

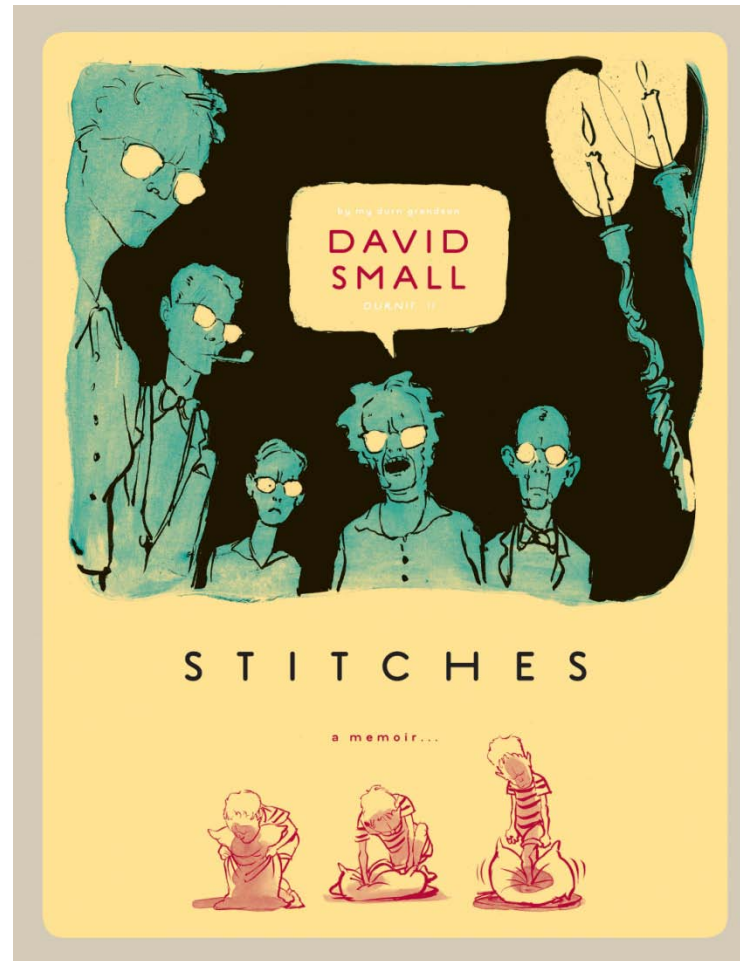
Know Thy Characters, Love Thy Villains

Why it's important to love your characters when writing stories.

Advantages of Loving Characters

- You'll write sympathetic characters
- Knowing your characters fully can propel your plot when you get stuck.
- You will want to write about people you like, even if they are imaginary.
- Your narrative will be richer, which will lead to a more engaged reader. Remember the old adage: Show, don't tell!
- You can use spare dialogue and visual clues rather than internal-monologues and long, overwritten conversations between characters. This all adds up to better crafted stories

Working toward Knowing Characters



Character Sketch

- The analog here is a drawing of a character, a conceptual notion of what the character looks like from whence the character will be understood & further described.

I got this image from the internet. I offer it under 107 of copyright law, for education & not financial gain.



How Do I Get to Know My Characters?

- There is only one way: to write. Write Write Write.

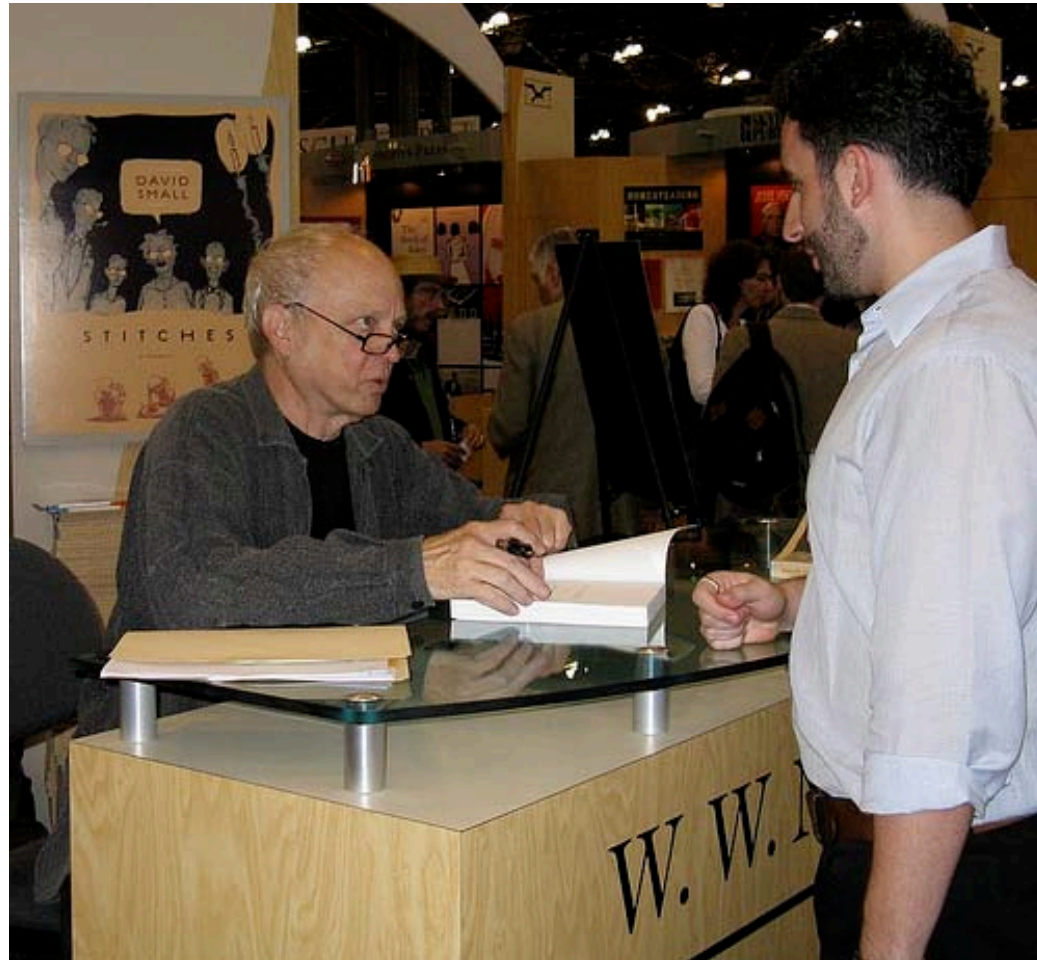
So today we're going to do some writing exercises, or prompts.

