

A decorative border surrounds the text, featuring a repeating pattern of stylized, overlapping letters and symbols in shades of blue, grey, and white. The border is thicker at the corners.

# Let's Get You Writing

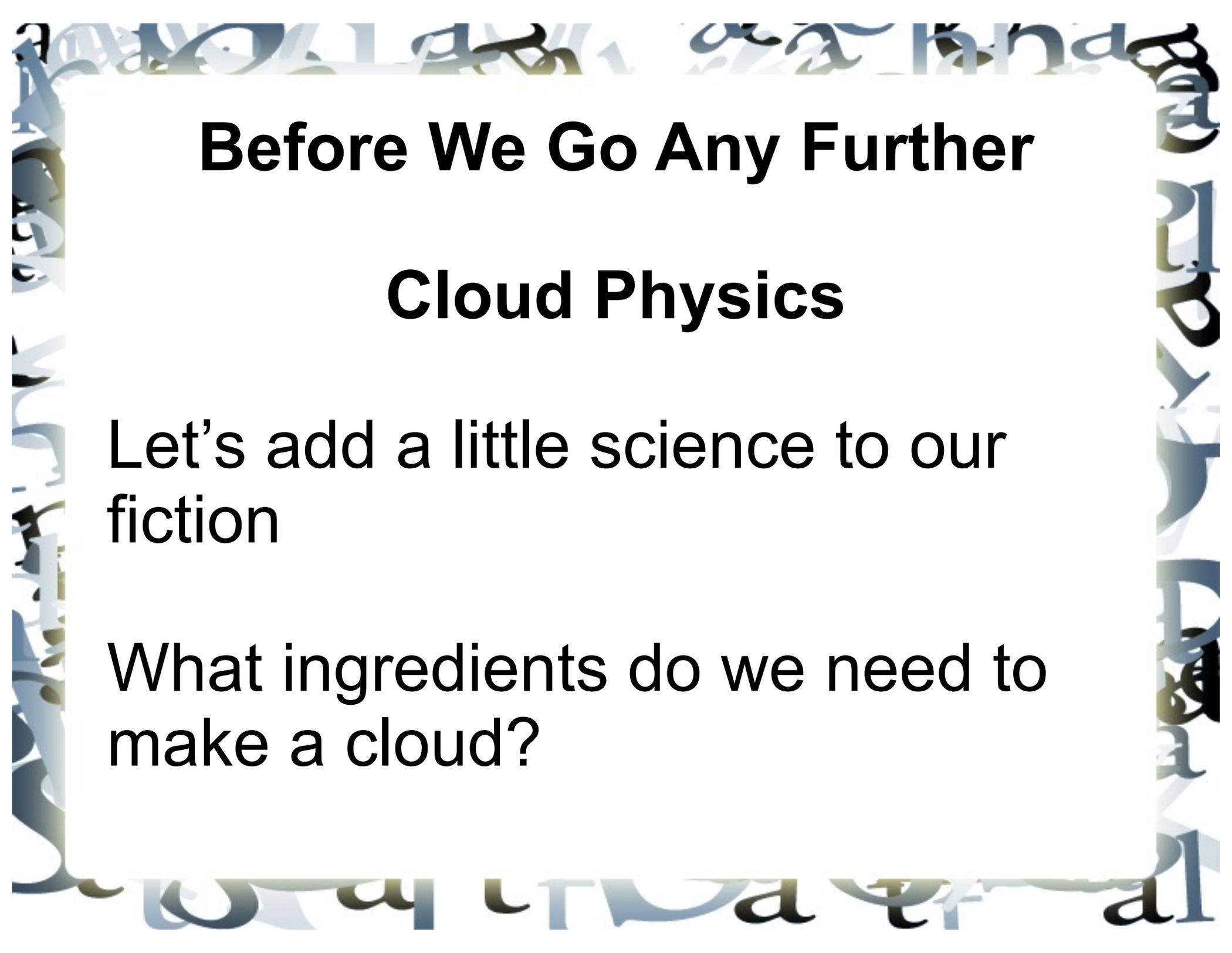
Ignite Your Creative Fire Through  
Micro Stories

Presented by Izolda Trakhtenberg  
[IzoldaTWriter.com](http://IzoldaTWriter.com)

# **Before We Go Any Further**

**If you're a writer, you have your head in the clouds.**

**Let's do something with that!**



**Before We Go Any Further**

## **Cloud Physics**

Let's add a little science to our fiction

What ingredients do we need to make a cloud?

