camera.

Lily pads shimmering on the surface of a pond, a cluster of fallen leaves, or a wave gently lapping the shore...each of these and many more can be just as exciting and picturesque as the more expansive view.

Any environment contains an inexhaustible supply of fascinating miniature landscape detail.

Other than a keen eye, no elaborate equipment is needed. At times, a set of close-up filters or a macro lens will help to move in close and a tripod should be used to maximize sharpness and depth-of-field.

Seeing "simply" is a good way to begin to photograph miniature landscapes. That is, start to look through the viewfinder and withdraw simple elements from the whole, that, in themselves, make exciting, dramatic photographs. In other words, begin to see pictures within

the picture. The view of a majestic mountain across the lake will make a beautiful, overall landscape shot, but don't overlook the miniature landscape produced by the velvety row of moss-draped rocks at the water's edge.

Rather than portray the whole plowed field in your country photograph, zoom in on a small section of freshly cut furrows.

Bond Falls in Michigan's upper peninsula has provided me with many sweeping and majestic waterfall picture opportunities. Yet isolating only an intimate detail as shown in the accompanying photograph, produced an image that "says it all" about these magnificent falls.

Miniature landscapes will give a unique perspective to your picture and will emphasize textures and tones you often won't get by shooting the whole.

Remember, you're making photographs, not taking snapshots. Let your miniature landscape be a complete picture in itself while at the same time conveying the flavor and essence of the whole.

Monte Nagler is a fine art photographer based in Farmington Hills. You can leave him a message by dialing (734) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone. His fax number is (248) 644-1314.

FOCUS ON PHOTOGRAPHY



MONTE NAGLER

Research family history

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Michigan is presenting a multiple workshop 12:30-4:30 p.m. Sunday, April 21 at Temple Beth El, 14 Mile Road at Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills. Pre-registration is encouraged. Topics include:

12:30-1:30 p.m. — Research in the Franklin Archives or Holocaust Research
1:30-2:30 p.m. — Local sources of Polish research
2:30-3:30 p.m. — Ship arrival records and military records or unusual sources
3:30-4:30 p.m. — Writing a family

newsletter or oral histories. There is no charge for members, guests pay \$4 per session. For more information e-mail jgsprograms@aol.com or call (248) 738-6655.

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