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### My Very Own Watcher

The Watcher looks over me as I move my fingers across the keyboard and punch in these letters. It is there when I delete some of the words and replace them. Gail Godwin's essay, *The Watcher at the Gates*, describes encounters with the Watchers. Whether we are beginners or experts, the Watchers constrict the creativity that good writing thrives on.

Godwin becomes aware of this Watcher while reading Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*. The book explains that the Watcher causes its host to reject her writing too soon. Godwin realizes that she fell prey to the Watcher in believing that her first draft must be perfect. To understand her Watcher, Godwin examines how others fared against this mighty opponent. Some refuse to write until after a dental appointment. Some need to read the draft on a clothesline faraway with binoculars. Others have found ways to cheat around the Watcher. By writing when tired, using purple ink, or pretending to write a letter, these writers shake off the Watchers. Despite all, the Watchers are not always the annoying inner self. They still are reliable for critic and revision. In the end, Godwin encourages the reader to know your Watcher and learn when to depend on him.

Confronting my own Watcher has not been easy; he practically owns the backspace on my keyboard. Sometimes, I would write for hours, only to realize that I have not even finish my

first paragraph. Although I have not tried some of the more interesting methods mentioned in the article to avoid my Watcher, I find staying up to be tired an effective way. As the reasoning slows down in my mind and the looming deadline approaches, I force my Watcher to give up his control on my paper. After that, my words flow out relentlessly. My tiredness, well may be simple, is quite disastrous for writing a good paper. Careless mistakes and poor construction cover the pages. Without my Watcher with me, my ideas simply remain to be unrefined ideas. They will never become polished without going under the meticulous eyes of the Watcher. Godwin's message of keeping your Watcher feel needed and in shape resonated deeply with me. Yes, we may run into stalemates quite often, but I still need my Watcher to examine my words and how they can be improved.

Watcher, I may have wronged you multiple times in the past, but I promise from now on to work together with you. Godwin is right, I need to treat you for what you are, a crucial part of my writing. No longer will I wait past midnight to start the essay that is due on the next day. Let us recognize each other's strength and do our best. Here is to many more papers!