

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Writing Prompt: The Betrayal

Charity Hume · Wednesday, July 16th, 2014

This week's writing prompt is that juicy word – Betrayal.

What are the most significant motivators for human beings?

There are primal moments in our lives which touch on the deeper feelings inside us, and draw us into action. Moments of betrayal between husband and wife, friends or siblings, form the heart of drama. These betrayals can have small consequences, or they can be cataclysmic.

In the great Belgian film, *La Promesse*, a teenager witnesses his father hide a terrible secret. The arc of the film hinges on whether the son will have the strength to betray his father and uphold his loyalty to what is truly right. An exquisite tension builds through the story, as the viewer wonders which side of the son's character will win. Here, a son's loyalty has a darker price than the betrayal itself.

When have you been betrayed? When has someone truly let you down? When have you done the same? Write a few pages in order to explore these questions. Don't worry if intense feelings rush back as you write. Just let them flow onto the page in their raw and honest state. Later, you can edit, disguise, and fictionalize if the "true" version inspires you to use its rare, powerful material. When you have some "footage," construct a story, fictional or autobiographical, around a betrayal you know all too well.



"Parau Api," (1892), by Paul Gaugin, courtesy of Wikipaintings

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