

Obliterati's Thunderdome Crit Sheet Template

To use, just read the story and answer the questions as you see fit!

N.B. I claim no ownership of this template. It's just a Googledoc, for Christ's sake. Share, modify, change the title and make out like you made it, whatever.

Story Title	:	The Courage of Nearly Flightless Birds
Written by	:	Flyerant
Word count (approx.)	:	500
Critiqued by	:	Obliterati

1: What is this story about - what is its premise? Does this story have any themes you can see?

Someone goes to work, comes home, and dreams about chickens and eggs, which is a metaphor for her miscarriage.

2: What do you think about the language?

Prose is way too purple. It was pointed out to me that there might be a rhyming scheme going on here of some type: if so, you need to go harder on it, commit the story to it, make it impossible for the reader to miss. I've had luck writing that sort of thing out like one would a poem or lyrics, before shoving it all into paragraphs later.

3: Is the plot clear to you? Where is it unclear and how could it be clearer?

This is another one of the stories this week that has, if anything, made what's going on far too clear. The pinnacle of this is at the end:

'My eyes opened to see a room I had tried to avoid. A room filled with small toys, clothes and baby bibs. The truth stood in front of me: an empty crib.'

I'm not telling you this has to be 'For Sale: baby shoes, never worn' but equally you should be confident enough in yourself and in your reader that you don't need to say 'IT WAS A BABY'S ROOM' twice in two sentences.

4: Name one thing you liked about this story.

I like the idea of the chicken dreams as a sort of B plot to the main thing, which is the lady thinking about the stuff that's happened.

5: Name one thing you disliked about this story.

Sadly I do not like its execution. There's no gradual reveal, no steady unfolding of the mystery or the connection to draw the reader along with you: you just throw the metaphor for us at a bit and then at the end say the meaning at us twice.

6: Do you have any other thoughts that weren't covered above?

END