

JH: I read this piece very carefully and I must say that I am at a dead loss as to how to critique what I'm reading because I simply don't understand what you are trying to write. What sort of piece is it? It reminds me of free style poetry but I still don't get it. You're sentences are elegant and beautiful. You are great at describing things in detail probably too much detail at the expense of plot and character development. I am reminded of Bob Dylan's songs that are a string of images set to music that doesn't follow a story line but the images make an emotional connection with what he's trying to say. For example:

Johnny's in the basement
Mixing up the medicine
I'm on the pavement
Thinking about the government
The man in the trench coat
Badge out, laid off
Says he's got a bad cough
Wants to get it paid off
Look out kid
It's somethin' you did
God knows when
But you're doin' it again
You better duck down the alley way
Lookin' for a new friend
The man in the coon-skin cap
In the big pen
Wants eleven dollar bills
You only got ten

If this is a novel, you need a believable character, a place setting, a time setting, dialogue, and a story line. What you have are images set in a stream of consciousness. I simply cannot get my hands into what is going on here. We know at first its set in the USA because you mention Idaho but then later on it seems to be set in Venice Italy. We need to know who the subject of the piece is. What is he/she's name? You have lots of made up words in here as well as some that had me scrambling to a dictionary. Reminds me of the author who described a character as: He was sartorially replete and tonsorially perfect. Well, to the average reader that means nothing. Keep your language simple and clear. Saying, he was nicely dressed with a perfect haircut would be easier for most to understand. Do you understand what I'm getting at here? Entopic, anodyne, louring, crepuscular, begreyened (what a made up doozey is that one) and finally the renitence of the rind. God lord, even my dictionary didn't list that one. Reminds me of a buddy of mine who was asked to pray aloud in church years ago. He tossed in a fifty dollar word in his prayer that he must have looked up in a medical encyclopedia. Nobody but he and God knew what he was talking about and it was all I could do to keep from laughing out loud with a snort. God probably did too. I made a few remarks on the manuscript with question marks on what I couldn't understand. Please, if you are writing a novel, find a good author to two and read what they are

writing and try to imitate their style. Get Renni Browne's book, self editing for writers and do her exercises there. Don't get discouraged but go back to the drawing board and try again.

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