

# Struggles of Writing Fiction

MAHEJABEEN HOSSAIN NIDHI

"There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed."

— Ernest Hemingway

During English classes, among the range of essay types – narrative, descriptive and argumentative, a majority tends to attempt the narrative storytelling. The reason behind it is that usually the fiction prompts provide an easier option to gain more marks. The examiner here acts like a customer at your boutique, telling you exactly what he/she wants you to make and you simply have to comply. However, what happens when you venture to write fiction without the prompt, without the time limit and exam conditions? Does it get easier? By no means.

When encountered with the question of "What is the purpose of life?" Kilgore Trout, one of Kurt Vonnegut's most creatively driven characters, who also is an author, replies, "To be the eyes and ears and conscience of the Creator of the Universe, you fool." As you devote yourself to writing fiction, you find yourself striving to create a universe, or at least a fragment of a universe, with characters projecting the images and voices inside you and their



actions reflecting your own conscience. In the words of Oscar Wilde, "As it was, we always misunderstood ourselves and rarely understood others." Therefore, the projection of our thoughts in writing fiction is, to say the very least, complex. This paradoxical complexity has never hindered a truly great writer. Writers of that calibre use their fiction to vent, to attempt to make sense of

their own thoughts.

Albert Camus, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1957, said, "Fiction is the lie through which we tell the truth." Fiction is an art form; it does not matter whether the expressed art is science fiction, romance or fantasy. At the end of the day, to satisfy yourself (which in turn will satisfy your readers) your work has to

convey something meaningful. This deeper meaning makes fiction riveting as it places dangerous ideas in the most delicate ways imaginable. Sure, you can write fiction for "fun", and it is fun sometimes, yet it must be kept in mind that fiction calls for a deep emotional investment.

Take it from a closet fiction writer, one of the most difficult parts of the fiction writing process is revealing it – giving people access to the thoughts your mind plays with and opening the gateway for criticism. Since writing fiction is the product of such personal input, it is harder to integrate changes to it. In the non-fiction book "On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft", Stephen King writes, "Even when it breaks your egocentric little scribbler's heart, kill your darlings." He does not mean for you to kill off all your characters like in "Game of Thrones", but discusses the importance of editing and cutting of pieces that may be significant to you but not to the story. As you leaf through the pages of a great work of fiction, you find the thoughts of the writer trickling down your own mind. That is the basic standard of writing fiction writers are compelled to aspire for. The bravery of trying your hand at fiction alone is a commendable act.

