

# DEAD TO WRITES

A MALICE IN MEMPHIS NEWSLETTER

JULY 2015 ISSUE

## A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Happy July, y'all!

Just a quick update from our Trolley Night at the Book Juggler.

I spoke with Jean, the day after our sale and she informed me that we sold more books than any other book signing she has had there. Granted, we only sold 7 books (6 paperback, 1 hardback), but per the traffic that came through, it was a successful evening in my opinion.

For those of you that weren't aware, Allan Gilbreath and Kimberly Richardson have an art gallery right next door to Book Juggler. The name is lon's: A Geek Gallery, and yes, it is very 'geeky'. We all know what a fantastic photographer Kimberly is, and she has several of her photos for sale there. Also, there is almost anything for the geek in your life. lon's is the dealer room from a Con, without the Con. Please give them a visit.

Best to all~

Missy

All,

**"A short story must have a single mood and every sentence must build towards it." -Edgar Allen Poe**

**Hope to see everyone Saturday, 11 am at El Patron, 5811 Stage Road in the upstairs meeting room.**

**Kristi Bradley  
VP Malice in Memphis**

**PLEASE REMEMBER FOR THIS MONTH:**

**WE WILL BE MEETING AT 11:00 A.M. at EL PATRON MEXICAN RESTAURANT. LOCATED AT 5811 STAGE ROAD IN THE UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM.** This is located around the corner from Brad's BBQ on Stage.

Check out our new Anthology:

Malice in Memphis:Bluff City Mysteries.  
You can get it at

<http://www.darkoakpress.com/malice.html> or  
on Amazon.

I am trying to secure a room at the shooting range for September. That will be the last month that we have to find an alternate meeting location. I will keep everybody posted on the decision.

#### WRITING TIP:

Watch out for repetition in your writing. This not only refers to phrases and actions, but also to how a word sounds. Think of the tongue twisters we've all heard: Peter Piper Picked a Peck of... etc. you get the picture. These repetitions can happen when you least expect it. They are not always in the same line, the same paragraph, or on the same page. Read your work aloud it helps you hear the sounds you are using. Oh, and don't forget to check out actions, words, phrases and descriptions

Keep writing  
Barbara Christopher

#### Malice in Memphis Minutes –June 2015

Meeting was called to order at 10:22 a.m. by Kristi. Missy was out of town. Members present were, Juanita, Kristi, Cindy, Carolyn, Richard, Angelyn, Susan, Elaine and Vicki. We had two guests Beth Hines and Melissa Smith. Introductions were made for the new members. Motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes, Carolyn seconded. Elaine made an announcement of a new book coming out in July.

We dispensed with the Treasurer's report as it was in the newsletter. We have a book signing on the 26<sup>th</sup> at the Book Juggler on South Main, downtown Memphis at 6:00p. This will take place on Trolley night and since it is a small book store only 4 authors were able to go. Kristi sent out a notice and the first 4 to respond were picked. We discussed the Sisters in Crime Membership and why we were not part of Sisters in Crime at this time. We discussed Seth's program last month on Scrivener.

We discussed future programs for upcoming meetings. Several people made future suggestions:

Beth Hines suggested her husband, Gene Hines for August.

Susan is going to try to get a detective from AR as a possible speaker for September.

Carolyn agreed to speak on Settings for October

Kristi stated she would work on a program for November on Villains.

A lot of the ones by members can be rescheduled if we get guest speakers for those months. Members that are scheduled will be moved to months in the next year.

We have made the announcement that there will not be a retreat this year. The group discussed publishing on Amazon.com and self-publishing for future references.

Carolyn gave a rundown of what she has received as far as stories

Ann Orpheum	Phyllis	2
Jim 2	Carolyn	2
Seth 2	Kristi	2
Elaine 2	Juanita	1
Geoff 1	Richard	2
Susan 0	Barbara	2
Missy 0	David	0

Angelyn explained about Wiggio and that we thought it would be a good idea and it was agreed by majority. Angelyn agreed to set it up

Meeting was called at 11:45. Lunch at Brad's BBQ.

