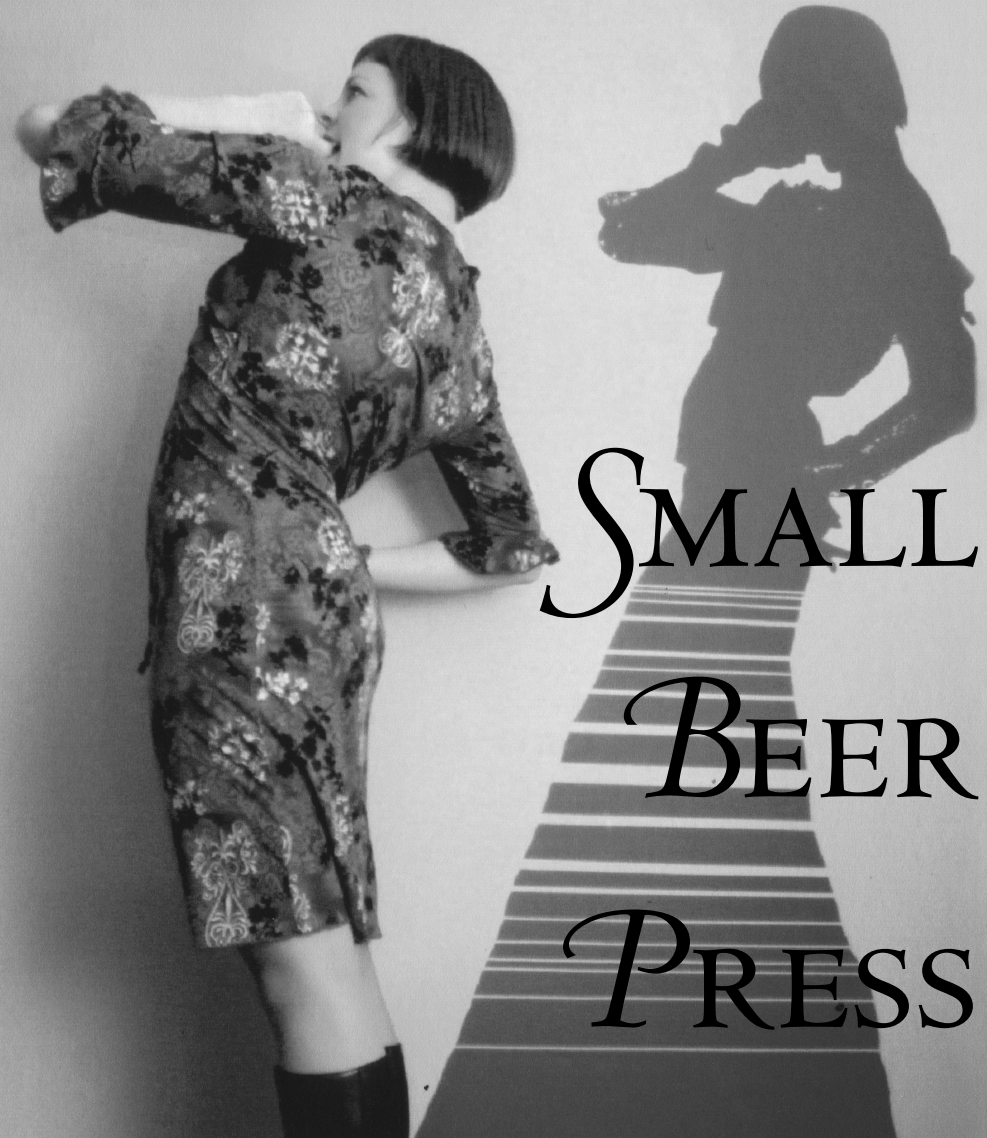


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From LCRW 12: How to Make a Martini
Richard Butner

"I drink so I can talk to assholes. This includes me."—James Douglas Morrison

Drink what you like, so you can talk to assholes including yourself. But. But you might want to have a martini. And here's how to make one.

First off, martinis are made of gin and vermouth. If you make one with vodka, it's not a martini; it's a vodka martini. If you make one without vermouth, it's not a martini, it's cold gin, which is a perfectly fine KISS song but perhaps not a perfectly fine beverage.

The state of being in a martini glass does not instantly confer martini-hood on any given concoction. Some perfectly fine drinks are served in martini glasses (aka cocktail glasses, as opposed to old-fashioned glasses or Collins glasses or cordial glasses). Gimlets, say. Hell, even Lemon Drops. There is no such thing as a Choco-Banana Martini, though.

