California Writers Club, June 2023

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**Pulling Your Reader Close, Mastering Deep Point of View**

* How to recognize what deep point of view is and why you want it
* How to fix common ways we distance our readers
* How to add details that close the distance
* How to get physical without clichés
* How to put deep point of view into your setting

Examples for close study:

**Example 1 3 versions of the same opening**:

**I.** Lex Sakai paused on the threshold of the Chinese restaurant, suddenly surrounded by the scents of nutty sesame oil, salty-sweet oyster sauce, pungent soy sauce. Asian party guests mingled in a sea of black and dark-brown and gray heads. They were all dressed up for the party, men in dress shirts and women in short dresses.

**II.** Eat and leave. That’s all she had to do.

If Grandma didn’t kill her first for being late.

Lex Sakai raced through the open doorway to the Chinese restaurant and was immediately immersed in conversation, babies’ wails, clashing perfumes, and stale sesame oil. She tripped over the threshold and almost turned her ankle. Stupid pumps. Man, she hated wearing heals.

**III.** Andrea O’Malley paused on the threshold of the Chinese restaurant. She wasn’t sure if she liked the exotic smells that teased her nose—spices she couldn’t name, as well as nutty sesame oil, salty-sweet oyster sauce, pungent soy sauce. She patted her French twist, which didn’t need fiddling with. She couldn’t help it—she was a golden-haired alien in the midst of these black-haired party guests. At least she wasn’t dressed inappropriately—the other guests stood talking in clusters, the women in short silk dresses like her own.

**Example 2 Unintentional Head Hopping**

Jake rolled down the window half an inch, a smirk spreading across his face. The slut would never find her way back without him, and no one would find her until the coyotes had picked her bones clean.

Anna yanked at the door handle. Her chest felt heavy, her lungs unwilling to suck in a full breath. “Unlock the door, Jake. This isn’t funny anymore.”

**Example 3 Unintentional Head Hopping**

Scene with 2 characters, Alice, the middle-aged owner of a secondhand store and Daisy, her teenaged, newly hired helper. Chapter (intended as) written in Daisy’s pov.

After the first estate sale they visited two more. There was a really cute patio set at the second one. It was one of those aged metal sets that nobody sat on because they were too uncomfortable. Still, it looked great, even better than new with its worn edges. People liked that look and spent a lot of money at specialty stores for knock offs, or they rolled up their sleeves and painted and scraped and aged and pickled and whatever else they did to their perfectly good new stuff to make it look old. These pieces would go quickly, Alice was sure of it. Daisy thought the set would look great in the window of the shop, with a few outdoor items nearby. Maybe an old watering can, a few garden tools, and a vintage beach bag. There was one in the shop made of straw, with brightly colored raffia flowers embroidered on the sides. A couple of flowerpots, and a brightly colored ceramic pitcher with a pair of glasses on the table would look great. She could see the display in her mind already.

**Example 4 Add the details that close the distance**

 Distant: “I don’t want to talk about it,” he said.

 Deeper: “I don’t want to talk about it,” he said, ripping the paper in half.

 Deeper still: “I don’t want to talk about it.” Focused on his fingers, he tore a long strip

from the paper, then another, and then another. Ripping each strip into tiny pieces until a small paper mountain stood between them.

**Example 5 Add the details**

 Dr. Ferris twisted round in her seat and looked, giving me a chance to admire her profile. Her neck was about twice as long as mine and her jaw made me think of swans. I lifted my chin and poked it forward. Her hair was held back in a silk scarf patterned in exactly the green of her jumper, the green of her slacks, and the brown of her shoes. I didn’t even know what shops still sold those scarves these days, like the ones the queen used to wear with the knot on her chin in that daft way. -*House. Tree. Person.* by Catriona McPherson

**Example 6 Avoid Distancing Words by layering in deep pov**

 Fix: Kenny *wondered* if Monica didn’t like him going out at night.

With this: The mornings after Kenny had stayed out, beyond the last bus, until he’d had to bum a ride or pay for a cab and got home to find Monica faking sleep, faking because she never slept that quiet, those mornings, she’d only put her own cup of coffee in the microwave.  Never his.

–Nuts and Bolts: “Thought” Verbs, by Chuck Palahniuk, author of *Fight Club*, post on LitReactor http://bit.ly/2EYhie1

**Example 7 Grounding dialogue with inner emotions of pov character to create deep pov**

 “How can you insult me like this?” A smear of shame crept through her chest.

