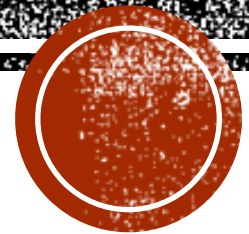


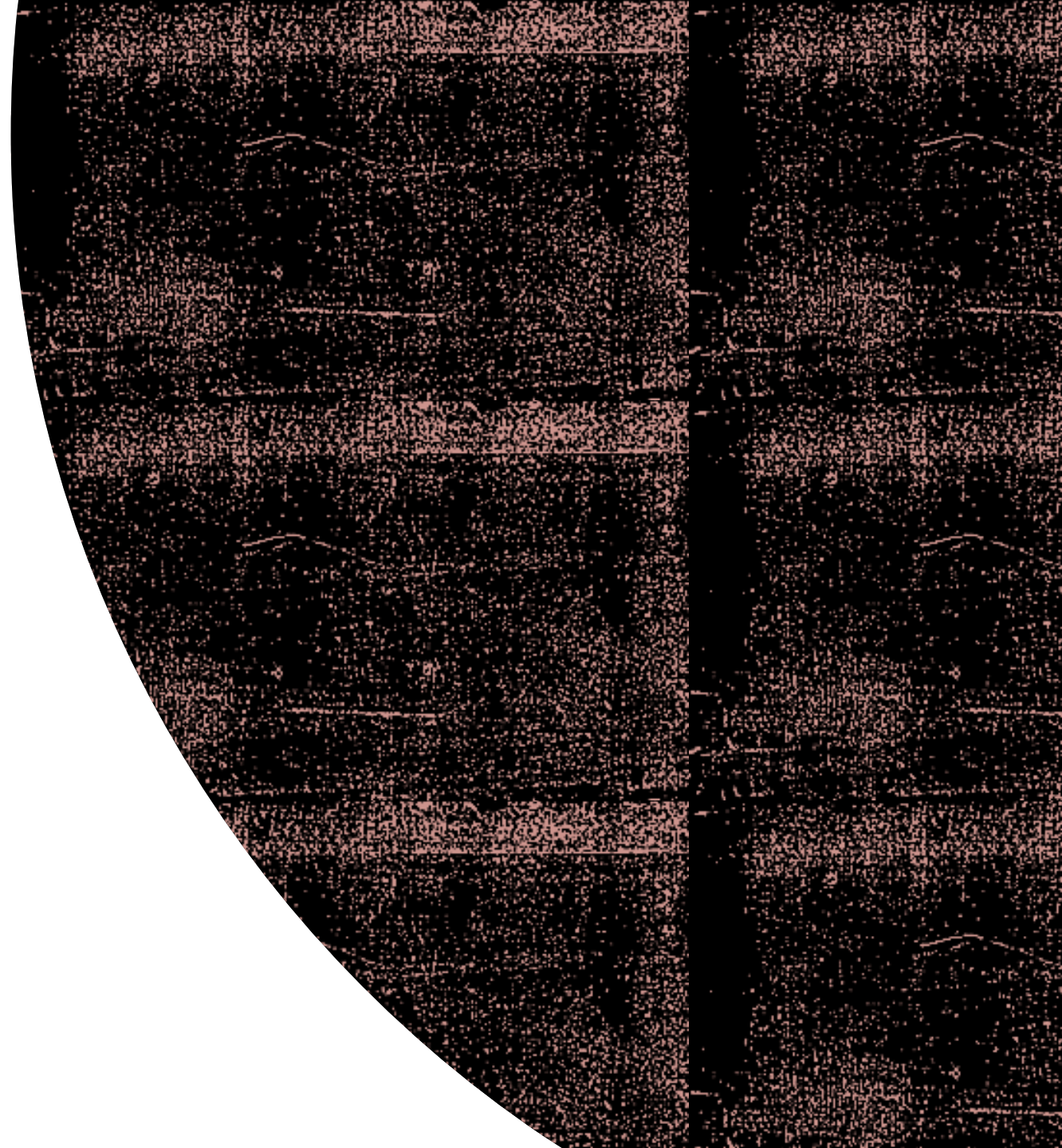
A Creative Writing Workshop
By Dustin Grinnell





PROFESSOR VS. PROVOCATEUR

- Many people want to write, but seem to struggle to produce or finish work
- The intangibles of writing
- The professor vs. the provocateur
 - How to write (professor) vs. inspiring to write (provocateur)
 - Discussing literary theory (professor) vs. showing the writing process (provocateur)
 - Teach (professor) vs. dare (provocateur)



WHAT'S YOUR GENRE?