# Beautifying Jewellery Boxes

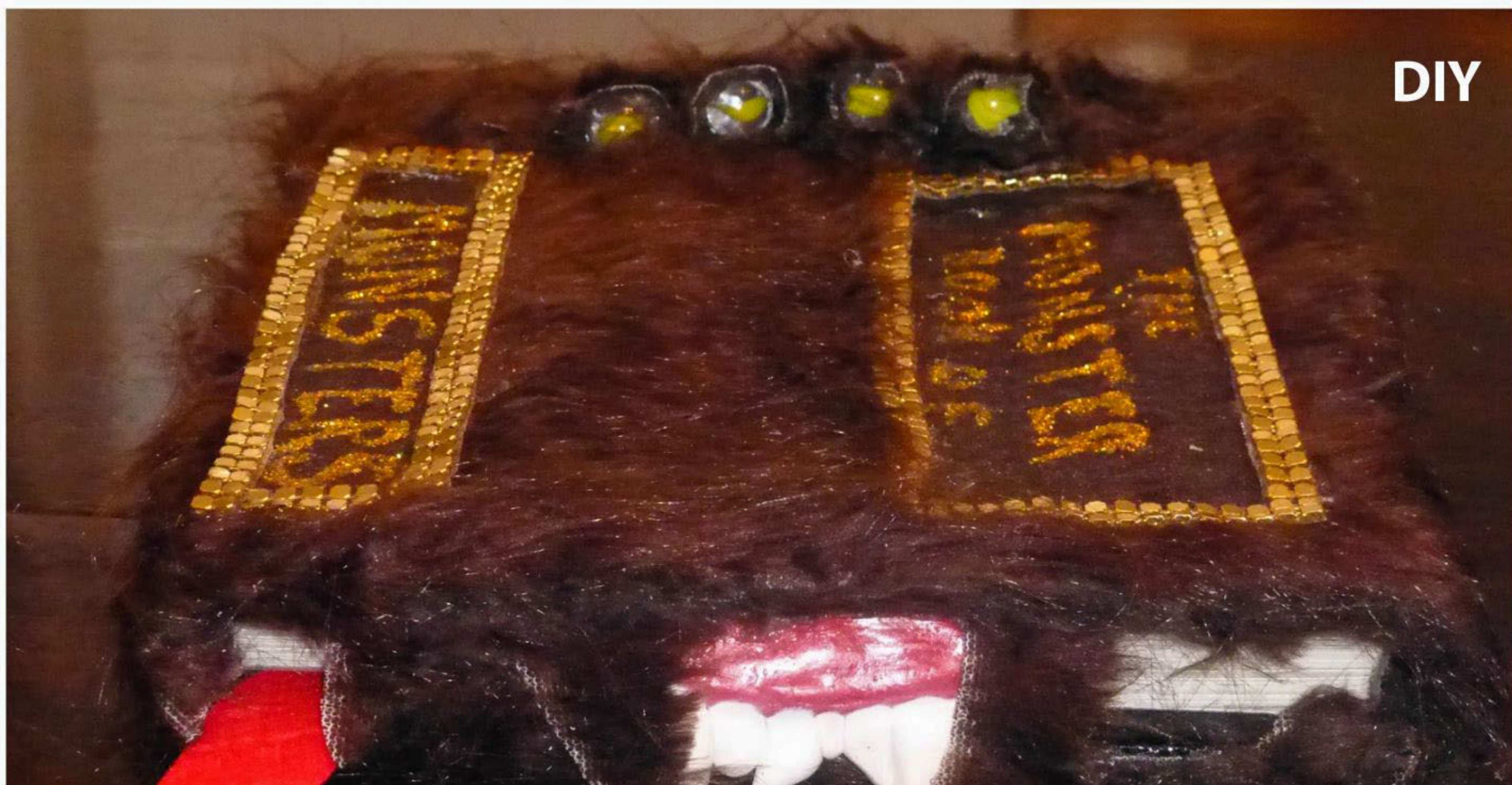
SALMA MOHAMMAD ALI

Why should jewellery boxes be bland and boring when they store such beauty inside? Here are some ideas to spruce up your jewellery boxes.

Try the Harry Potter themed "Monster Book". This box will look like the book that tried to bite off Harry's hand. A wooden box with hinges will work best for this. Try to get artificial fur from stores. Use strong glue to paste the fur on the lid and at the bottom of the box. Leave some hanging over the edges. To add the teeth, take some cardboard, cut them in the shape of teeth and paint them white or yellow. You can make around eight. Paste four on the front of the box and align the rest on the top half. This way the monster book will open its 'mouth' every time your box is opened! Use red fabric or paper to cut out a tongue. For the eyes you can use identical marbles or beads to be glued on the lid.

Other than themed ideas, you can opt for simple designs. If your box is made of wood or cardboard, paint by first applying a base coat, ideally white. Acrylic paint will make your boxes bright and colourful, giving it a professional look. You could do the bottom half of the box with a solid colour and paint designs on only the top half or you could do designs all throughout.

Instead of painting the box, you could also cover it up with coloured paper. Tape the paper on and paste glitter, sequins



and ribbons. Jewellery boxes are also great gift items so you could also write the name of the recipient, tie ribbons into bows and stick them on as well. Get the coloured paper from stationery shops or you could even use some wrapping paper.

A great technique is covering the box with fabric. Ironing the fabric beforehand to get rid of creases is recommended, so it

will look neat when on the box. White adhesive/Fevicol glue works perfectly to attach the fabric on the box. Use the glue in meagre amounts, otherwise it will be visible through the fabric and look all blotchy. Put glue on the box and smoothen it out using a ruler, paste your fabric and wait for it to dry. Beads go great with fabric. Stick beads of different sizes and colours on the lid to make

creative designs. You could sew the beads on as well, but remember to have done that before pasting the fabric on. We all probably have some sea shells from trips to beaches. This is a time to put those shells to good use. Using Superglue, paste a large shell and/or several small ones to further beautify your box. Experiment with different types of fabric, the felt ones look very pretty.