

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Writing Prompt: The Return

Charity Hume · Wednesday, April 16th, 2014

Charity Hume with this week's writing prompt

Stories of the return are epic and magical. Odysseus endures hardships, war, obstacles and shipwreck before he ultimately evolves into the warrior who can regain his stolen home. But a return doesn't have to be from a literal journey or separation. In one of the West African folk tales about Kiriku, a child with wisdom beyond his years, a sorceress terrorizes a village until Kiriku finds out the secret to her cruelty. It turns out there's a thorn in her heart. When Kiriku removes it, she returns to compassion, forgiveness, mercy and love. A return can be one of the heart, or to a point of view one had previously discredited. A return to health after illness, or reconciliation after an estrangement, can also form the heart of a story.

What "returns" have mattered most to you in your own life? When were you separated from those you cared about? Reflecting and taking notes on these autobiographical experiences will give you a wealth of creative writing material to explore. Brainstorm for ten or fifteen minutes. When you are done, use some of that material to write a story in which a character returns after a separation, either one that is literal or emotional.



Moonlight, The Old House, (1906), by Childe Hassam, courtesy of Wikipaintings

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