

ChatGPT AI Analysis of Graven's, ' *The Drawing Board* '

[ChatGPT AI Analysis Performed in Jan. 2026]

<-Begin Poem->

The Drawing Board

by G.E. Graven

... Over and again,
how I despise the sprawled sheet
upon which I so wisely wondered last.
Nauseating, as it lay barren, I nurse it again
as prescribed by many abortions passed ~ a requisite
to bare witness if the quill will give birth to flesh and bone,
or instead, vomit forth another abandoned crumpled paper companion
nigh six legs of persistence ~ two pacing, anxiously awaiting delivery,
and the drawing board's remaining four,
exclaiming for: "Over and again" ...

>-End Poem-<

<-Begin Analysis->

This poem seems to explore the themes of creative frustration, the cyclical nature of artistic struggle, and the tension between ambition and failure. The speaker appears to be wrestling with the process of creation—particularly writing—expressing a sense of revulsion and weariness toward the "sprawled sheet," which likely represents the blank page or an unfinished work.

Key Themes:

- 1. Frustration and Repetition:** The phrase "Over and again" suggests a sense of relentless, recurring struggle. The speaker is caught in a loop of dissatisfaction, where each attempt to create is marred by failure or dissatisfaction. The idea of "wisely wondered last" hints at a past expectation of success, yet the current reality feels different—"nauseating," "barren," and something to be "nursed again." The act of creation seems to be both mentally and emotionally draining.
- 2. Creative Birth and Abortion:** The terms "abortions passed" and "prescribed" link the creative process to physical birth and death. The word "abortions" might refer to past works that were abandoned or discarded, but there's a deeper connection to the idea of ideas being birthed or terminated. The speaker may be questioning whether their work will "give birth to flesh and bone," representing a completed, tangible creation, or if it will "vomit forth" another failure, a piece of work destined for the scrap heap. This duality suggests both hope and despair.

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3. **Persistence Amid Failure:** The "six legs of persistence" evoke a creature or entity that, though imperfect or perhaps malfunctioning, keeps going. The image of "two pacing, anxiously awaiting delivery" might represent the speaker's mind, which is eager but unsure of the outcome. The "four remaining legs" could symbolize external forces or the more practical aspects of the creative process (like tools, time, or external expectations) that are pushing for the same "over and again" result, echoing a feeling of being trapped in an endless loop of effort and failure.
4. **Existential Struggle:** The line "nigh six legs of persistence" may also suggest a sense of existential dissonance. There is an inherent tension between the intellectual (the "two pacing" legs) and the physical or mechanical (the "four" legs), which could represent the body of work or the creative tools (like a pen, paper, typewriter, etc.). The "drawing board's remaining four" could hint at an artist or writer's struggle with the practical and emotional elements of creation.

Overall Interpretation:

At its core, the poem touches on the emotional and existential turmoil of creation—how one is drawn into the process of producing something meaningful, only to face repeated failure and dissatisfaction. The process itself becomes both a source of anguish and a form of necessary perseverance. The reference to "nursing" the sheet "again" might also suggest that despite the frustration, the act of creating is a compulsion, something that must be continued even in the face of its often unpleasant and draining nature. There's a strong sense of battling against self-doubt, striving for a creation that feels worth the effort but never quite reaching it.

>-End Analysis-<