Get some vermouth that's decent. Universally renowned as decent is Noilly Prat. It deserves its rep. If you have some fancy small batch vermouth, try that—make sure to use dry vermouth, not sweet. If you're stuck with Martini & Rossi or Stock or Cinzano, make do until you've finished that bottle, then pay the extra buck for the Noilly Prat.

Get some gin that's decent. This is actually easier than the vermouth purchase. Gin is a poor person's drink; it's flavored grain alcohol, the simplest booze to manufacture. It is automatically not fancy, no matter what various pop cultural artifacts of the twentieth century say. So, get something that's good but not faux good, like Bombay or Beefeater but not Bombay Sapphire or Tanqueray Number Ten, unless you feel like plunking down the cash. In other words, get something in a glass bottle (not a plastic one).

Now, get a garnish. Weird purists (weird purists who are not me) will demand that

you eat an olive. You do not need to do this. One thing you definitely do not need to do is to drink a dirty martini, obtained by pouring olive brine in with the other fluids. If you like olive brine, then go have a large salty flagon of olive brine, but don't ruin your martini with it. So decide whether you'd like one olive or two, or instead of olives, a citrus twist. The citrus can be lemon or lime (see Bombay Gin bottle as reference for the lime option). The olives can only be manzanilla-sized olives, not jumbo or "queen" olives. You're having a cocktail, you're not eating lunch.

Keep the vermouth in the fridge once you've opened it; it's delicate, like Sandy Denny. Keep the gin either in the freezer, or in the liquor cabinet. If you keep it in the freezer, it's already nice and cold, which is good, but the ice will melt less quickly when you prepare it. You want the ice to melt. You want some dilution. Dilution via melting ice is the key to any good cocktail. If you keep the gin in the freezer, make sure to stir your martini for an extra-long time.

Get a mixing glass. Crack some ice. You don't want just ice cubes; you want actual cracked ice. Buy a bag of it, or make it yourself with a hammer or with a Tap-Icer®, or build a robot friend that you can program to crack ice for you. Put plenty of the cracked ice in the mixing glass. Then put in the vermouth. If you're completely vermouth-o-phobic, allow it to flavor the ice, then dump it out (this is the "In and Out" martini). If you want a real martini, though, leave it in, and use about one part vermouth to six parts gin. Add the gin. Stir. Continue stirring. Stir some more.

Strain into your frosted martini glasses. You have kept them in the freezer, right? Add the garnish. Drink, and enjoy. If the gin-to-vermouth ratio feels wrong to your taste buds, well then, make another. Cheers, y'all.



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From LCRW 13: For George Romero

The poor don't shoot their zombies
in the heads. Not in your version.
The zombies do the right things
horribly: the man mourned
embraces his wife. Then he bites
her shoulder. And then they go
ice skating, but without skates.

—David Blair

"tiny but celebrated"
—Washington Post

No. 13
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Other Cities by Benjamin Rosenbaum. Illustrated by Peter Reiss.

The eloquence and poignancy of each of these stories astonished me. "The City of Peace," alone, is enough to make one weep. But when read as a whole, *Other Cities* is not only harrowing, but exhilarating.—Bradley Denton, *One Day Closer to Death*

Bittersweet Creek by Christopher Rowe. Cover illustration by Shelley Jackson.

This smart, sleek, scary little book is all about strange arrivals: girls coming up out of their graves, giants from their junkyards, dragons from their river beds. Add Rowe himself—striding out of the Kentucky hills into the sunlight of literature's regard. And he looks good doing it.—Terry Bisson, *The Pickup Artist*

Foreigners, and Other Familiar Faces written and illustrated by Mark Rich.

The only writer in existence who can make my mouth fall open
—Michael Kandel

Lord Stink by Judith Berman. Cover illustration by Shelley Jackson.

Four stories by the author of *The Bear's Daughter* (Ace, 2004).

Rossetti Song by Alex Irvine

Four stories by the author of the multi-award winner *A Scattering of Jades*.

