

“It was a dark, blustery afternoon in spring, and the city of London was chasing a small mining town across the dried-out bed of the Old North Sea.”

- Philip Reeve, *Mortal Engines*

“Matthew Steelgate had five cents in his pocket and a yearning for chewing gum and liquorice. He wasn’t sure which he wanted most, but knew he could buy both and have a penny left over.”

- Arthur Slade, *Dust*

“The sky above the port was the color of television, tuned to a dead channel”

—William Gibson’s, *Neuromancer*

“Whatever happened to Saturday night? The kind of Saturday night you looked forward to all week because you knew you were going to spend it with someone you liked a lot, maybe even loved, someone who was looking forward to spending it with you, too. That kind of Saturday night.

-Lois Simmie, *They Shouldn’t Make You Promise That*

News item from Westover (ME.) weekly enterprise, August 19, 1966

Rain of stones reported

It was reliably reported by several persons that a rain of stones fell from a clear blue sky on Carlin Street in the town of Chamberlain on August 17th

—Stephen King, *Carrie*

“They say Maniac Magee was born in a dump. They say his stomach was a cereal box and his heart a sofa spring.”

- Jerry Spinelli, *Maniac Magee*

“His followers called him Mahasamatman and said he was a god. He preferred to drop the Maha- and the -atman, however, and called himself Sam. He never claimed to be a god. But then, he never claimed not to be a god. Circumstances being what they were, neither admission could be of any benefit. Silence, though, could.”

Lord of Light, Roger Zelazny

“In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit.”

- JRR Tolkien, *The Hobbit*

On the afternoon of his seventh birthday, I set Bobby Clarke on fire.

- Gail Giles, *Right Behind You*

A few ways to start a story.

- 1) *Slow & Thoughtful beginning with the slightest hook*
- 2) *Introduce a character through other person's point of view/tall tale*
- 3) *Start with a sense of place*
- 4) *Let the newspaper start your story.*
- 5) *Start off in the middle of the action. Or with dialogue. Or with an ending.*
- 6) *Giving the reader a left hook.*

Things to think about while building your beginning:

1. *Write like a Rolling Stone. That is build momentum.*
2. *Don't start at the very, very very very beginning.*
3. *Use small hooks. The more explosive the beginning. Sometimes the more of the letdown for the reader.*
4. *Don't be too clever. In other words don't get ahead of your reader.*
5. *Building a little mystery.*
6. *Beware: don't trick the reader. Unless it works.*
7. *Don't talk the reader to death.*
8. *Rewrite, rethink, re-imagine, what will work.*
9. *Always remember your relationship to the reader.*