



*Brought to you by: K.D. Wentworth, Uncle Guido, Simon McCaffery & Chris Merle*

**Special "A Christmas Chad" Issue •  
December 2000**

**\*\*\* HELLO, OSFW! \*\*\***

The Christmas party/potluck dinner will be held Saturday, 7:00 P.M., December 9th, at the Warren and Lana Brown residence. Meat, cheese, and various sandwich fixings will be provided, along with a variety of soft drinks and coffee. Members are invited to bring desserts and other alternative foods. Address: 6012 S. Pittsburgh Ave., Tulsa. Directions: Drive down 61st St. between Harvard and Yale. to Pittsburgh Ave. which is across the street from Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church. Turn north. The house will be on your left.

Those who wish to take part in the gift exchange should bring a wrapped sf/fantasy themed present in the \$10 range.

Also, we will have the annual Fragment Contest. To participate, bring a two to three page fragment of a story you have never shared with anyone in OSFW. Title it (very important!), then put it in a plain manila envelope without your name. All fragments will be read out loud and then we'll try to guess who wrote each one. There will be a prize for the winner.

**\*\*\* UNLOCAL NEWS \*\*\***

Noted author L. Sprague de Camp died on November 6th in Texas. He was 93.

**\*\*\* LOCAL NEWS \*\*\***

Melissa Tatum has been contracted to write an

entry for the OXFORD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF LAW.

K.D. Wentworth has been asked to write a collaboration with Eric Flint for Baen.

**GOOD REJECTIONS:**

Greg Lower: LEADING EDGE

Warren Brown: PICASSO PRESS, HAWK PUBLICATIONS

**\*\*\* THE ICE PICK \*\*\***

by Diana Carolyn Ice

WORD PAINTING: A GUIDE TO WRITING MORE DESCRIPTIVELY, by Rebecca McClanahan. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 1999. ISBN 0-89879-861-2. \$18.99

Description can create the illusion of reality and establish our characters, our point of view, and our setting. It can speed up or slow down our stories or provide the needed links between scenes and summaries. It can be anything from a transitional device to a unifying thematic one. And nowhere is the challenge of writing description greater than for the writer of "non realistic" fiction. "We're trying to render and maintain a world . . . that we've not experienced firsthand." In doing so, "we can't assume that [our reader] will enter our fictional dream as easily as the reader of a contemporary realistic novel would."

McClanahan begins by explaining how we can

sharpen our powers of observation, because our ability to describe things depends on our ability to see, smell, hear, touch, and taste them and to interpret and understand what we have observed. In the following chapters she discusses the tools a writer can use in description and how to create the effects we want in mood, plot, pacing, characterization, point of view, and setting. She also explains how to organize the description of a setting or a person and how to introduce the story's setting.

Throughout the book there are exercises designed to help us understand and apply the ideas McClanahan introduces. For example, within the section on characterization, she asks us to imagine what container our character would pack for a weekend away and what they would put in it. Would their grocery list look like? What would they put out for a yard sale?

There is a selected bibliography for further reading and study, plus a good index, and the book is very well organized.

Packed with practical advice and information, this is a wonderful book. But it is not an easy book, nor one to be skimmed quickly. You need to take your time with it, working through the exercises and seeing how you might apply them to your own writing.

### \*\*\* THE TOP 20 BAD SUSPENSE NOVEL METAPHORS OR SIMILES \*\*\*

Occasionally, we like do long, wordy, more "literate" lists. This, then, would be one of those times. Sit back, get a nice hot cup of tea, and enjoy... – Chris M.

20. Worn down at the edges like a Times Square hooker, the caretaker's last tooth lay on the floor like a yellow Chiclet.

19. When she stepped out of her dress, she had the body of a 90-year-old nun, if the nun looked as young, attractive, and sexy as the dame standing in front of me.

18. The situation had become topsy-turvy -- like

Christmas in the summer, if you're in Australia.

17. The information imbedded on the stolen computer chip was like an explosive so explosive it could explode, creating a massive explosion.

16. As I watched through the slatted shades, her bosom bounced like her suspicious husband's first check.

15. The killer was a misplaced comma in the jaunty, happy sentence that made up the party crowd.

14. His face looked like an ice sculpture. Not one of those pretty ones in the middle of a cruise ship buffet, but the kind they do in a contest with a chainsaw -- and it had been out in the heat too long.

13. Like any family, this house had its secrets, secrets it grimly refused to reveal, and would continue to refuse to reveal even if it could speak, which unlike a family, or at least most members of most families, it couldn't.