KALPA IMPERIAL

the greatest empire that never was

Angélica Gorodischer
translated by Ursula K. Le Guin

The dreamy, ancient voice is not unlike Le Guin's . . . this collection should appeal to her fans as well as to those of literary fantasy and Latin American fiction.—*Library Journal*

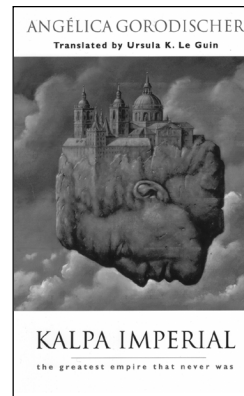
Kalpa Imperial is the first of best-selling Argentinean writer Angélica Gorodischer's 19 award-winning books translated into English. Multiple storytellers tell of a fabled nameless empire which has risen and fallen innumerable times. Fairy tales, oral histories, and political commentaries are woven tapestry-style: beggars become emperors, democracies become dictatorships, and history becomes legends and stories.

But *Kalpa Imperial* is much more than a simple political allegory or fable. It is a celebration of storytelling. Gorodischer and acclaimed poet, writer, and translator Ursula K. Le Guin are a well-matched, sly and delightful team of magician-storytellers. Rarely have author and translator been such an effortless pairing. *Kalpa Imperial* is a powerful introduction to the writing of Angélica Gorodischer, a novel which will enthrall readers already familiar with the worlds of Ursula K. Le Guin.

It's always difficult to wrap up a rave review without babbling redundant praises. This time I'll simply say "Buy this Book!"—*Locus*

Angélica Gorodischer was born in Buenos Aires and since 1936 has lived in Rosario, Argentina. Among her many awards are the Dignity Award (Permanent Assembly for Human Rights), the Silvina Bullrich Award (Argentina Writer Society), and the Margarita de Ponce Award (Union of Argentine Women).

Ursula K. Le Guin is one of the world's most popular writers. She has been awarded the National Book Award, the PEN/Malamud Award, Boston Globe-Horn Book Award, five Hugo and five Nebula Awards, and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pacific NW Booksellers Association. As of 2003 she has published over a hundred short stories (collected in nine volumes), two collections of essays, twelve books for children, five volumes of poetry, two of translation, and nineteen novels.



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Trampoline: an anthology

edited by Kelly Link

An original anthology edited by Kelly Link, author of *Stranger Things Happen*, and co-editor of the zine *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*.

Trampoline: twenty astounding and surprising stories by Christopher Barzak, Richard Butner, Alan DeNiro, Carol Emshwiller, Jeffrey Ford, Karen Joy Fowler, Greer Gilman, John Gonzalez, Glen Hirshberg, Samantha Hunt, Alex Irvine, Shelley Jackson, Beth Adele Long, Maureen McHugh, Susan Mosser, Ed Park, Christopher Rowe, Dave Shaw, Vandana Singh, and Rosalind Palermo Stevenson.

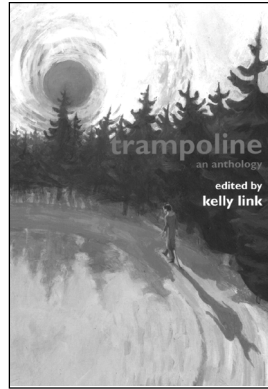
Does what most other anthologies only dream of: it manages to be both significant and eminently readable.—Peggy Hailey, Book People

No unblinkered, gloveless reader can resist the stream of associations unleashed by Ford's story and the rest of *Trampoline*: influences as disparate as science fiction, magic realism, pulp, and Twilight Zone morality plays.—Village Voice

Eclectic, elevating, bouncy: *Trampoline* ("a major anthology"—*Locus*) demonstrates the strength and range in modern short fiction. The 20 stories include several debuts as well as contributions by PEN/Faulkner finalist Karen Joy Fowler, Shelley Jackson (*Village Voice* Writer on the Verge), and Dave Shaw, winner of the Katherine Anne Porter Prize. Other contributors have won World Fantasy, Nebula, Hugo, Philip K. Dick, Crawford, Lambda, James Tiptree, Jr., and Campbell Awards.

Trampoline is meant to entertain as well as explore the boundaries of fiction, in the tradition of *Dangerous Visions* and *McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales*.

Since 1996, **Kelly Link** has co-edited the zine *Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet*. Her first short fiction collection, *Stranger Things Happen*, was nominated for the Firecracker Award. She has won the Nebula, Tiptree, and World Fantasy Awards. Most recently, her stories have appeared in *Conjunctions* and *McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales*.



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From *MEET ME IN THE MOON ROOM: In The Refrigerator*
Ray Vukcevich

So I come home to find her sitting on the hide-a-bed with this brown paper bag over her head. She hasn't turned on the lights. There are shadows everywhere. I can just make out the name of the grocery store printed in upside-down letters on the front of the bag. She's wearing one of the big bags.