# **Before We Go Any Further**

## **Cloud Physics**

To make a cloud, we need

1. Water
2. A Condensation Nucleus (dust?)
3. A Temperature Change

# **Before We Go Any Further**

## **Creativity Physics**

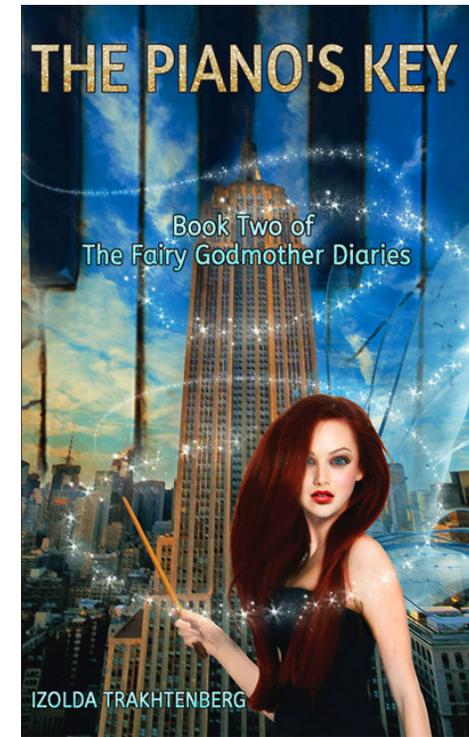
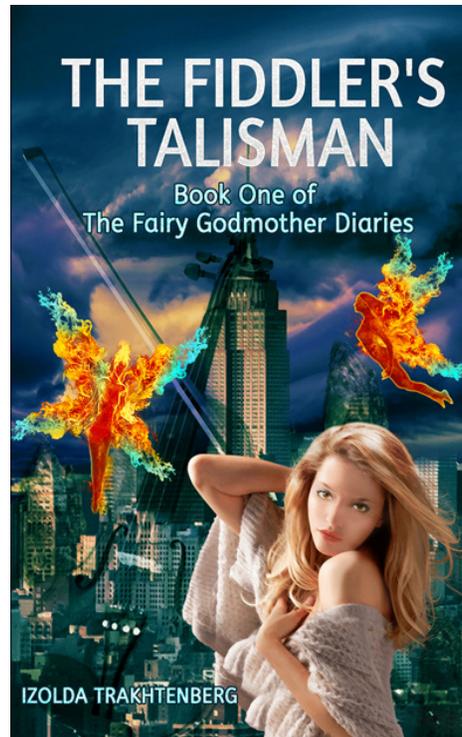
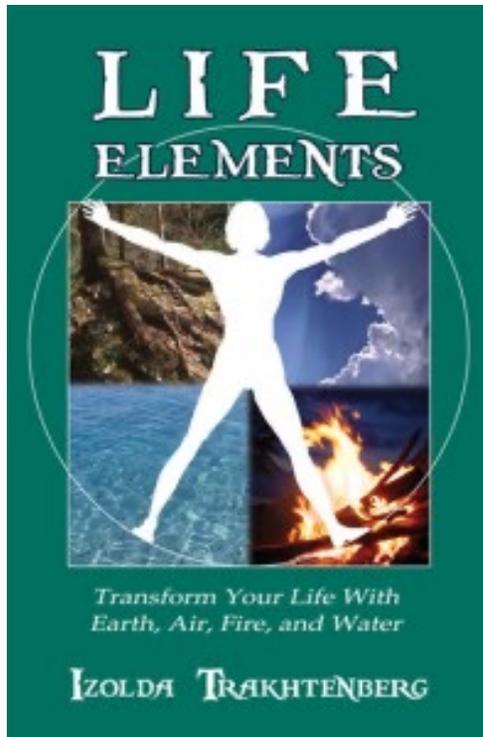
To spark our creativity, we need

