

WINTER STORM  
Breaking Elmore Leonard's Ten Rules of Writing

by

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~~Never~~ open a book with weather. | ~~Avoid~~ <sup>use.</sup> prologues | ~~Never~~ use a verb other than "said" to carry dialogue | ~~Never~~ use an adverb to modify the verb said | ~~Keep~~ <sup>use lots of</sup> your exclamation points ~~under control~~ | ~~Never~~ use the words "suddenly" or "all hell broke loose" | Use regional dialect <sup>often</sup> sparingly | ~~Avoid~~ <sup>be sure to give</sup> detailed descriptions of characters. | ~~Don't~~ go into great detail describing things and places. | ~~Try to~~ <sup>never</sup> leave out the part that readers tend to skip.

Prologue:

The wind ripped through the trees, driving hard, stinging pellets that bit the flesh and frosted the eyelids.

They were deep in the woods now, and the dark brown bark of the tree trunks and the vibrant dark green of their boughs contrasted with the aluminum grey sky and the crusted sugar white of the ground.

"My...my...God!!!" sputtered Gary. "If we stay out her much longer my eyes are going to freeze shut!"

Harry grunted, "I know what you mean!!!" He was shouting at the top of his voice but the wind ripped the words away as soon as he uttered them. It was a good thing the a foot apart.

Gary was happy to be wearing his Bunny Hug under his Parka, but it wasn't enough. "I'm so cold, I can't even feel the ice on my face!" said Gary stutteringly.

Harry looked down at the GPS in his gloved hand and felt his heart sink. "We're hosed! This fuckin' thing, has had the biscuit!!!" he shouted angrily, smacking the side of the failing device.

Gary couldn't believe how this storm came out of nowhere. For not the first (or last) time that day, he wished he was far away, sitting in a Timmy Ho's with a hot double-double and a bismarck.

He turned and looked back at his companion, Harry.

Harry was exactly six feet tall and had long sandy blonde hair that hung to his shoulders when it wasn't tucked into a toque like it was now. His eyes were exactly the same leaden grey color that Gary associated with the sea off Nova Scotia in the winter.

Not that you often got to see those eyes. Harry was sensitive to bright lights, so he normally wore very dark round sunglasses that reminded Gary of John Lennon. In fact, Gary realized, Harry looked a lot like John did during the end of the Beatles when the musician and Yoko were hanging out in bags and longing around in hotel beds.

He yelled back to Harry, "Hey, I think there's a clearing up ahead!!! Maybe we can get our bearings!!!"

In five more strides, they stepped out from the tree line.

Suddenly, all hell broke loose...



## Chapter One: The Lodge

The day started out with the smell of sage sausage, good coffee and butter.

Gary smiled as he slowly opened his eyes and looked at the rich, chocolate brown drapes blocking out the brightest of the early morning sun. Waking up to the smell of breakfast being made was one of the most comforting things he could imagine. Still warm and drowsy with the anticipation of something delicious soon to be eaten.

He rose from the top bunk (Harry had insisted on the bottom one), and climbed down the ladder. He liked that the ladder and the floor were both free of the chill that sometimes ripped you right out of that early morning reverie.

He walked into the hall and then down to the end where the bathroom waited. He stepped in and walked first to the mirror to check his eyes and the stubble on his cheeks. Today was the day of the big hike. Because of this, he chose to leave the stubble since he was sure it made him look more manly.

He ran the water in the sink, letting it get nice and steaming hot. He took out a wash cloth and tossed it into the basin so it would get hot, and wet. He loved to let it rest over his face as he sipped his first cup of coffee and tried to remember his dreams.

Last night's had been bad he thought. there was a lot of tossing and turning. much that Harry had woke him up twice to tell him to stop screaming.