"What are you doing?" I say.

"Don't talk to me," she says.

I reach across her and turn on the table lamp. I see that she's wearing basketball shoes untied, and that her hands are folded in her lap.

I look her up and down, becoming strangely aroused, knowing that she knows I'm looking at her but can't look back.

"I'm looking at you," I say.

"Leave me alone."

I sit down beside her, being careful not to touch her but sitting close enough on the sagging couch to make her lean in my direction. She moves away from me in prissy little annoyed scoots. Her bag wobbles, but when she's gotten as far from me as she can, she straightens it, then puts her hands back in her lap. I sigh and settle back with my arm across the top of the couch, my hand just behind her head. I stretch out my legs. They don't quite reach the opposite wall. Otherwise, we'd never be able to fold the couch out into a bed at night. I could reach to my side and take something from our tiny refrigerator if there was anything I wanted in our tiny refrigerator. The place smells of her. The place smells of me. It's uniquely our smell now, merged in the end by these close walls.

I sigh again, knowing she'll know I'm sighing at her.

I get no response. It's as if she is in another room instead of sitting right beside me on the couch with a paper bag over her head.

"So have you been sitting here with that bag over your head all afternoon?" I say.

She says, "I heard you coming up the stairs."

I say, "You heard me coming and you hurried over to the couch and put a grocery bag over your head?"

"Yes," she says.

I suppose what she's doing makes some sense. In fact, nothing she does makes absolutely no sense. We live in a single room. We cook here, we sleep here, we do everything here. Well, we do go down the hall to use the bathroom we share with another couple. But there aren't many chances to be alone.

"Let me see your face," I say.

"Go away," she says.

"I think we should hash this out," I say.

She doesn't answer, and her silence infuriates me. I lean in close to snatch the bag from her head, but stop myself just in time.

"Come out of there!" I say.

"I won't," she says.

I take a deep breath. I count to ten. I do some deep knee bends. I root around under the sink and find a paper bag of my own. I wait to unfold it until I'm standing right in front of her again. I want her to hear the sound.

It doesn't make enough noise when I unfold it. So I shake it. I can see it is having an effect on her by the way she squeezes her hands into fists in her lap.

I sit back down beside her.

"Okay," I say, "you want to be alone, I'll just go off by myself." I shake the bag again and then put it over my head. I am startled by all the room inside. "Hey, there's really a lot of room in here!" I say, and as I speak I can hear my voice is different, and I realize that she can probably hear that my voice sounds different now, too. I picture her sitting there beside me with the bag over her head, wondering just what I'm up to. Has she figured it out yet? Is she sitting there picturing me sitting here with a bag over my own head? Or has she taken her bag off?

I worry that maybe she is looking at me now. As if to confirm my fears, I hear her get to her feet and open the refrigerator.

Then I hear nothing at all.

I don't even hear the refrigerator close.

I listen carefully. But I cannot tell what is going on. Is there anyone out there? I'm afraid to look. I'm afraid to know.

Stranger Things Happen

Kelly Link

Kelly Link's ("a writer to watch"—*Kirkus*) debut collection is now in its third printing. She writes about beauty pageant contestants, cannibals, girl detectives, magicians, and amnesiacs. *Stranger Things Happen* was selected by the *Village Voice* and *Salon* as a Book of the Year and contains Tiptree, Nebula, and World Fantasy Award-winning stories.

The exact best and strangest and funniest short story writer on earth that you have never heard of.—Jonathan Lethem

Funny, moving, tender; brave and dangerous.—Neil Gaiman

At their best, her stories have the vibrancy, the buzzing resonance and the oddly insistent quality of dreams.
—*New York Times Book Review*

Lovers of short fiction should fall over themselves getting out the door to find a copy.—*Washington Post Book World*

Kelly Link is currently writing more short stories. Her fiction has appeared in *Fence*, *Conjunctions*, and *McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales*.

Meet Me in the Moon Room

Ray Vukcevich

Weird, wonderful stories of men, women, teleportation, wind-up cats, and brown paper bags. Vukcevich's loopy, fun-house mirror take on everyday life belongs to the same absurdist school of work as that of George Saunders, David Sedaris, Ken Kalfus, and Victor Pelevin.

