

RUSTY LUCAS  
P.O. Box 422  
Sandusky, Ohio 44871

September 9, 2004

Nine Lives  
c/o Del Monte Foods  
1075 Progress Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
ATTN: Melissa Murphy Media Relations

Dear Nine Lives the makers of excellent cat food:

I am writing to you about a condition I have where I cannot write more than nine words in any one sentence. The problem is that I also cannot write sentences that have less than nine words in them. As you can probably tell this gets quite confusing to anyone who reads the letters that I write to them. This also keeps me from being able to write in paragraphs.

I am told that this rare condition stems from some bad hashish that my parents smoked while I was a toddler and first learned my alphabet. The second hand smoke had some strange effects on my development.

I belong to a support group for people with unique writing disorders. So far mine is the only documented case of novem-scribe (that literally means nine writing). Hyphenated words count as only one word, but they have to be real words and not made up words. See, every once in a while my sentences end in the right place and the period falls where it would normally. I can talk fine when speaking to other people so you do not get these unnatural pauses when I speak but when I am writing it is a different story. Some of the other people in my support group are Samuel who can only express himself in Haiku form and Sigmund who writes all of his sentences in two criss-crossing diagonals that make the shape of a large X. Then there is Gordon who cannot write without overusing punctuation and especially commas. His writing looks like he ate a bowl of commas for breakfast and then threw up on his paper. They just fall in everywhere there is a space for them.

Anyway, Miss Wilson, who is the leader of our support group and helps us with our writing, suggested that we each try to find a way to put our unique writing conditions to good use for the benefit of others. She told us to look at our conditions as a creative gift that other [normal] people do not have. I am not sure how Eduardo's condition of writing absolutely everything in his own blood can be considered a "creative gift" but I will leave that up to Eduardo and Miss Wilson.

So I was thinking that you might be able to use me to write your print advertisements for

you since your product is called NINE LIVES. You could create a new ad campaign and call it writing to the power of nine and it would sweep the nation's newspapers like wildfire. I would be more than happy to send you a sampling of my advertising copy for you to review before you make any decisions to hire me in this capacity. One of the possible slogans that I already came up with would be "Nine Words for Nine Lives Cats Just Love it." Of course if that slogan was written "stand alone", as Miss Wilson likes to call it, without any lead in or post script, it would make nine words and complete a full sentence in itself, but when I write it in the body of this letter it gets a little bit off because of where it falls in the word counting process.

I just wondered if there was a way to market myself and my unique writing style and you came to mind. I would like to tell Miss Wilson that I found a job so that I can help to pay for the snacks that she always brings to the support group. Then she might like to go out with me someday.

Sincerely,

Rusty Lucas

p.s. I wonder if you guys happen to have any baseball caps with your company logo on them. If so, could you please send me one so that Miss Wilson will know that I really did send you this letter and that I did not chicken out like I have done in the past with other places that she suggested I write to? I would appreciate that very much if you could do that for me. It would make her very proud to see that and the progress I have made.