- What genre do you like most?
 - Share on the board!
- What do you want to start writing today? Share!
 - Fiction examples: Short story, novel, screenplay.
 - Nonfiction examples: Poem, article, essay, memoir.

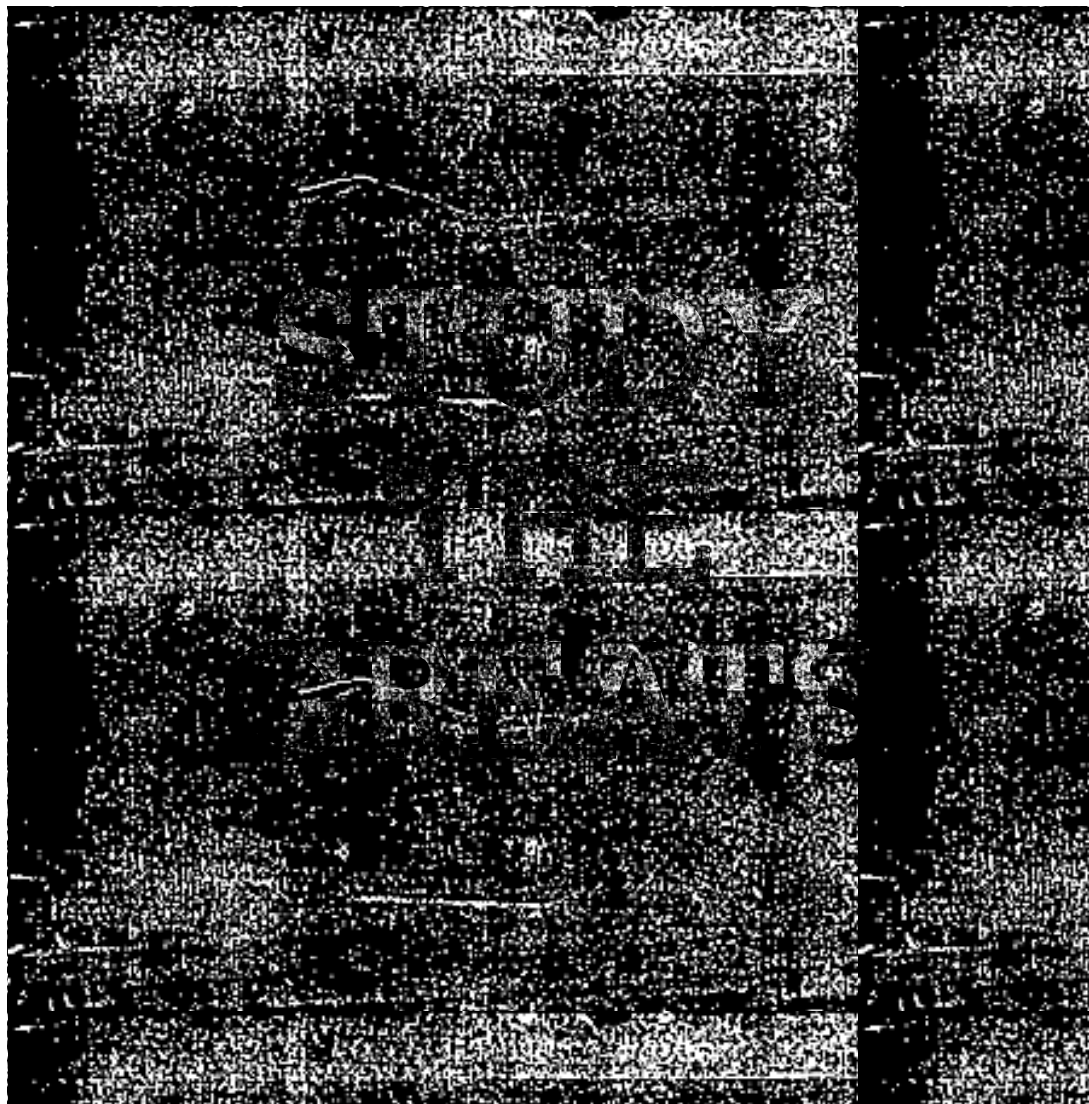


MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT WRITING

- Misconception #1: You have to be motivated to start writing.
- Misconception #2: Ideas need to be fully formed before you start.
- Misconception #3: Not everyone is born with “talent.”
- Your taste will exceed your abilities at the start. See “The Gap” with Ira Glass.







