

**Carve Magazine** (fall 2011—Vol. XII Issue III)

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Web Address: [www.carvemagazine.com](http://www.carvemagazine.com)

What they publish: Publishes fiction under 10,000 words including novel excerpts if they can stand alone as a short story. Does not accept genre fiction or poetry.

Submission Guidelines: Submit only one short story at a time and wait for a response before sending out another.

Accepts simultaneous submissions. Payment depends on available funding. Compensation varies between \$20-\$50.

All authors are paid the same rate per story within a single issue. Does not accept submissions by e-mail. Charges a \$3 reading fee if submitted through Submishmash (comparable to the cost of postage). Include a brief cover letter and contact information.

Description of Publication: “The magazine is named in honor of Raymond Carver, short story artist and master of the “minimalist” form.” They “strive to publish fiction that is both concise and generous.” They also want to promote the writers they publish by reaching a large literary audience through a variety of publication mediums.

Prose Per Issue/Annually: Published quarterly. Averages 3-4 stories per issue (about 12-16/year)

Prose Reviews:

*Whiskey and Ribbons* by Leesa Cross-Smith is a realistic story told in the first person, present tense in a domestic setting. It chronicles the life of a woman named Evangeline six months after her husband, a police officer named Eamon, is gunned down by a teenager. With a five month-old child and a friend named Dalton (who was also friends with Eamon) living with her, her emotions are torn between holding onto the memory of her husband and following her desire for Dalton. On one particular day, Evangeline, wanting some rest, leaves Noah at her mother's house to be watched. Throughout the evening, she and Dalton get drunk while she worries about what would happen if he left her for a family of his own. Passion overflows within her, and she cannot help but kiss him. At the end of the evening, she can only hope that something will come along to heal her.

The story is able to pull my interest directly from the start and does not let go even after the conclusion. Through the use of rhythm, repetition, and simplistic language that lacerates the heart, the story captures the powerful emotions one feels after the loss of a spouse. The healing time, never an easy process, is made all the more complicated once one is thinking about “moving on.” One of the best instances in which the reader can hear the flow of the narrator's voice is when she thinks about what would happen after Dalton leaves her, when he has his own

son. "I hate thinking about it I hate thinking about it I hate thinking about it so I try to make myself stop. I go to the freezer for the bottle of whiskey." Through flashback, I get a sense of what her relationships were like with her husband, Eamon, and how her feelings that she had for him slowly wash away for feelings for Dalton.

*Stalled Symphony* by Liesl Wilke is a realistic story told in the third person, present tense in a domestic setting. Throughout the story, we get a brief glimpse into the lives of several different women and children in the peach-tiled women's bathroom of Hearthstone Mall. A fifteen year-old is disgusted by her over-protective mother who, on one occasion, took her to Dr. Dipshit (as the girl calls him) when she mentions the slow, runny flow of her vagina. Later on, it is revealed that within the hour, the fifteen-year-old will "have very bad sex with the Radio Shack salesman in the stock room and contract Chlamydia." A German woman named Marta is trying to empty her bowels, but only gas will come out. She is taking refuge in the bathroom away from her sister. A young mother struggles to change the diaper of her daughter, who is difficult to deal with. It's revealed that she secretly cannot stand her child along with her role as housewife. Finally, a college student suffers from bulimia, one of many "diseases in vogue," according to an elderly woman in the bathroom.

The story cannot be lumped into one, but is rather a composite of stories that are extracted from the characters by the omniscient narrator. The reader goes along a ride as the narrator jumps from one character to next, one stall to the next. Small glimpses of their personalities are given, just enough to characterize them, to label them with such names as: "troubled teenager", "unsatisfied housewife", "bulimic college student", and so on. What make the pieces startling and interesting are the short thoughts that are given from each of the troubled characters about each other. In this way, the characters are knitted together in a quilt of compassion, sorrow, and hope. The author does a fantastic job of weaving her voice as the overall story-teller and the narrative voice of each individual character.

Rating: 9. The site is easy to navigate. The editors present a friendly environment where their passion for quality literature is evident and encouraging to both readers and writers. They are open to new writers and writers who have a few credits under their belt. Provides an excellent array of fiction.