

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Writing Prompt: Fevers

Charity Hume · Wednesday, June 25th, 2014

In this week's writing prompt, "Fevers," Charity Hume encourages the writer to explore something we'd rather avoid in life.

Novelists have sometimes used sickness as inspiration: Camus in *The Plague*, Thomas Mann in *Magic Mountain*, Geraldine Brooks in *The Year of Wonders*.

Write about illness, either by researching one you have read about in an article in the media, or even better, one you have witnessed first hand, as a patient or by caring for a loved one. Illness can create a separate world that divides the healthy from the stricken. Give your full attention to the progress of the disease, its effect on the character, the circumstances and changes that result when illness interrupts the patterns of daily life. This can be a light hearted exercise, or one that is a portal into a whole world.

In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee subtly organizes the arc of the novel as Scout tries to remember details about the summer her brother Jem broke his arm. The point here is not to hyper-focus on illness, but to see where the "symptom" or the illness can take you.



The Sick Girl, (1882) by Michael Ancher, courtesy of Wikimedia

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