“Ivan Ivanych came out of the cabin, plunged into the water with a splash and swam in the rain, thrusting his arms out wide; he raised waves on which white lilies swayed. He swam out to the middle of the river and dived and a minute later came up in another spot and swam on and kept diving, trying to touch bottom. “By God!” he kept repeating delightedly, “by God!” He swam to the mill, spoke to the peasants there, and turned back and in the middle of the river lay floating, exposing his face to the rain. Burkin and Alyohin were already dressed and ready to leave, but he kept on swimming and diving. “By God!” he kept exclaiming, “Lord, have mercy on me.”

“You’ve had enough!” Burkin shouted to him.

– Anton Chekov, “Gooseberries”

PRO TIP: #3 SHOW, DON'T TELL

- The writing advice “show, don’t tell” is 80% of the game.
- Great example of this rule from Anton Chekov’s short story, “Gooseberries.”
- Saunders calls this description of a woman’s beauty “the best proof of a character’s beauty in all of literature.”

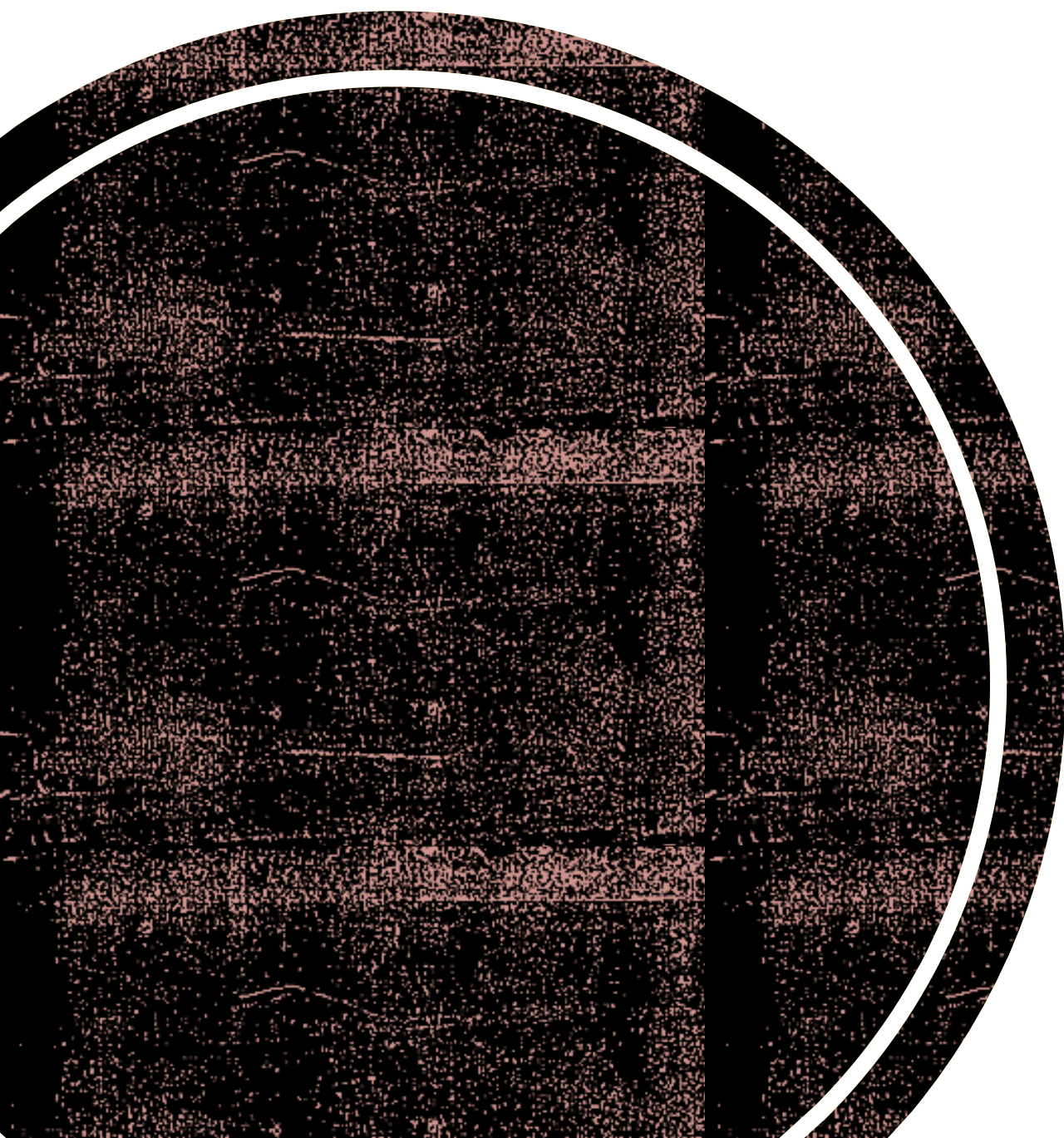
“Once in the house, the two visitors were met by a chambermaid, a young woman so beautiful that both of them stood still at the same moment and glanced at each other.”

