

THE SILLY GOOSE WRITING CLUB



Newsletter no. 2

Hello, *TAM* subscribers! I'm Elizabeth, and I'm *Thin Air's* fiction editor. This week, I wanted to give you a behind-the-scenes look at our review process along with some practical tips for submitting. I hope this is informative both for those of you who've already submitted and those of you who haven't (yet)!

We're a student-run magazine, so our work begins at the start of the semester. My team of readers and I review stories from oldest to newest. Each week, I assign a certain number of stories to each of my readers, and the next week, we sit down and discuss each one. We know our submitters have put time and care into their stories — and, potentially, three dollars into their submission — and we want to extend that same care in our reviewal.

Now for some practical tips: do your best to engage the reader as early into the story as you can. You only have so many pages, and we don't want to wait too long to get into the meat of your piece. I once got this advice in a poetry workshop, but I think it's relevant here: see what happens if you remove the first paragraph of your story. You might find that that paragraph was only build-up for where the story really begins.

Use your space carefully. Trim down where you can, but don't leave too much to the reader's imagination. Having a friend read your story can be a big help in ensuring you have all the pieces you need for the story to work. But stories are also more than just plots, so don't be afraid to use your space simply for creating dynamic characters.

With all that being said, here's your writing prompt for this week: write three opening lines to three different stories. Remember that any situation can be compelling if you give the reader a reason to care, so don't hesitate to start with a mundane activity or scene. Once you've written those, see if you can write the rest of the paragraph — and then, maybe a whole story. In your first paragraph, remember to focus on giving the reader a good reason to care about the plot. And be sure to keep the other two opening lines somewhere safe in case you ever need a writing prompt!

CHECK OUT

"You Who Are Without Light"

By Bart Edelman
on Thin Air Online