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Disclaimer: I signed up for a newsletter called Creative Writing Newsletter back in July 2010 and it is a great newsletter. I recommend that every writer check it out. You get prompts, and help with just about any issue you might have. I hope that you check it out and that Nancy from Creative

Writing doesn't mind me posting this in our newsletter. She does an awesome job. I am hoping this will get her many more followers.

Welcome to Lesson 2 of Endless Story Ideas!

In the previous lesson, we talked about five different techniques for generating character ideas. These are techniques you can use over and over again to create new characters whenever you need them.

Today, we'll look at how you can turn fictional characters into story ideas. To do this, you need to come up with ideas for story conflicts.

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Why you need a conflict  
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A story conflict is a problem facing the main character. This problem might be a romantic rival or a horde of attacking zombies. It might be an internal struggle; for example, the character has to overcome a particular fear or a bad habit.

Here are some examples of story conflicts:

- Mary falls in love with the perfect man, but she's already married to someone else.
- John wants to be president of his high school class, but he is terrified of public speaking.
- Harry Potter has to save the world from the evil wizard Voldemort.

Conflict is important because it makes things happen. If everything in your character's life is perfect, there is no reason for her to take action. There is no reason for anything to change. And no change equals no story.

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The keys to effective conflict  
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If readers care about the result of your story conflict, they will keep reading to find out what happens.

What makes readers care?

- 1) The result of the conflict matters a lot to your character.
- 2) The readers identify with your character -- in other words, readers imagine themselves in your character's place.

A *\*viewpoint character\** is a character whose perspective is used to tell the story. Readers see the story through that character's eyes, experiencing what that character experiences.

Readers tend to identify with the viewpoint character and feel as if they're resolving the story's conflict along with him or her. They're frustrated when the character encounters obstacles and relieved when the obstacles are overcome. They're triumphant or in despair at the end of the story when the character either succeeds or fails.

When writing a short story, it's generally best to have one viewpoint character and develop a conflict that matters to that character. This gives your reader, who identifies with the character, a stake in what happens.

If the starting point for your story idea is the conflict instead of the character, then come up with a viewpoint character who will be directly affected by the result of that conflict.

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7 ways to get conflict ideas from your characters  
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Here are seven surefire ways to turn a character idea into an idea for conflict, which gives you the seed for a story.

You can repeat the techniques with new characters and come out with a completely different story every time!

1) What is something your character deeply desires? Imagine a situation in which your character has the chance to obtain this desire... but there is a terrible obstacle in the way. (What obstacle? You decide.)

2) What is one of your character's greatest fears? Imagine a situation which forces your character to face this fear in order to achieve an important goal.

3) Who is someone your character hates? Imagine a situation which forces your character into a major struggle with this person.

4) Who is someone your character loves? Imagine a situation which threatens to cut your character off from this person. How does your character react?

5) What is one of your character's greatest weaknesses? Imagine a situation in which your character must overcome this weakness or risk losing something s/he cares about deeply.

6) Imagine a situation in which something your character doesn't know about himself or herself is about to ruin his or her life, unless the character is capable of making drastic changes.

7) Who are the people your character cares about most? Imagine a situation in which your character must choose between two of them.

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## Plotting 101

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The word *\*plot\** is used to describe the structure of a story's action: the main events of the story and the order in which they happen.

A story plot normally goes like this:

1) The character and the conflict are introduced.

2) The character struggles with the conflict.

3) The character's struggle builds to a win-or-lose moment which will decide if the story ends happily or not. This moment is called the \*story climax.\*

4) The character either is either successful or unsuccessful in resolving the conflict.

If you have a character idea and a conflict idea, you have everything necessary to plot your story.

What's still missing is the third dimension. You'll need a setting for your story and details that will bring it to life for your reader.

We'll come up with setting and detail ideas in next week's class.

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Homework  
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For yesterday's homework, you wrote profiles of three different characters. Now, use at least two of the techniques above to come up with conflict ideas for these characters. Write down each idea in your Idea Journal in the form of a short paragraph. Don't worry about style -- the paragraph is only meant to be a record of the idea so that you can come back to it later.

Happy writing!

Nancy

<http://www.creative-writing-now.com/descriptive-writing.html>

Part 3 coming in August.

Here is the link to Killer Nashville magazine:  
<http://www.killernashvillemagazine.com/>

Lots of great articles in it again this month.