

Dark Sky Magazine – Online journal

Steve Tartaglione

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Editor: Kevin Murphy

Website: www.darksourcemagazine.com

What They Publish: Fiction, nonfiction, film reviews, photography, art

Submission Guidelines: Submit previously unpublished work as an e-mail attachment to

editor@darksourcemagazine.com. Dark Sky accepts submissions year-round. Prose must not exceed 5,000 words.

Description of Publication: The website is clean and easily navigated. One story is published each week. The contributors are varied, though most have been published in numerous other independent and university literary journals.

Prose Per Issue: 20 percent each week

Prose Reviews:

Sister by Michael McManus is a close, first-person narrative in a domestic setting. The narrator, his mother, and their neighbor, Mr. Jenkins, travel to Logger's Ridge to scatter Sissy's ashes after her memorial service. Mr. Jenkins, 62 years old and a drinker, takes the urn as they reach the summit and begins to mumble a few words of condolence. The story ends with Mr. Jenkins, perceptibly tipsy, accidentally dropping the urn down the ridge, scattering ashes in gusts as the urn tumbles down the mountainside.

Falling just under 500 words, *Sister* is a well-written and evocative short-short. The prose is clean and direct. While the reader only knows that Sissy is a sister, the lack of description does not inhibit the effectiveness of the story, nor does it hinder the sense of sorrow and, near the end, the profound shock of watching one's ashes scatter down a mountain ridge.

The Client Chair by Werner Low is a close, third-person narrative in a domestic setting. Fabian attends an introductory one-on-one session with Mr. Po, a man who Fabian believes to be a master of meditation. Fabian has difficulties clearing his mind, though Mr. Po says that he never asked Fabian to do so. Mr. Po, with his eyes closed, as they have been the entire session, then admits he was thinking about whether to move the client chair closer to the window. Fabian, surprised by Mr. Po's candor, begins to picture himself in the chair and his spatial relationship in the room, and comments that the room would, in fact, work better if the chair was moved. The session, and the story, ends with Fabian wondering whether the chair will be moved next week.

This short-short is driven by dialogue and internal thoughts of the narrator, which gives the reader a good sense of scene and character. The room, Mr. Po, and Fabian's relationship to both are meticulously described. Fabian is nervous and almost disappointed by the lack of a conventional, if not wholly stereotypical, Zen-like environment. The sense of anxiety, confusion, and mild disappointment is the driving force of the story, giving validation to the sense of wonder Fabian possesses in the culmination of the story.

Rating: 7. The experience of the contributors is varied, however most have had other stories published in a wide array of journals and magazines. A sizeable portion of contributors are current English professors. But there are contributors who are emerging writers, some who have only a few publications. The rating is a bit on the high side,

given the experience of the contributors, because of the frequency of new work appearing on the site. For this reason, an emerging writer might choose, and rightly so, to play the odds and submit to this online magazine.