"Ray Vukcevich is a master of the last line.... Often it's a perfect line of dialogue that opens up the whole story."—*The Review of Contemporary Fiction*

"The 33 brief stories ... defy categorization or genre."
—*Hartford Courant*

"Inventive and entertaining, these stories yield more emotional truth than much more comparatively realistic fiction."—*Publishers Weekly*

Ray Vukcevich is the author of this collection and the novel *The Man of Maybe Half a Dozen Faces*. His short fiction has appeared in *Rosebud*, *Fantasy & Science Fiction*, *The Infinite Matrix*, and elsewhere. In his other life, he works for a couple of university brain labs.

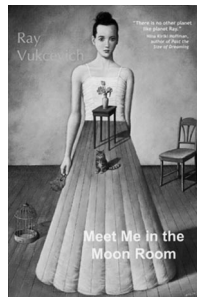


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From TRAMPOLINE: Famous Men: For Love (an excerpt)
Samantha Hunt

You have a family, yes?" he asked his bodyguard through the locked bathroom door.

"Yes," the guard answered.

"That's nice," the Sultan told him and tried to finish up in silence but instead turned on the faucet to hear the sound of water. That was nice, too. Until the repetition of water falling down the drain began to sound like a young girl laughing. He turned the water off.

There is a room in my palace, he thought, where there are over three hundred women, shiny models and actresses imported from Los Angeles. So many girls that they have to share bedrooms, two per bed. At that thought he clapped his hands three times in excitement. And I also have some very nice cars. Tonight I will wear my red velour jogging outfit, he thought.

Once the Sultan had had a near-death experience. Not his death, but near someone else's death. His driver, while negotiating the streets of O_____, had been distracted, racing a cargo train running alongside the car. He failed to note an intersection. The Sultan saw very little but a pair of women's eyeglasses thrown high into the air, coming to rest on the other side of the road where they were struck instantly by oncoming traffic.

At the palace they had a party every night. It was the only thing that the three hundred actresses and models imported from Los Angeles to the place where he lived did outside a monthly shopping trip to London or Paris. The parties were normally held by the pool, and they were fun, he thought. Dancing and fancy clothes, three hundred females to six or eight or eleven males depending on whether his cousins were around. At the party, every now and then, a plate of snacks would be passed.

At three in the morning one of the models or actresses would return to the Sultan's room with him for love.

Between noon and one the Sultan tried to visit his wives and children.

Sometimes there were angry women in the palace. They would be asked to leave before the germ spread. But he'd heard them more than once

and remembered what they'd said. "The Sultan bathes with hogs," or, "We are being starved to death," or one, who could not stop repeating in a calm way, "He ate my child. The Sultan ate my child. He ate my child alive."

He had not.

Often the Sultan turned to television. The richest man in the world, an American who had usurped the Sultan's title, was being interviewed. Few people ever asked to interview the Sultan. But still he imagined how it would sound. He imagined his own voice saying, "Well, Dan, you should have seen the all-girl conga line we had going last night. What a hoot."

His driver had not stopped after striking the pedestrian. And over the course of the next few days and weeks the Sultan, at odd moments of quiet, found himself making his pointer and middle finger into the pedestrian. And then he began to do it at not so odd moments. He began thinking of her regularly. He walked her across the table. He tucked her under his sheets, but it was an awkward position for his hand to be in, so she, as his hand, lay in bed lifeless. This inactivity disturbed the Sultan. Normally, he thought girls' legs were the prettiest things he'd ever seen, but not this girl's. His fingers made her legs rough and stubby. He was terrified by this girl and her glasses. Maybe she was dead or hurt. Maybe she was possessed with special powers that most rich people fear poor people have. Maybe she would use those powers to shrivel his brain or worse, or worse than that.

The Sultan was afraid he knew what any anchorman would ask him: "Why does one man need three hundred women?"

He'd thought his answer through. "Ah, yes, for good health, yes; you see, certain men, well, to be healthy..." The Sultan believed his open-ended answer flattered his virility. But often in his own head he heard the imaginary anchorman laugh and then repeat the original question. "No, honestly, why would one man need three hundred women?"

The Mount

Carol Emshwiller

Philip K. Dick
Award Winner

Carol Emshwiller's "complex and compelling" (*School Library Journal*) fourth novel, *The Mount*, received rave reviews and is still being discovered by readers of all ages.

"This poetic, funny and above all humane novel deserves to be read and cherished as a fundamental fable for our material-minded times." *Publisher's Weekly* (starred review)

Charley is fourteen. He wants to be the fastest runner in the world; but he isn't a runner, he's a mount. Charley belongs to the alien invaders and lives in a stable.