THE GREAT GATSBY

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, 1925

He smiled understandingly—much more than understandingly. It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance in it, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced—or seemed to face—the whole eternal world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor. It understood you just as far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself, and assured you that it had precisely the impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey.

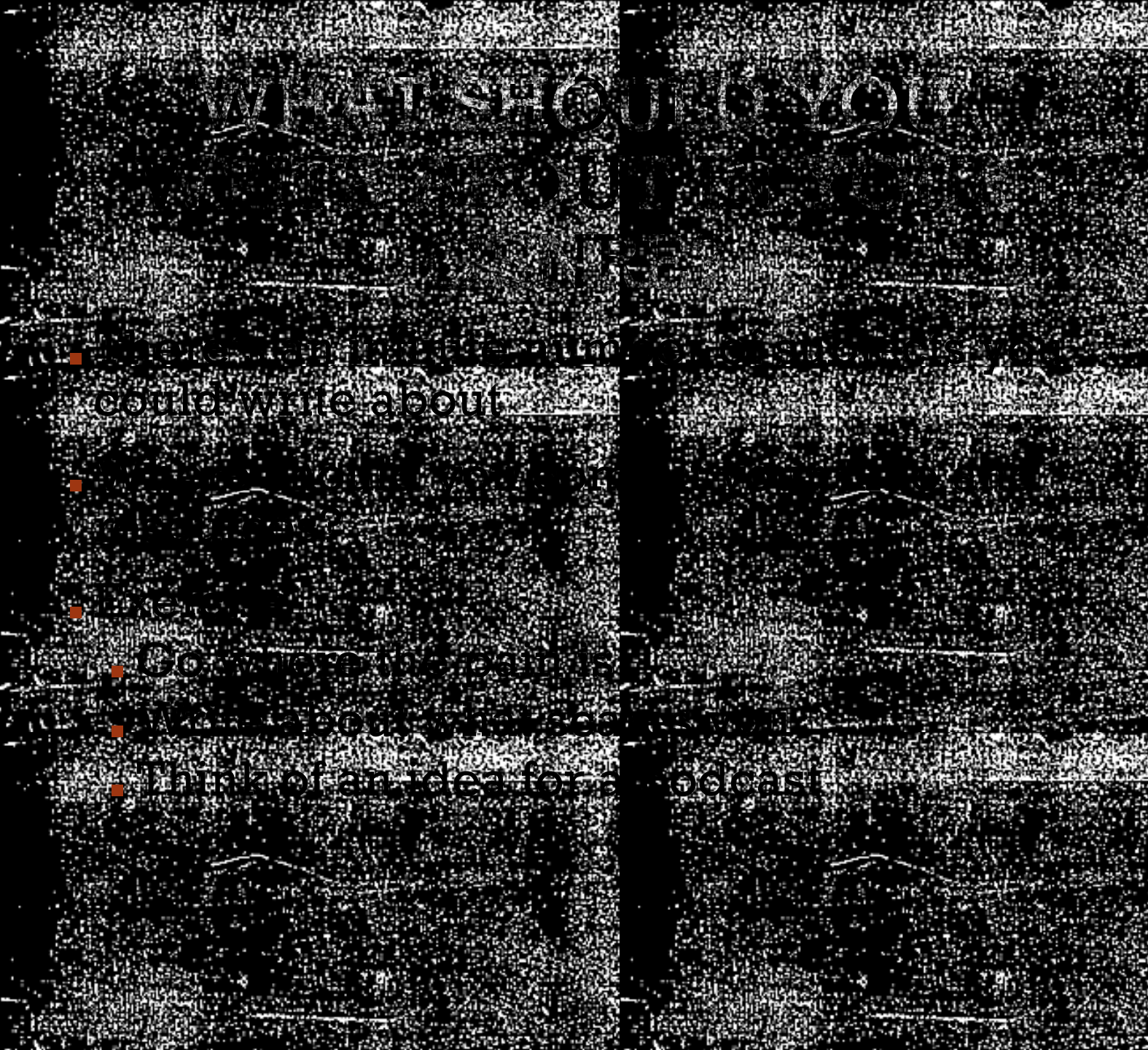




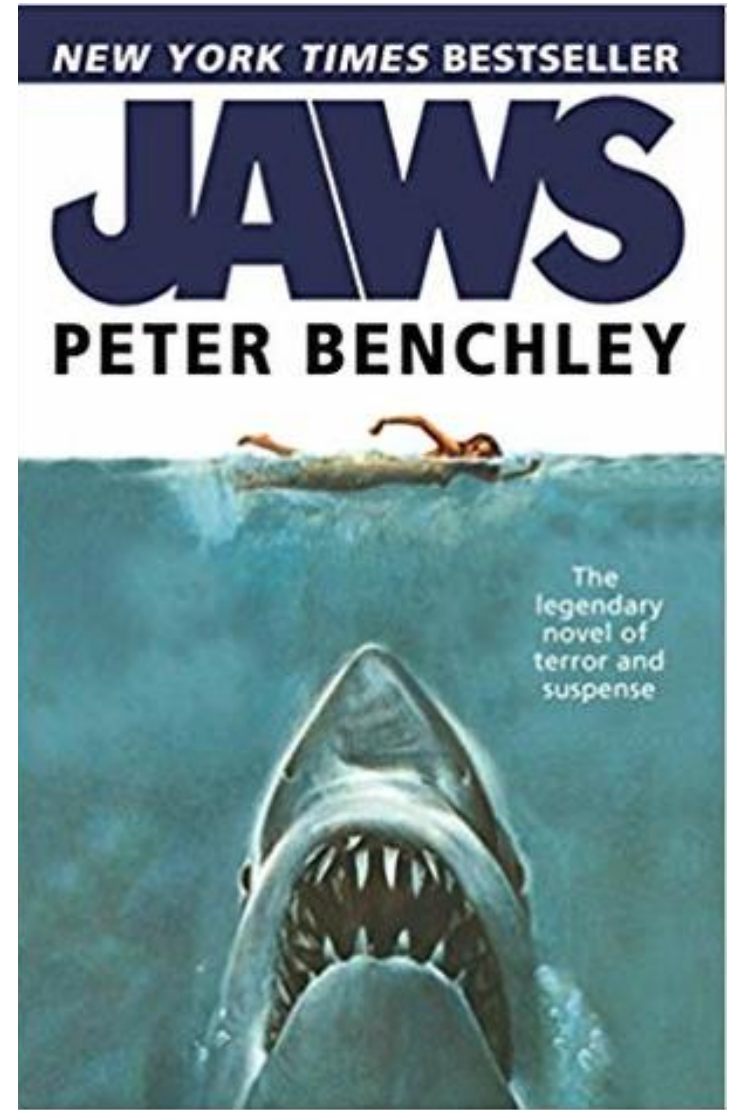
WHERE DO YOU GET IDEAS?

- From your brain, silly!
- Monitor your thoughts, record them in a notebook or note-taking software.
- Let's try it. Look inward. What have you been thinking about?
- Write down your thoughts. What's most interesting to you.





- There are a lot of things you could write about
- Do you have a personal experience?
- Write about it
- Think of an idea for a podcast



“Everything I've written is based on something that has happened to me or something that I know a great deal about.” - Peter

Benchley





THE FUTURE IS NOW



WRITE IN SCENE

- Write in scenes to immerse your reader
- See Lauren Slater's essay, "Three Spheres"
- Write a scene in your story
- Show, don't tell!

"So who wants to take the case?" Dr. Siley, the director of the outpatient portion of the unit where I work, asks. He folds the initial intake evaluation from which he's been reading back into its green file.

