

Magazine Title: StoryChord

Editor: Sarah Lynn Knowles

Web Address: www.storychord.com

What They Publish: fiction, multi-media/visual art, soundtracks

Submission Guidelines: All submissions are held in consideration for six months. For Fiction, submit a body of work in an “.rft” attachment to storychord@yahoo.com. Include a bio with any publication credits. Visual artists should submit links to portfolios and attachments to the email listed above.

Description of Publication: StoryChord publishes one fictional story that is paired with a soundtrack and an image every other Monday on their website. Each published piece is from a different, underexposed artist. The songs and images that accompany the stories appear on the same page and relate to the story’s theme in some way.

Prose Per Issue: A new piece is published every other Monday.

Prose Reviews: “Treading Water” by Amanda Miska, is a first person, realistic story. The narrator has taken a break from teaching to go on vacation in Mexico. Her father-in-law, Inez, and his young, gorgeous girlfriend accompany them. While on the trip, the narrator begins to notice her father-in-law’s passionate relationship with his girlfriend, as uncomfortable as it is to watch. She then begins to question her own relationship and reflects on the static nature of her husband. As the families board the airplane, the narrator softly tells her husband that they should take a break for a while. He agrees but gently squeezes her hand before the plane takes off.

The dialog is the driving force behind this story. The voices are well captured, leaving very little need for dialog tags. The passive information revealed through dialog is a nice juxtaposition compared to that of revealing character gestures and internal narration. All these elements combined drive the story to its end, when the narrator finally comes to terms with her deteriorating relationship. The story is broken up into a series of instances that happen while the couples are on vacation. While these scenes are simplistic plot-wise, each instance reveals something new about the narrator, making the scenes effective, and they also allow the reader to see a full character arc from the narrator.

“The Crow” by Lena Valencia is a plainspoken, third person realistic short story. Maggie is forced to interact with her mother-in-law while she waits for her husband to come home from work so they can all go out to dinner. As Maggie and her mother-in-law wait, they stand in the baby’s bedroom, watching the baby cry. Maggie is trying a self-soothing parenting technique while the mother-in-law argues against this kind of parenting. The cries become unbearable and

Maggie's spouse is still running late from work. Meanwhile, a crow sitting on the tree outside the baby's bedroom window is crowing and the baby begins to mimic it. Maggie decides to film the interaction between the bird and the baby, and runs to get a camera. As she leaves, the crow swoops in through the window and takes the baby away. Maggie ignores the screams as she searches for the camera.

The Crow's dialog is very similar to Treading Water, as this is the driving force of the story's movement. We learn much about Maggie's character through her dialog and her terse interactions with her mother-in-law. The overall storyteller point of view is also an effective way for us to see Maggie from a distance. This happens when the point of view switches to the crow's, who is watching the interactions from a tree outside the bedroom. This distance also helps the audience understand Maggie's immature and careless parenting, and makes her ignorance to the baby's cries much more believable to the audience.

Rating: 8. While most of the writers in this magazine have been previously published, many of their first publications have been through StoryChord. It is highly encouraged by StoryChord's mission that new artists submit.