

## A Bad Story

*Write a bad story.*

It can't be that hard, can it?

Just write a bad story.

Okay, so what does bad mean?

Bad means boring. Bad means confusing. Bad means average.

What's more boring than a guy named Joe? A guy named Joe and a guy named Bob.

Okay, so there's Joe and Bob.

What's more boring than Joe and Bob?

Okay, so there's Joe and Bob and they're partaking in small talk.

What's more boring than Joe and Bob and partaking in small talk?

Okay, so there's Joe and Bob and they're asking each other about their days, on a bench, looking at an empty street.

Is boring bad? What if boring becomes interesting?

I must make it confusing.

So, Bob asks Joe if he has somewhere to be, because they've been sitting on this bench for hours. Joe says he never has anywhere to be.

Is that confusing enough?

Not yet.

Bob asks Joe why and he says he doesn't have a job. Then Bob grabs his bags and leaves.

They never speak again.

So it's strange and confusing.

But is it average enough?

Let's give Joe a striped shirt and let's give Bob a plain, green polo.

Let's also have Joe twiddle his thumbs in the silence.

But now it's gotten descriptive.

No, no, no. Description is good, we want bad.

Let's not have Joe twiddle his thumbs. Let's just have Joe stare straight into space.

But now I'm curious about Joe.

Curiosity is good. I need bad.

I'm not even that good of a writer, my God. Why is it so difficult to write a bad story?

Start over. What if there is too much description and repetition? Too much of those can be bad, right?

So, we have Joe slouching on a bench looking at a piece of white, pasty gum on the cracked sidewalk, and the gum is right next to his shiny, black shoe which is right beneath his trousers that are khaki but have a green stain of some kind under the knee, and under his trousers his knee is slightly bruised, but he can't remember why. He just can't remember. He absolutely cannot remember for the life of him. He stares at the gum. The white, pasty gum. He cannot stop staring at the gum for the life of him. He just can't.

Some kind of rhythm has taken over that is quite interesting. This is not happening.

Start over.

Cliché is bad, right? I'll write a story of clichés.

So, it was only a matter of time until Joe had his tail between his legs. He had never been good with conversation and Bob was asking him about his day. The aura in the air felt like the calm before the storm, and it was quiet, so Bob asked, "Cat got your tongue?" Joe was scared out of his wits, and wished time could move at the speed of light. The seconds after Bob's question seemed to last an eternity, but without a care in the world, Joe told Bob that he woke up on the wrong side of the bed. "Why's that?" Bob asked. Joe explained that he had a bruise on his knee. Bob simply told him, "An apple a day will keep the doctor away, and don't you know that laughter is the best medicine?"

Oh dear. Now this has become some kind of social commentary on the use of clichés. Is that interesting? Is that good?

I know.

Try to write something good. Something personal.

Ten bucks I try to write something good and it turns out like shit.

Wait. Is this a bad story?