1. Creative Flow (the Water)
2. A focus or subject (the dust)
3. The Release of Pressure/Temperature When We Start

# About Izolda

- Former MWA–MC chapter Vice President
- Conducted workshops and presentations for over 20 years.
- Three books: “Life Elements,” “The Fiddler’s Talisman,” and “The Piano’s Key.”
- In 2011, wrote a micro-story from a prompt word every day for a year.
- Sparked creative fire! Revolutionized my writing!
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# Our Creative Fire

- What is our creative fire?
- How do we access our creative fire?
- What are some techniques?
  - Improvisation
  - Journaling
  - Vision boards
  - Reading
  - Writing (especially focused yet quick, inspired work – Flash Fiction)

# What is Flash Fiction?

- Short-form storytelling, literature or fiction
- No official ruling on length of stories.
  - Some say a completed story should have no more than 75 words.
  - Some allow anything under a thousand or even fifteen hundred words
- Other names for it include: short-short stories, minute stories, micro fiction, or nano fiction

# What is Flash Fiction?

- What else can we do with our short fiction?
- Incorporate many together?
- Make movies?
  - **A Close Shave?**
    - Let's watch!

<https://youtu.be/wX4tILm5iPs>

# What is Flash Fiction?

- What else can we do with our short fiction?
- Another example
  - **Career Suicide**
  - Let's watch.

<https://youtu.be/Co2yJ4Br07g>

# Career Suicide

“But this is career suicide,” Angelo screamed at Bobby.

“I don’t care,” Bobby said as he finished cleaning his Walther PPK. “It’s what I’ve always wanted to do.”

Angelo took a deep breath and tried to calm his nerves. Bobby was always the cool customer and Angelo took his lead from his more experienced colleague.

“Bobby,” Angelo pleaded. “Hitmen don’t travel the Barbie Doll convention circuit showing their collections. It’s just not done.”

“It is done, Angelo,” Bobby replied. “It’s done, and I’m going to do it.” (prompt word: Suicide)

# Flash Fiction and Accessing Creativity

How Does Flash Fiction Access the Creative Spark?

- No time to plan
- Immediate
- Written work
- But don't do it all yourself. Use a prompt.
- OneWord.com
- Use one prompt word & incorporate it into a story.
- Don't think. Just write (from oneword.com)
- Use an image

# One Word Challenge

- Take the next sixty seconds and write a story incorporating the word I'll give you
- **Don't think. Just write.** Let your mind open to the next sentence even as you write the current one.
- Remember to have at least one character doing something.
- Remember the beginning, middle, and end.
- Remember to include the word.

# One Word Challenge

**Don't edit a thing!**

You never count your money  
When you're sitting at the table.  
There'll be time enough for counting  
When the dealing's done. - The Gambler

