

Writing Challenge 5.0: Short Short Fiction

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According to Wikipedia, short short fiction contain “the classic story elements: protagonist, conflict, obstacles or complications, and resolution. However, unlike the case with a traditional short story, the limited word length often forces some of these elements to remain unwritten, that is, hinted at or implied in the written storyline. This principle, taken to the extreme, is illustrated in a possibly apocryphal story about a six-word flash allegedly penned by Ernest Hemingway: ‘For sale: baby shoes, never worn’” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flash_fiction). For this writing challenge, you will take Hemingway’s lead and find a recent classifieds ad (from a newspaper or Craigslist) and use that ad as inspiration for a short short story. Like poetry, short short fiction (sometimes called flash fiction) is all about compression of language, about telling details, and about careful decisions about what to show, to leave out, or leave inferred. You have up to 300 words (only) to develop setting, character, plot, and purpose. Choose your words wisely. You will copy or attach the ad to the back of your paper. Your story does not have to be a literal translation of the ad; the text of the classified ad need not appear in your short short story.

Guidelines and Due Dates

Format: 1-2 pages, up to 300 words, typed, double-spaced, no title page, proper heading
Include a copy of the classified ad

Due: Thursday, July 14, at the start of class

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