Hi everyone,

I’m very much looking forward to joining you for a generative writing workshop next Friday, November 13th!

In our workshop session, I will help you with some “story seed” ideas to help generate new work. We will have a chance to do some writing, and then we’ll close out with some tips on keeping your new work going after the workshop. I’ll also be available for any questions that you may have.

In the meantime, I’ve created a brief overview of what we’ll be working on next Friday and a few quick prompts for you to be thinking about for a story to work on. Don’t feel that you have to have anything written before the workshop! These are just to get our writing brains engaged and thinking about new stories.

I look forward to seeing you next week!

All the best,
Mark Maynard

Before/After

We are all in the midst of a monumental moment of change. In writing, we call these moments doorway or threshold moments. Once we have moved through a particular experience, we cannot go back. It changes us, our perception of the world, challenges our memory, and hones our senses.

The global pandemic has been a universal Before/After moment – our lives can be clearly demarcated into before and after the moment we first sheltered in place, quarantined, stepped away from our workplace, our public lives, our circles of friends and family.

But there are many before/after moments in a life – many doorways that we pass through and are changed by. Before and after becoming a parent. Before and after a marriage. Before and after a job, a loss, a major change. And they are moments that are rich for art, inspirations for poetry, prose, and essays.
Think of a before and after moment that you have experienced. Then, think about those feelings and about creating a fictitious character that you could put into a similar situation. I find it useful to think of these situations as being similar emotionally, not necessarily created by the same life events that you may have experienced. You do not need to literally record a before/after moment biographically. Instead, use it as a jumping off point into a new piece of writing.

Here are some related quick prompts to help:

- You can never go back because…
- As I drove away, I looked into my rearview mirror and saw….
- I stepped through the frame of the door and into the world beyond. I did not look back, but I heard the door close shut behind me….
- If my life were a book, and I had to bend the corner of a page where the climax was, the scene on that page would show….
- When I made that decision, I had no idea it would lead to….

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