

Story

by Matt Potter

“NO!”

Instantly he's in the doorway, face pale with concern.

“I was just about to email my story,” I say. “And I've realised I got the fucking theme wrong!”

“Oh,” he says. “Can you re-write it to make it fit?”

“That's not the point!”

This bloody story! I even downloaded *Rhapsody in Blue* to help — I loathe those blaring trumpets and that stupid circling clarinet at the beginning — listening countless times, pretending — hoping — to be inspired.

And all I kept seeing in my head was the black and white opening sequence from *Manhattan*.

“Write a story about how you got the theme wrong,” he calls out, safe on the other side of the house now.

“I hate *this-is-a-story-about-how-I-can't-write-a-story* stories,” I say. “It's a hack's cop out.”

I glare at my laptop. I'm to blame. No one made me mistake *v* for *c*. Or *c* for *v*.

For two days, I bashed out words with grimacing fingers, wrenching images from my whining consciousness — a weak, lumbering, uninspired piece — and now for what?

I thump my fist on the desk, like so many of my characters, and stare at the keyboard.

Urban concert. All those fabulous images I hoped would inspire me — skyscrapers, bridges, traffic lights, traffic jams, parks and gardens, freeways, taxis, rubbish trucks — all stuck nowhere, lame and hopeless and wrong wrong wrong.

Urban *concert*?

No. Urban *convert*. Whatever *that* means.

The deadline ticks closer, outpaced only by my lack of enthusiasm.

Blank blank blank.

Fuck it.
Send.
Click.
Done.