12. The air of danger perversely made Nina's nipples harden, like that Magic Shell stuff on a bowl of ice cream.

11. From his vantage point in the balcony, the would-be assassin looked down on the debating candidates like a webhead looking down on an AOL user.

10. The sudden darkness made the Countess tense, like Bobby Jerome that time with the bicycle in 7th grade, remember?

9. There was something funny about the kidnapping crime scene that Special Agent Frievald couldn't quite place, and the thought stuck with him throughout the rest of the day, like those tiny little bits of the circumferent skin from the bologna slices on a foot-long Subway Cold Cut Trio that get stuck in between the last two molars on the upper left, on the tongue side where you can't possibly reach them with a toothpick, your fingernails, or even a systematically straightened paper clip, they just sit there and make everything you eat at your

next meal taste vaguely like vinegar and mayonnaise, and then somehow -- quietly but miraculously -- they disappear by themselves in the middle of the night while you're asleep, just like the visiting Countess appeared to have done.

8. Her parting words lingered heavily inside me like last night's Taco Bell.

7. The bullet burned Gilmore's gut like the first piss after a long night in a Singapore brothel.

6. A single drop of sweat slowly inched down Chad's brow -- a tiny, glistening Times Square New Year's Eve Ball of desperation.

5. His .38 barked fire, like John Goodman's butt after a chili cookoff.

4. Her blazing eyes dance like Astaire and Rogers, but since they were crossed, it was an ocular tango, and my eyes had to foxtrot just to maintain eye contact.

3. She had a voice so husky it could have pulled a dogsled, and the gun she was holding gave me a bad case of barrel envy.

2. The neon sign reflected off his gun, like the moonlight reflects off my brother-in-law's bald head after a night of beer drinking and cow-tipping.

and *Topfive.com's Number 1 Bad Suspense Novel Metaphor or Simile...*

1. Unable to contain his rage, he burst like a pimple of emotion, the pus of his fury streaking the mirror of calm in the bathroom of his life.

\*\*\* DEAR EDDY \*\*\*

Dear Eddy,

Recently I was taken to a movie by my four-year-old daughter and her pet opossum. It was called *The Grinch*. The director, Ron Howard, is known for the consistent quality of his films, and their heartwarming flavor. The star has always made me laugh in one way or another. During this film, however, my head began to hurt and I

thought I was losing my eyesight. The only time I laughed was approximately seven hours into the film, when this Grinch character knocked over a table full of coffee pots, and then the back of my throat hurt from the strain.

Was this the director's goal? Is *Grinch* a commentary on the mindlessness of Hollywood? Was it just so postmodern I didn't "get" it? Please help me.

Sad at the Multiplex

P.S. My daughter thought it was "predictable" and "reductive." Her opossum pronounced it "derivative of Godard's *Weekend*, except for no fish sex." So it's not just me.

Dear Sad:

While Jim Carrey has been called the "rubber faced spawn of Satan" by at least one reviewer, old Lucifer himself would be above subjecting even Republican ballot-count watchers to this movie. Eating a bowl full of sugar coated chad would be more entertaining, more nutritious, and probably better for all concerned. As a matter of fact, a bowl of chad would have the Ron Howard trademark heartwarming flavor this movie lacks.

I don't know about the postmodern aspect of *Grinch*, but I think the family opossum's ruminations on Godard's *Weekend* has possibilities. (I'm going to find myself some SCUBA gear and delve more into that fish sex thing.)

Meanwhile, I can only hope your precocious marsupial (the opossum that is) is not on an HMO plan, because the therapy the little beast will need to recover from this Grinch of a movie is going to cost a pretty penny, which will be far prettier than the mud-colored tones of this Seussmare before Christmas (not your fault Theodore).

Apollo Ron, you have a problem.

Yours for cutting the first four hours

Eddy

P.S. Take your fish to this gobbler and they'll never have sex again.

**\*\*\* MARKET UPDATE \*\*\***

**CHANGES**

**VIRTUAL LOBOTOMY** has been cancelled.

**HMS BEAGLE** only responds to submissions if they're buying the piece. If you send a story there, you should consider it rejected if you don't hear back in a "few weeks."

