Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Writing Prompt: The Hiding Place

Charity Hume · Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014

This week's writing prompt to get your creativity flowing: The Hiding Place.

I was a member of a large family, and throughout my childhood I found various "hiding places" where I could escape the busy clamor of siblings and parents. I sought out places where I could lose myself in books, reading for hours in trees, in a loft in our barn, anywhere beyond the reach of voices calling me to supper. In our family, hiding became a sport in itself. We played a game called "Hide and *Ghost* Seek," when we looked for one another with flashlights in the dark, or "Sardines," when a group of us gradually packed into one tight hiding place till the last player discovered us. As we all grew up, there were more important secrets, and other kinds of hiding places. And those moments of refuge, though harder to find, still call my name.

Think of your own hiding places. More symbolically, think about a time you needed to hide something important: a parental illness that couldn't be shared with a younger sibling; a *rendez-vous* with forbidden friends who had not met with parental approval. What were you hiding and how did you avoid detection? Brainstorm and make a list of all of the different memories.

Then, write a story that draws on a moment where you needed to hide. Your inspiration could be a light-hearted secret, or describe a memory of when you needed to escape forces too large for you to deal with at the time. Let the reader understand the fear of discovery, the motives, the duration and tension of hiding a secret. When you work from specific memories of your own life, you will find seeds for interesting and powerful stories.

Hide and Seek, by William Merritt Chase, (1888), courtesy of Wikipaintings

This entry was posted on Tuesday, July 22nd, 2014 at 4:48 pm and is filed under Fiction
You can follow any responses to this entry through the Comments (RSS) feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.