

Necessary Fiction

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Editor: Steve Himmer

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Web Address: <http://necessaryfiction.com>

What They Publish: Fiction

Submission Guidelines: Short stories of 2000 words or less can be submitted via email.

Simultaneous submissions are allowed, but multiple submissions are discouraged.

Description of Publication: From So New Publishing, Necessary Fiction is an online zine with a bare-bones, blog-style site, updated with a new story every Wednesday.

Prose Per Issue: 100% prose / 1 story / 52 per year

Prose Reviews:

Marionettes by David Erlewine is a plainspoken, realistic story in a domestic setting. The unnamed narrator describes his life after his long-time girlfriend disappears one night while jogging. He is forced to interact with his girlfriend's mother, who has become obsessed with sending her daughter emails which the narrator ultimately reads himself, leaving him feeling voyeuristic. In the end, he begins to believe he can recognize potential abductors in crowds and feels the urge to shout things like "Let her go, man," to strangers.

The narrator directly addresses his missing girlfriend, starting the story with the sentence, "You never could get used to waking up early, flipping to HBO, and grinding out a few miles on the treadmill." This gives a sense of familiarity and intimacy to the voice, which increases the emotional resonance of the story. The voice also gives richness to the awkward relationship between him and her mother. Brief details like "I let her talk about where you might be and what you might be doing. She once mentioned Munich," elegantly show the disconnected, uncomfortable relationship the two have as a result of being close to the same missing person.

Arizona's Lonely by Rachel Yoder is a plainspoken story in an domestic setting. Jacks, the narrator, tells three stories about the period of her life in which she graduates from an MFA program and moves from one city in Arizona to another. In the first story, she sits with a friend drinking beer and discussing the sexual prowess of different types of authors. In the second she has a male acquaintance help her move. When he leaves, he forgets a t-shirt that she ends up regarding as a keepsake. In the last story she speaks to

another friend who tells her the story of a punk boy she once loved.

The structure of *Arizona's Lonely* is absolutely lovely. Jacks is plagued with loneliness and this is conveyed to the reader without the use of a traditional plot line. The effect is cumulative and the prose never feels heavy-handed. Jacks's need for connection is apparent in the first instance where she says, "I thought about how I didn't want to fall asleep that night, and how I hadn't been in love for what seemed like my whole life." It continues building through the next two instances, and ends on a gorgeous note. Jacks urges her friend, who has missed out on a change at love with an odd-ball punk boy, to express her feelings by writing it down. The last line "For God's sake, write that down, too," brings beauty, symmetry, and emotional closure

Rating: 7. Necessary Fiction is a brand new endeavor that is off to a very strong start. The fiction selected so far is lovely and well-written. Some authors have been highly published, but not all of them. So New and Necessary Fiction's focus on the online lit zine scene makes them a great venue for an emerging writer to publish a story.