None of the other clinicians offer. A woman as outrageously demanding and consistently suicidal as this one is would add a lot of pressure to anyone's job. Ellen looks away. Veronica busies herself with the pleats on her skirt. The staff room stays quiet.

"What about you?" Dr. Siley says, looking in my direction. He knows my numbers are down. My job description states I'm responsible for seeing at least twenty outpatients, in addition to the chronic schizophrenics in the residential program.

"Well," I say, "she sounds like a lot of work."

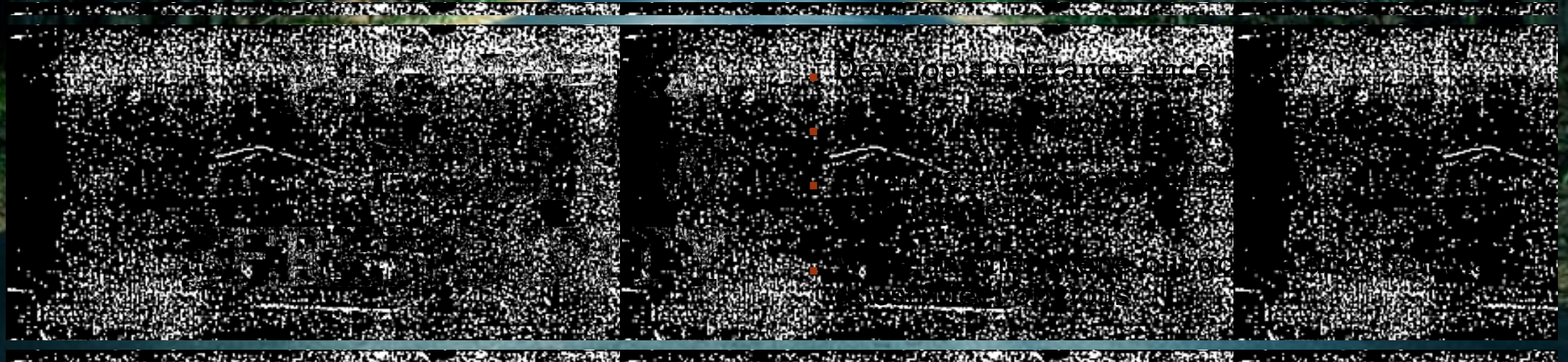
"Who isn't?" Veronica says.

"Why don't you take her then?" I say.

"I'm full," Veronica says.

"And you aren't," Dr. Siley adds, pushing the file across the table toward me.

