

Here is some correspondence working with 2 past clients

I agree that most of the stories share the coming of age, Vietnam, New Jersey elements you were looking to showcase. It is evident you have become an even better writer. I feel the stories flow very well, even the ones that stand alone and do not share the elements you mentioned. I do have a couple of questions re: Crossing Cali's Wires and The Neighborhood.

In Cali's, it seems that the conversation she first hears in the elevator between the pair on the intercom is much more menacing than it at last resolves itself to be. This heightened tension is carried throughout until, in the final intercom conversation, it comes across as little more than a lover's spat. (And the poor guy who dies in the subway, are we to assume he's just left there and no one ever finds him??) :) *They are playacting. You see that a lot. Cali wouldn't be able to tell.*

While I applaud the fact that almost everyone in the story makes it out alive, the resolution makes what promised at first to be the main event of the story (thus worth all the tension your readers feel) seem to be little more than an afterthought. Maybe it wasn't meant to be written that way, but that's how it came across to me.

*This story is an early experiment with setting up expectations and delivering reversals. Cali is a character who sees the world as a mystery to be solved, a story to be uncovered, a justice to be severed. The guy on the train just died, there is no way she (or anyone really) could find out more about him. This happens all the time in cities.*

As to whether or not you should strengthen the Vietnam link in The Neighborhood...I don't think you need to. But that's your call. Based upon your portrayal of Robbie, I see we are dealing with a kid in his early teens. How much attention would one really expect a 12-14 year old to pay re: a war in Southeast Asia? What you do have in the story, the war as an undercurrent, seems more than enough given Robbie's age and family life.

Thanks for your notes, Nessie! They've been helpful, and I can't wait to read all your notes on the full manuscript! I took out the lisp reference, and I changed the seat belt quote a bit. I did some research and it looks basically impossible that Robert would die wearing a seat belt under these circumstances. Do you think this works okay?

*"He didn't have his seat belt on. Lukas said he took it off for a second, to reach for something in the back seat. His head hit the windshield. They couldn't stop the bleeding..."*

This way readers are left wondering what Robert was reaching for, and it would of course be a part of Book 2, if I write Book 2. Here's the deal with a sequel right now. I'm going to wait and see how this one

does. If it sells well, I'll write a sequel. I already have some ideas for a second one, so cross your fingers the readers snap it up!

Looking over your notes, I notice you asked, "Is Robert the kind of guy who wouldn't wear a seat belt?" My thought is that Robert is Absolutely the kind of guy who Would wear a seat belt. So, you may want to rethink the scene.

N.

On Tue, Aug 27, 2013 at 2:47 PM, Nessie Siler <[nessie.siler90@gmail.com](mailto:nessie.siler90@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Brian,

Okay. I've gone over line by line, and made my notes, which I'll put on sticky notes in the text for you. The sex scenes seemed to me to be good... I don't quite know why you were worried. (This is coming from a woman happily married for about 10 years...)

I felt there was enough heat to keep things quite interesting, without going too far. Which age group were you considering this piece for? Teens or adults? I assume teens. I'll be happy to look back through again and work on any of those scenes you found particularly vexing, but I feel they were just right.

Are you working on a sequel to this one? I ended my read wanting to turn the next page for more, and then realized there were no more pages. :)

Nessie

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