**Example 8 Get physical**

There is near complete darkness, yes, but it’s the least of my problems. I’d glimpsed the space before I got in, and knew the claustrophobic dimensions that would have kept me from moving easily even if I hadn’t been shot in the leg. . . . No, my most urgent need is water, to bring my temperature down, to slow my breathing and stop those syncopated warning beats that tell me my heart is about to check out for good. If I die in here, the likely plan is to dump me at a secondary site. –*Fear the Darkness*, Becky Masterman

**Example 9 Get physical**

The autocar’s horn blared, and Ingrid swayed as the driver made another tight turn.

The unearthed object was as warm as a cat against Ingrid’s thigh, its presence almost stroking her senses. What was it? It was not magic, not as she had encountered it. No, this thing felt . . . holy. -Beth Cato, *Call of Fire*

**Example 10 Get physical & metaphorical**

I’ve never trusted happiness. Just when you think you’ve corralled that mustang, she busts through the fence and leaves you with splinters. I should have seen it coming.

Still, when I tromped across the back porch, feeling grateful to be out of the frosty night air, I wasn’t worrying about my world turning into a sloppy, wet pile of manure. My calving ratio sat at a hundred percent so far this year. –*Stripped Bare* by Shannon Baker

**Example 11 Setting told from within pov character, develops character**

Alafair Tucker was standing on the porch, clutching a dishtowel, watching the two young people come up the tree-lined drive toward the house, and she shaded her eyes with her free hand in order to see them better against the pale gray afternoon sky. They were walking slowly, perfectly decorous, at least a yard apart, but Alafair was not fooled. Phoebe’s face may have been as serene as an angel’s, but it was also beet red. The white house sat on a gentle rise facing the long drive that ran the quarter-mile from the road to the barn and stables so it was easy for Alafair to observe the couple for a considerable time before they reached her. –*The Old Buzzard Had It Coming*, Donis Casey

**Example 12 edit into your pov**

From this: The smooth outer walls of wealthy homes gave way suddenly to an open space filled with the scent of jasmine and roses. The fabled gardens of Ishana spread out before Hattu in geometric patterns. Gravel paths surrounded beds of brilliant color.

 To this: Beyond the wealthy homes lay the fabled gardens of Ishana. An open space filled with the scent of jasmine and roses fanned out in geometric patterns. Hattu reined in his horses. He inhaled deeply and allowed his shoulders to relax. He took in the beds of brilliant color surrounded by immaculate gravel paths. As a general, he knew the gardens served a valuable defensive purpose, but that didn’t diminish their beauty. -*Priestess of Ishana*, Judith Starkston

**Example 13 Deep pov amid action and dialogue**

 Alucard had been dreaming of the sea when he heard the door open. It wasn’t a loud sound, but it was so out of place, at odds with the ocean spray and the summer gulls.

He rolled over, lost for a moment in the haze of sleep, his body aching from the abuse of the tournament and his head full of silk. And then, a step, wooden boards groaning underfoot. The sudden, very real presence of another person in the room. *Rhy’s* room. And the prince, still unconscious, unarmed, beside him.

Alucard rose in a single, fluid movement, the water from the glass beside the bed rising up and freezing into a dagger against his palm.

“Show yourself.”

He held the shard in a fighting stance, ready to strike as the intruder continued his slow march forward. The room around them was dim, a lamp burning just behind the intruder’s back, casting him in shadow.

“Down, dog,” said an unmistakable voice.

Alucard let out a low curse and slumped back against the side of the bed, heart pounding. “Kell.”

The *Antari* stepped forward, light illuminating his grim mouth and narrowed eyes, one blue, the other black. But what caught Alucard’s attention, what held it in a vice, was the sigil scrawled over his bare chest. A pattern of concentric circles. An exact replica of the mark over Rhy’s heart, the one woven through with iridescent threads.

Kell flicked his fingers, and Alucard’s frozen blade flew from his hand, melting back into a ribbon of water as it returned to its glass. *A Conjuring of Light*, V.E. Schwab

**Example 14**

From: Sarah wondered why he wanted to see her. She was only the housemaid, not a member of the family, and Lord Griffith hated her. (She already knows this info, so she wouldn’t tell it to herself. Author telling reader, not in pov)

To: Why would Lord Griffith want her, of all people? To further humiliate the housemaid? She had a fleeting memory of his spit flying in her face, his gaze blacker than the coat of his prize-winning horse, and her gut involuntarily heaved.