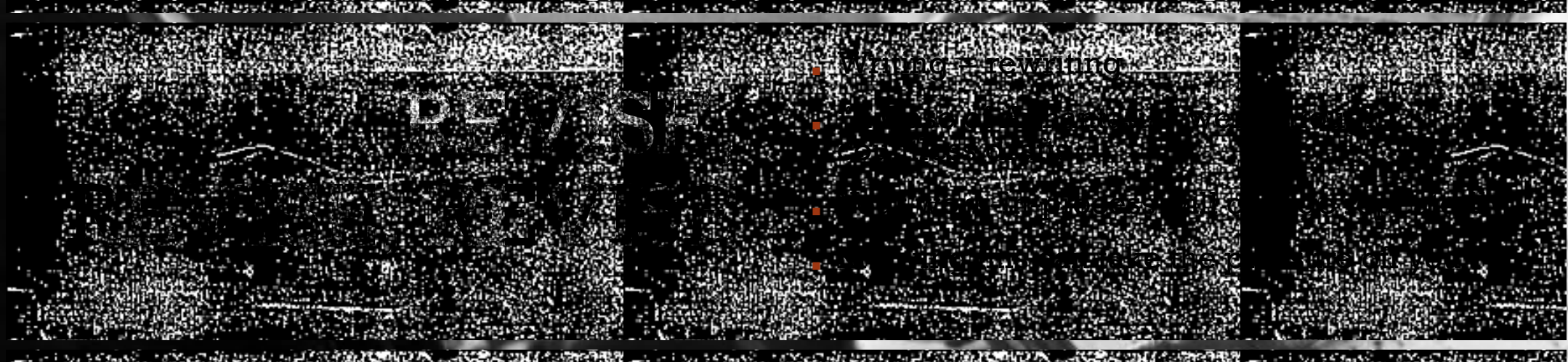


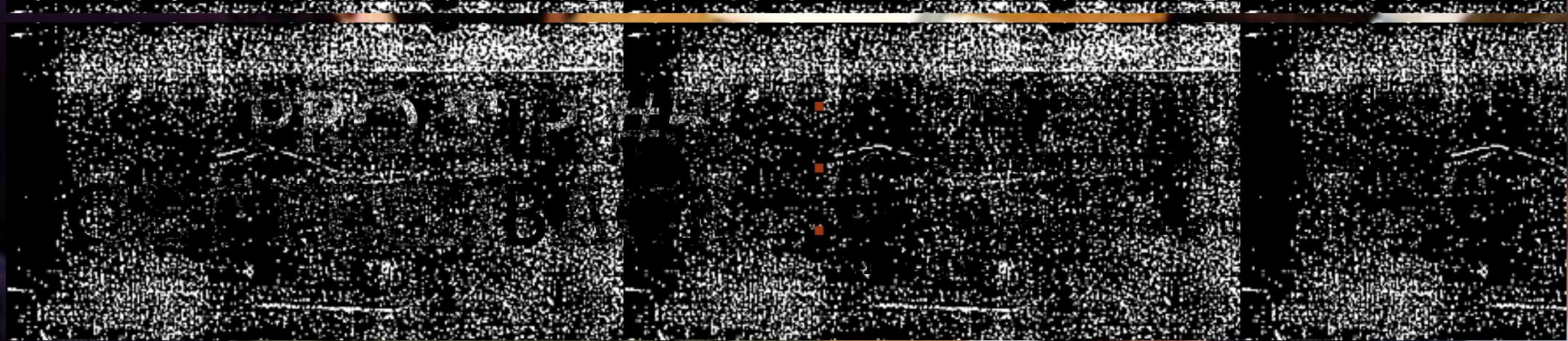


WRITE A SUMMARY OF YOUR STORY

- Summarize your writing project to limit possibilities
- See the summary of my short story, “A Case of Aphantasia.”
- Write a summary of your work-in-progress now.







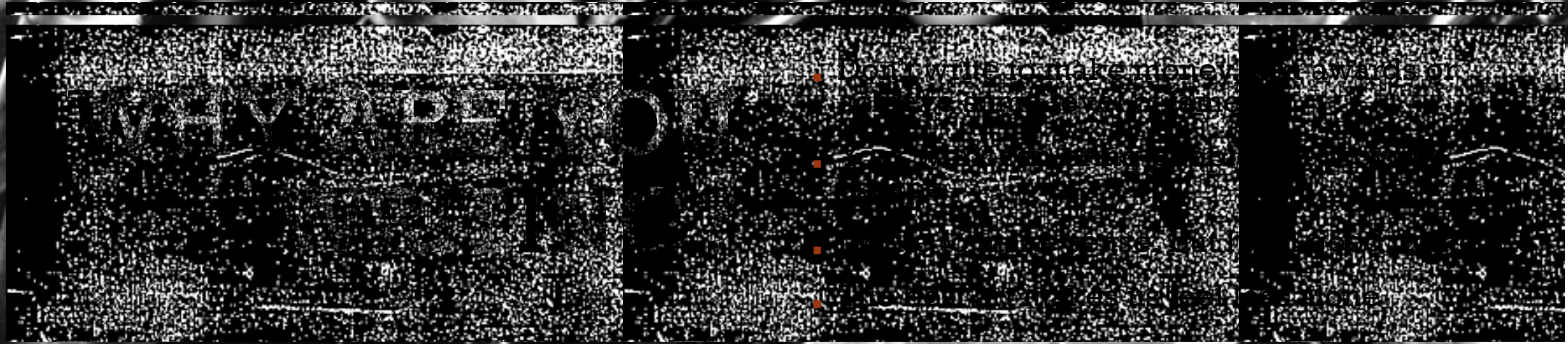
**never
never
never
give
up**

(winston churchill)

THE BUSINESS OF WRITING

- Find your voice and edit your work mercilessly before trying to publish
- Where do writers you admire publish? Submit there.
- Always be professional with industry professionals
- Submit often
- Never give up





DARE TO WRITE

- I'll leave you with a few dares:
 - Finish what you started today
 - Start something you've want to write
 - Register for a creative writing class
 - Ask a friend for feedback
 - Submit your work for publication