**NEW LISTINGS**

**NOIROTICA**, Vol. 4, P.O. Box 410686, San Francisco, CA 94141. Editor: Thomas S. Roche. Print anthology to be published by **BLACK BOOKS** in September, 2001. Looking for "sexy crime stories with a strong erotic and crime-noir element integrated into the plot. Explicit sex is preferred but not absolutely necessary, but the sexual element must be crucial to the plot. The sexuality can be of any orientation. Not looking for work with a supernatural, fantasy, or sf element." Length: 1000-5000 words. Payment: \$50 plus a share of the royalties. Buying First Anthology Rights. **\*\*\*Deadline: December 15, 2000.**

**PIF**. Monthly webzine, all genres. Email subs only. Must be embedded in the body of the email. Include cover letter with short bio. Online submission form at [www.pifmagazine.com/submit](http://www.pifmagazine.com/submit). Length: 1000-4000 words. Payment: \$50-200. No reprints or simultaneous submissions. [www.pifmagazine.com](http://www.pifmagazine.com)

**REALITY'S ESCAPE**, P.O. Box 1629, Pearl River, LA 70452. Editor: Celia L. Badon. Quarterly print publication buying f/sf/df/h. Payment: 3 cents/word for First N.A. serial rights on acceptance. Length: up to 10,000 words. [7realmpublishing.com/realityescape.htm](http://7realmpublishing.com/realityescape.htm)

**SPECULON**, [speculon@crosswinds.net](mailto:speculon@crosswinds.net). Editor:

none listed. This is an online magazine of sf and f. No h or exceptionally dark f. "Stories including gratuitous or excessive violence, gore of any amount, graphic depictions of sex or violence, or hateful or defamatory content will be rejected immediately." Submissions must be embedded in the body of the e-mail or attached in a format readable by Microsoft Word '97. All submissions should include the word "submission" or "sub" in their subject line. Payment: 5 cents/word for stories up to 3,000 words, \$150 max. for longer work. Length: up to 5,000 words. Buys one-year web publication rights with a six week exclusive. Considers reprints if the story has not been printed in a North American magazine, has not been available on the Internet, or has never been published in English.

**STILLWATERS JOURNAL FICTION**, Marietta Publishing, Stillwaters Journal, P.O. Box 3485, Marietta, GA 30061-3485. Editor: Bruce Gehweiler. Sf/f/h/df/slipstream. "Seeking well written dark fiction . . . stories should be gripping, intelligent, weird, and not previously done to death in the genre." Length: 1500-8,000 words, prefers 3,000-4,000. Payment: \$40 to new writers, negotiates fee for established writers. [www.stillwatersjournal.com](http://www.stillwatersjournal.com).

**VACANCY**, the Webzine of Spoken Epiphanies. Open to reprints of fiction with supernatural elements. All works are published in streaming RealAudio read by the author. Payment: 4 cents/word. More information available at <http://blindsides.net/Vacancy>.

**\*\*\* MANY THANKS TO \*\*\***

KDW & Guido & Bear  
Diana Carolyn Ice  
Chris Merle  
Warren & Lana Brown

**\*\*\* SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION \*\*\***

A subscription to *Son of GPIC*, the official newsletter of the Oklahoma Science Fiction Writers, may be obtained online or by mail. E-mail subscription is \$7 per year. Snail-mail printed version is \$13. Mail a check or money order in the correct amount, prorated by quarter, to:

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6915 New Haven  
Tulsa, OK 74136-2844  
(Checks should be made out to K.D. Wentworth)

*Please note: An "X" on your mailing label indicates OSFW has no record of either 2000 dues or GPIC subscription renewal. This GPIC will be your last.*

**\*\*\* OSFW INFORMATION \*\*\***

The OSFW meets at members' homes the second Friday of every month to read, critique, and promote in general SF, Fantasy, and Horror writing. All willing to contribute and (after a couple of trial meetings) pay their dues are welcome. **There is no age limit but parents should understand that material with adult themes and language is read and discussed.**

**\*\*\* GPIC NEWS AND ARTICLES \*\*\***

GPIC solicits news and articles from OSFW members. We prefer they be on disk or sent via e-mail. Pseudonyms are OK. We accept files on either a 3-inch Mac or PC disk. We like RTF files but we can convert most Word and Word Perfect files; always include a separate ASCII file just in case.

Otherwise, arrange to send them by e-mail to Simon at: [simon.mccaffery@wilcom.com](mailto:simon.mccaffery@wilcom.com).

You retain copyright on material. If this is of special concern you might let us know who you really are along with your pseudonym. We reserve the right to edit (although we try not to).

**\*\*\* NEXT GPIC DEADLINE \*\*\***

Pesky deadline for January issue: Dec. 28.