

IN the beginning...

Posted on Aug 09, Posted by [Lois Lowry](#) Category [Uncategorized](#)

So here's the thing. I agreed to do the beginning of a story for a section of Weekly Reader called "Weekly Writer"...in which a professional writer starts a story, kids continue it over several months, paragraph by paragraph, and eventually the professional writer finishes it up. Stephen King has done one. Walter Dean Myers. R.L. Stine. Others. And yesterday I set out to write my "beginning."

I always start a story, or a book, with a little introduction of character(s) and a sense that something is wrong and that something - at this point unknown, perhaps a little mysterious - is going to happen. (That is, after all, why a reader turns the page).

"It was almost December, and Jonas was beginning to be frightened." That is the "beginning" of THE GIVER, and it does what I just described, in the space of one sentence.

Another beginning, this time of GATHERING BLUE:

"Mother?"

There was no reply. She hadn't expected one. Her mother had been dead now for four days...

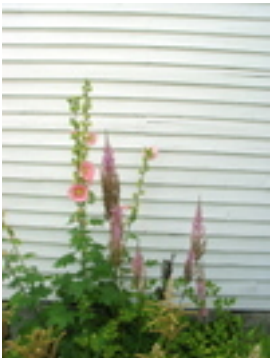
Different characters, different situation, same process.

So I began to write my story beginning for "Weekly Writer." In fact, I wrote it. Then I read it to myself and thought: *Hey*. I'm intrigued by this. I don't want anybody else going on with it. This is *mine*. This may be a *book*.

So I kept it. If, in the future, you ever hear that I have published a book called UNDER THE BARN...well, that is the one that started out as the opening paragraphs of a story that someone else was supposed to finish.

I wrote a different beginning for "Weekly Writer" and e-mailed it off before I mused too long about it or the same thing might have happened again.

It seems incomplete not to attach a couple of photos, so here are the last of the pink hollyhocks, as well as the last few high-bush blueberries.



Tags: Untagged