

Swink

Reviewer: Jeffrey Brennan

Editor: Darcy Cospet

April 2007

Website: www.swinkmag.com

What They Publish: Fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry and interviews

Submission Guidelines: Submissions must come one at a time and be previously unpublished in English. Standard Formatting, SASE required, but no word-count restrictions. E-mailed and faxed submissions not allowed.

Description of Publication: Biannual, bi-coastal publication with a clean, easily navigated Web site. They categorize their work under some peculiar themes, one of which being Damaged Darlings. These are stories abandoned by one author and picked up and finished by another. I think it's a novel concept.

Percentage of Prose Per Issue / Amount of Prose Published Annually: 55% / 20 stories online

Prose Reviews:

Under Water, Under Rock by Genanne Walsh is a plainspoken, realistic story in a domestic setting, told in the third person. It opens with Tracy waking up in her car, stiff, tired and probably pregnant. She has six hundred dollars in cash and some blood on her shoe. Her skin is dry from being in the river. She checks into a motel under a false name, stays inside for a week, during that time her thoughts allude to Jim who is no longer around. One night she goes out to the river and thinks how beautiful it looks. She skips out on the motel bill.

This story read like the above paragraph; a simple fact police blotter. What I was left with was a weary apathy as there were no feelings whatsoever from this character involved in so much suggested drama.

Tramp by Ginger Strand is a plainspoken, realistic story in a domestic setting. It is told through a close, third-person narrator, and is about Kathy, a young woman out with her friends for Abby's bachelorette party. As they make their way through the evening from the restaurant to the clubs in a limo, Kathy thinks about Barry, her 40-year-old boyfriend, who likes to wear dresses and get chained up during sex. He also happens to be Kathy's community college professor who's written a book. Kathy has avoided asking to read it up to this evening. While the girls are out on the town, small moments of bitterness and distance arise as they have all changed in their own ways in the last year after high school. In the end, Kathy decides that she is going to ask Barry about his novel.

This story, which has so many characters, was well balanced by Strand. The women come through as individuals with quick sights and dialogue. What I liked was the complexity of Kathy who was both turned on and angered by her boyfriend's sexual behavior, and the subtle clues that this circle of friends was breaking up.

Publication Rating: 8. Swink delivers some pretty good work by both emerging and established writers. Not all of it was fantastic, but overall it seems to be a decent place to begin a career.