

What's in your writer's toolbox, Ann Charles?

I love vivid, meaningful details that paint an amazing picture. But too much detail bogs down a story with unnecessary narrative. Take time to learn how to use the right amount of details and your stories will sparkle.

Remember, stale writing + boring details = your book ending up as a “wall-banger” rather than a “best-seller.” (Unfortunately, a “wall-banger” is not a sexually explicit story—it’s a lousy book that gets thrown against the wall out of frustration.)

Here is an example of vivid details from my book, *Dance of the Winnebagos*:
“If R.V.s were human, Gramps’s Winnebago Chieftain would be a cantankerous old warrior, raisin-wrinkled from the sun, donning a brown polyester leisure suit and red faux alligator shoes. Back before the plaid curtains had faded and the ceiling had yellowed with cigar smoke, the R.V. had made heads turn. Now the only thing turning was the odometer.”

In the Toolbox:

(I learn best by studying the masters.)

Odd Thomas by Dean Koontz

The Shipping News by E. Annie Proulx

Desperation by Stephen King

Written by Ann Charles, this essay was originally published in The Desert Rose, October 2007.



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