Here's the first one:

Answer the following questions about your character (If you're not working on one now, use this opportunity to make one up):

1. What is her job?
2. How does she know her best friend?
3. Does she have a good relationship with her parents?

Time for Sharing and Questions



Another Prompt

- Use the same character or make up a new one. There's a knock on the door. It's Ed McMahon with Publisher's Clearing House saying she's won \$5,000 a week for life. He has one of those phony checks and everything. What is her first thought, second, third? How does she react, and how does the money change her?



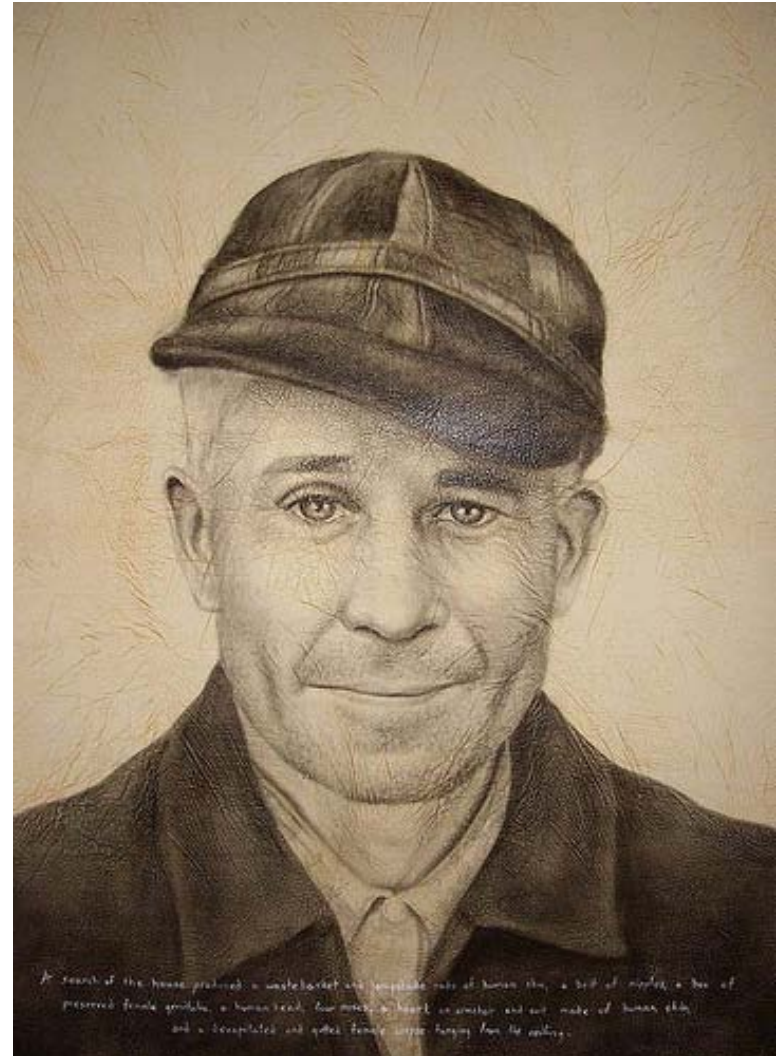
Time for Sharing and Questions



Used under Creative
Commons License,
this photo is from
flickr by
kathrin_reiger

Why Love My Villain As Much As My Hero?

- I think the reason I like serial killer movies is because they *humanize* the serial killer.
- This picture of Ed Gein makes me want to have a campfire with him.
- The conflict in your stories will be much more interesting and easier to figure out if you like your villains as much as you like your heroes.
- Your readers will like it, too.



Villain Prompt

- Who is your villain, how is she bad, and what made her that way? Think about her childhood or her early love relationships or even a medical issue like a long-ignored allergy .



From H.I.L.T. on Flickr.com

Time for Sharing and Questions



From malias on
Flickr.com

Villain Prompt

- Use the same villain. What would her first thought be if Ed McMahon showed up to tell her she won Publisher's Clearing House?



By Mussitation from Flickr.com

Time for Sharing & Questions



This is from Flickr
User Dickuhne

The End. See You Next Time



This is from Flickr
User Karen Roe