# One Word Challenge

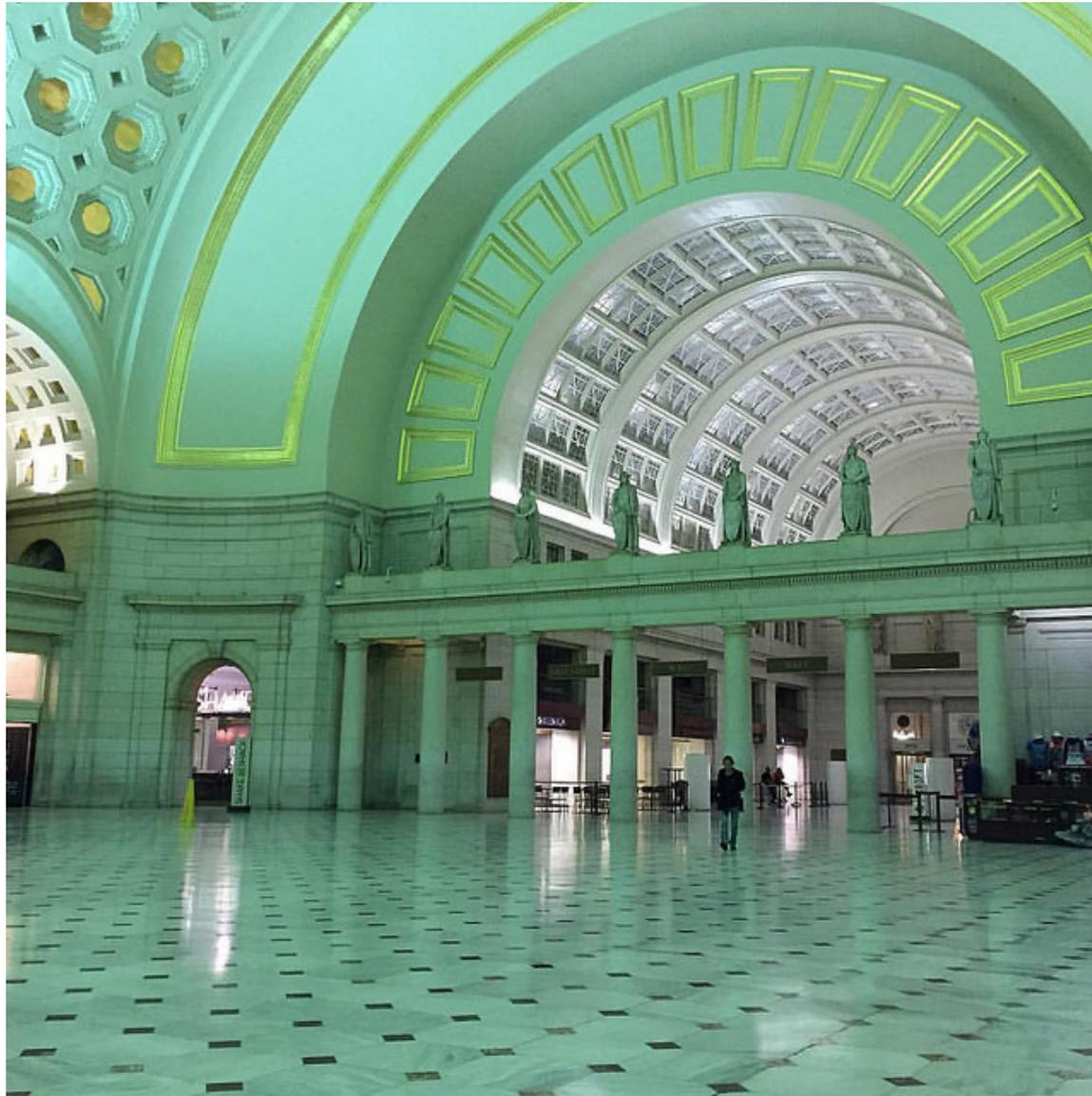
Copper

# One Picture Challenge

- Write a story incorporating this image



# One Picture Challenge



# Write With Collaborators

- Mobius Corpse

# Write With Collaborators

- Mobius Corpse
  - Easier with a focus
    - What are some possible focal points, subjects, or themes for our story?

# Write With Collaborators

- Mobius Corpse
  - Easier with a focus
    - The hunt for a lost treasure
    - Two people breaking up
    - A walk in the park at dusk
    - Dawn in a small seaside town
    - A new teacher's first day at a school in outer space

# Other forms of inspiration

- Nature
- Music
- Animals
- Stories of friends and family
- Overheard

# Overheard

Overheard at Staples.

A young boy is there with his mother and two sisters. He needs to buy poster board for a project. I am checking out and they are right behind me in line.

Young boy (to the cashier): Excuse me, sir. Do you have any vibrators?

Cashier: What?

Young boy: You know, vibrators. They vibrate and do things.

Cashier: This is Staples. We don't sell those here.

Me to the young boy's mother: I have a feeling you're about to have an interesting conversation.

Young boy's mother: honey, you don't know the half of it.

# Overheard

What do we know?

Who is this family?

What do they look like?

What are they doing?

What are their lives like?

# Overheard

Two people talking. One young man. One young woman. College age.

Young man: I just have to wait a half hour before class. It's ok. I've got the time.

Young woman: Lucky. I've got to finish this presentation before I have to start work on the next one. Why are they all due at once?

YM: Well, you're just a weirdo who doesn't know time management.

