

## **SYN synergy newsletter No. 5**

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This month's contents:

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### **Quote Of The email**

‘A classic is a book that has never finished saying what it has to say.’

- Italo Calvino

<http://www.worldofquotes.com/topic/Literature>

### **Editorial**

Welcome to another edition of Share Your Novel synergy newsletter.

Good news! Share Your Novel forum is alive and well.

After unsuccessful attempts to make it work, I have now changed the host of Share Your Novel Forum from phpBB to SMF (the one used by Nick Daws for his 'My Writers Circle' forum).

The reason why I have changed is because, with the old forum, I had no control over members joining. I was persistently bothered by bogus members who posted (often offensive) spam. You may have even visited the forum and been put off by this.

With the new forum, members have to be approved before they can post. I think you will like the new forum and encourage you to sign up at <http://www.shareyournovel.com/forum>

All I need now is for more people like you to sign up and participate in the forum. If we are going to make a difference to the attitudes towards and the success of self-published and POD novels, we need to share our ideas and support each other.

There is no change to the main Share Your Novel site.

Les Gates  
Administrator – Share Your Novel

**This month's article –**

## **Technique Tip: How Much Does Your Character Notice?**

*by Marg McAlister*

One thing that gives away an inexperienced writer is overuse of tags such as 'she noticed' or 'he saw'.

### **Example 1:**

"Taking a second look, SHE NOTICED that his face was growing redder."

### **Example 2:**

"TIM SAW that the car had slowed, and the driver was looking back at him."

The problem here is that the writer is keeping the reader at a distance by using "she noticed" and "Tim saw".

WHY is this a problem? Because instead of allowing the reader to walk in sync with the character, and experience events through the character's thoughts, feelings and emotions, the writer is REPORTING what is happening.

It's much better technique to *show* what happens. Let's see how the above two examples could change when the writer shows, rather than tells:

**Example 1** - "Taking a second look, she noticed that his face was growing redder" becomes: "She looked at him again. His face was growing redder." It's a small change, but by removing 'she noticed' we are removing the sense that somebody is watching and reporting on events. Instead, she's living it.

**Example 2** - "Tim saw that the car had slowed, and the driver was looking back at him" becomes: "The car slowed. The driver looked back at Tim."

That's better: we've eliminated the unnecessary 'Tim saw'. However, as it is written, it's pretty bland. Let's add some detail (the make of car) to help the reader visualise

the car better, and substitute something more powerful than 'the car slowed'.

Now we have this: "The Honda's tail lights flashed. The driver turned to look back at Tim."

Changes such as these are simple to make when you're editing your work, but they can have a dramatic effect on the quality of your writing.

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