The Mount is a literary fable, a major science fiction novel, and a coming of age novel reminiscent of *Holes*, *The Giver*, and John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*. It's about freedom, loyalty, humanity, and growing up in a world that doesn't belong to you.

This person needs to be really, really famous.—Paul Ingram, *Prairie Lights*

Emshwiller's prose is beautiful—Laura Miller, *Salon*

A terrific novel, at once an adventure story and a meditation on the psychology of freedom and slavery.—Glen David Gold, *Carter Beats the Devil*

Report to the Men's Club and other stories

Carol Emshwiller

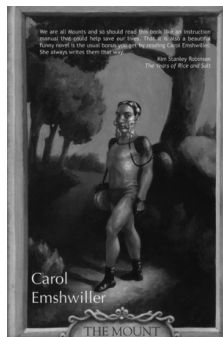
Carol Emshwiller's "surreal, beautiful" (*Jane Magazine*) new collection is her first since the World Fantasy Award-winning *The Start of the End of It All*. It was nominated for the Philip K. Dick Award and includes the Nebula Award-winning "Creature."

A daring, eccentric, and welcome observer of darkly human ways emerges from these 19 motley tales.—*Kirkus Reviews*

Elliptical, funny and stylish—*Time Out New York*

Emshwiller lends her elegant wit to . . . a collection of 19 fantastic short fictions treating the war between the sexes . . . brim-full of wry insights into male-female relationships.—*Publishers Weekly*

Carol Emshwiller is the author of three previous novels (including *Carmen Dog* and *Ledoyt*) and three short fiction collections. Her stories have recently appeared in *McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales*, *Leviathan 3*, and *Polyphony*. She lives in New York City in the winter where she teaches at New York University School of Continuing Education. She spends the summers in a shack in the Sierras in California.



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Resonance: An Essay on Writing

Carol Emshwiller

I've seldom liked a story that was just itself, even a (so called) good story. I don't know what resonance is, exactly, but I feel it when I read it and I get goose bumps when I find it and I get goose bumps when I write it.

Usually that's my reason for writing. That's what turns me on about a story idea—that it means more than it says. As I start writing, I can tell by the first paragraph whether I should go on with it. If I get that trembly feeling I know I'm hitting something more than just the story idea.

My friend calls this allegory, but I don't relate to that word. I think of it as resonance instead, because a story is either an allegory or it isn't, whereas there are all degrees of resonance. There can be a lot or a little.

I set myself off on something that resonates and follow where it leads. Simply by the feel. I usually know when I'm off track. Then I have to back up and regroup (and I have to do this three or four times a story) or the story won't move.

Whenever I sit down to write too consciously (and I do sometimes) it ends up with no resonance. It looks and feels planned. When I do that it has no . . . what? Underwear? Underside? This is why Kafka is my favorite writer. Kafka's stories aren't about what they're about. I like them for what they don't say. Sometimes Steven King stories sound like Kafka stories but they're only about the stories you see. They're only about their surface . . . about what happens. Kafka's stories are not about their stories.

There are all degrees of this. Some stories are almost all underwear/underside and some stories have very little or none. I'm mostly conscious of it when there's none. And I've done some of those over the years especially in my earlier writing. Usually there's at least a little resonance in my stories.

Usually I end up with a story with little resonance when I try too consciously to write something that will sell. Recently I threw a space ship into a story just to stop getting rejections that said, "We already have too many fantasies in stock." (A nice way of getting rejected.) That story has no meaning for me. It was a lesson, too. I'm too cut and dried when I try consciously to write something.

One problem with counting on your subconscious too much is that if something knocks you off your perch you have a hard time climbing back on it in order to write again, since, in a way, it's not your conscious mind you're writing with.

I tell my students that first thing because we don't want to say anything in class that will stop a person from writing. I tell them they must be critical but they must be gentle with each other. I tell them the purpose of the class is to make people go out enthusiastic to write more.

But sometimes there's a good reason for being blocked. It happened to me when I took a class with the poet Kenneth Koch. I learned so much I couldn't write for six months, but that was because I had to absorb what I'd learned. It took six months of mulling it over before I could write at all. After the six months my writing started coming out in a new way. I couldn't say what was different after those six months. I went into the class writing satire and fantasy and came out writing satire and fantasy but it was entirely different.

My more realistic stories have a different purpose . . . a people purpose. I don't care so much if they resonate or not. Their whole purpose is the characters. Or they resonate in a different way. I can get all shaky from characters alone, too.

CR