YW (picks up a huge, overstuffed backpack and heads for the door): Or, I'm a just weirdo who has no time.

YM calls after her: Whose fault is that?

YW: Not a fault. A plan. I'm graduating in three years.

# Overheard

What do we know?

Who are they?

What is their relationship?

What do they look like?

What are they doing?

What are their lives like?

**How can we turn this into a story?**

# Overheard

Overheard on the streets of New York City

Three young women standing outside another club. One is visibly upset and pacing in small, jerky steps.

“Okay, so here's how you get him,” the first young woman says.

“From now on, don't go to anywhere he's going to be. Make sure that you disappear from his life.”

“But if she disappears from his life and he doesn't know she's alive, how will that work?” The second young woman pipes up. “Doesn't he at least need to know she exists in order to give a sh\*t that she's gone?”

**(This one is going in my next fiction book!)**

# Overheard

What do we know?

Who are they?

What is their relationship to one another? Are they friends? Co-workers?

What do they look like?

What are they doing outside the bar?

What are their lives like outside of this brief moment?

# Overheard

Your Mission: For the next week, eavesdrop. Be shameless. Carry a notebook.

Note down any snippets you overhear.

We can incorporate those snippets into your tale.

OK, here's one last one.

# Overheard

Overheard on the gangway. Three people behind me.

Woman: "And he's always complaining. 'The traffic sucks. It all sucks. I leave work at 4:00 and I don't get home until 6:30.'"

Man: "Yeah and I be like 'Welcome to the real world, bra'. You gonna live in the city be prepared to pay in time.'"

Woman: "And then he all like, 'But I moved to the city to party.'"

Man: "And I'm like, 'First you work. Later you'll party.' And he be like 'But later I won't be able to party because I'll have kids.' And I'm like, 'Son partying is how you gonna get them kids.'"

All three guffawed.

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Dice!)

Let's write with prompt words to give us a springboard

- Object, Location, Profession
- First Story Gamble (Ten Minutes)
  - Focus on writing compelling dialog
  - What makes compelling dialog
    - Conflict?
    - Emotions?
    - Others?

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Dice!)

Second Story Roll of the Dice

**If you want, continue with the same story but incorporate the new words.**

- Object, Location, Profession

Second Story Gamble (Ten Minutes)

Focus on writing characterization

What makes compelling character development?

- Motivations, goals, desires?
- Emotions?
- Others?

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Dice!)

Third Story Roll of the Dice

Object, Location, Profession

Third Story Gamble (Ten Minutes)

- Focus on plot development and resolution
- What carries a plot forward?
  - Conflict? Resolutions?
  - Characters' Goals?
  - Solving problems?
  - Dilemmas/Choices?
  - Others?

# **Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Cards!)**

Mission for the week.

Use the blank cards and select and write your own stories from ...

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Cards!)

## Professions

artist

barber

detective

diplomat

doctor

event planner

farmer

jockey

luthier

magician

mayor

MBA

mechanic

musician

opera singer

physicist

professor

queen

saint

secretary

soldier

stock trader

therapist

waiter

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Cards!)

## Locations

Eiffel tower	Radio station
attic	roller coaster
bank	theater
beach	tower
cemetery	TV studio
church	yoga studio
diner	Yosemite
docks	
drive-in	

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Cards!)

## Objects

bag	curtain	ring
bike	dish	rope
bird	egg	salt
blood	feather	saucer
candle	GPS	scissors
chain	lamp	shovel
chess set	notebook	suit
coin	painting	
	rag	

# Our Flash Fiction Gamble (Cards!)

## Names

Shaun	Annabelle
Amy	Guadalupe
Brad	Marcia
Felicia	Mariah
Thomas	Brandon
Angelique	Billy
Jennifer	Jamie
Gwen	Stephan
Roy	Anders

# Let's Share!

- Let's read our stories and get feedback.
- Constructive, Supportive, and Fun!

# Next Week

- Other prompt ideas
- Writing
- Editing
- Finding the Hook

# Questions and Links

Izolda@IzoldaTWriter.com

IzoldaTWriter.com

(Click **60-Second Stories** from the main page)

OneWord.com

EveryStockPhoto.com