

# FAQ about Writers

MAISHA MALIHA

It's been over a year I've been working here at SHOUT and I still abstain from telling anyone that I do. The absurd requests that I'm bombarded with shortly afterwards is something I don't look forward to at all. I'm hoping this article will shed some light upon the more important questions regarding what we do.

**"Why do you write?"**

Simply because I can. I've always had a strong affinity for manipulating words to stories that ought to linger on minds even though it's about the most archetypal things. I came to the realisation, I might actually be good at something. It got stuck and now, I'm always looking out to express more of my thoughts through writing that I generally keep to myself. It's definitely not because I have no friends.

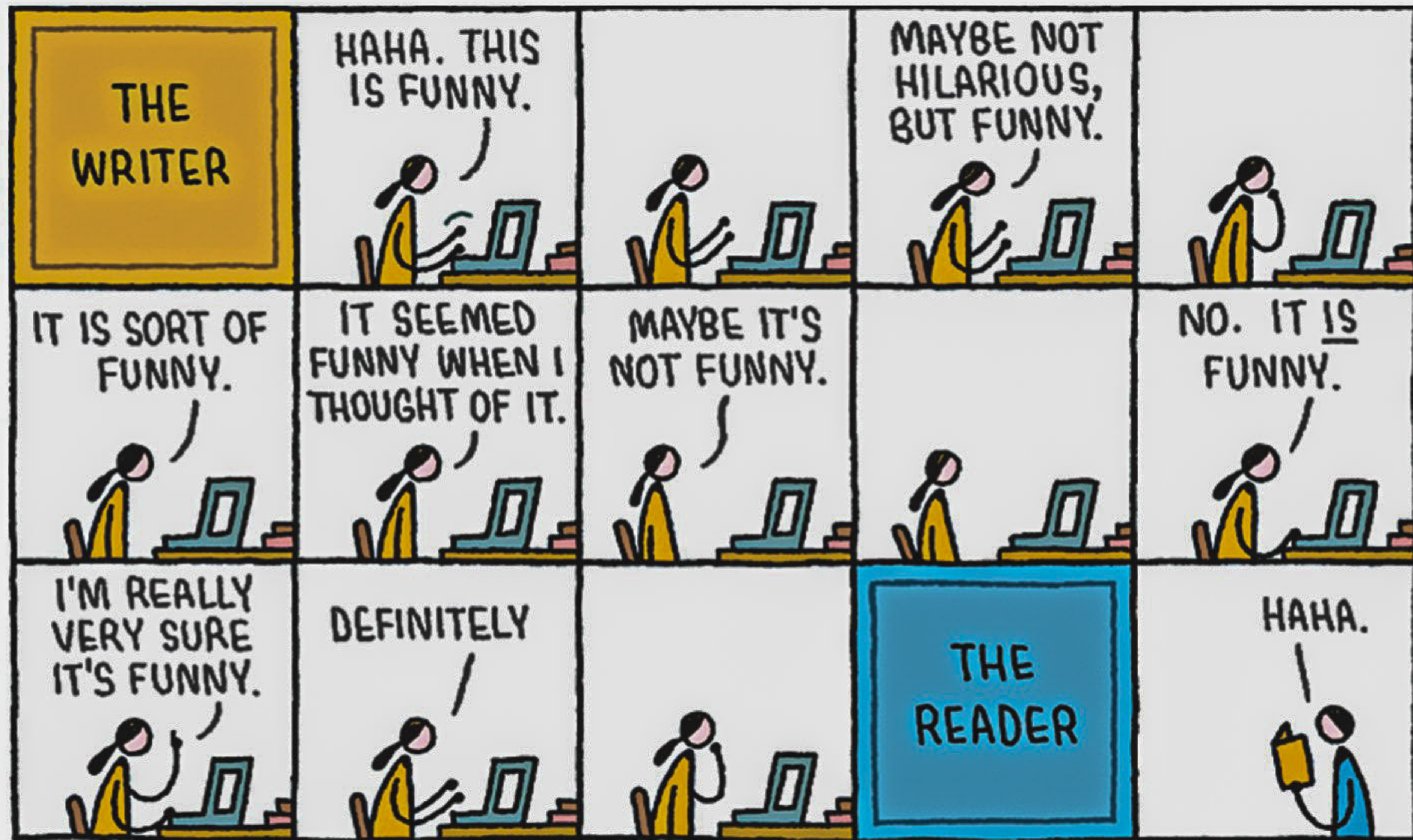
**"How do you know so many words?"**

**Can you give me some tips on how to become a better writer?"**

Two words: read books. Lots of them. Don't like reading books? Watch movies. Also, maybe, read SHOUT. I hear it's pretty good.

**"Do you get paid? How much?"**

To answer your first question and to your utter surprise, yes. As for the latter, the



more it is, the less you'll like it anyway. It's better if you imagine us scraping by with nothing.

**"How many and what kind of books do you read, since you're a writer?"**

I don't read a bunch of books just to prepare to write one article; I seek entertainment/information from books and in the process, I happen to pick up writing skills and learn new words. That's something that's entirely dependant on the individual. The last book I read was a thriller about a serial killer; obviously, I wasn't reading that to write this article.

**"Can you check the grammar and spelling in this love letter I'm writing for my significant other?"**

Ummm, I don't really know who you are but okay. As long as you don't ask me to write it for you.

**"Can you write me a love letter for my significant other?"**

...No. But if you're really desperate, I charge by the word.

**"Can you write a nice caption for**

**my picture?"**

I can suggest a nice quotes link online.

**"I read your fiction; you wrote that the girl smokes. You really shouldn't smoke."**

That's...that's fictional. Did you also think I'm married to a middle aged man with dimples?

**"Please help me in the English exam when I kick your chair."**

Now, I might be too old to go to school but I think it's my duty to speak for all the young(er) writers out there: how about when you kick my chair I get up and hit you with it, "FRIEND"?!?

**"Bro, I wrote this poem for my girlfriend. Can you get it published in the Shouts?"**

There are many different answers to this particular question. Firstly, you do realise that I don't own the publication, right? Secondly, the least you could've done before reaching out for such an atrocious request is to get the name right. Thirdly, "Roses are red, violets are blue; you are my

girlfriend and I love you" is barely anything.

**"Anyone can write, what's the big deal about that?"**

True indeed: anyone CAN write, that's what we were predominantly taught to do back when we first started out in school. However, letting the mind think beyond the norm, visualising the images of the stories, and then finally inking them down on paper – that's something not everyone can do unless they were groomed well. You cannot expect one to be writing for renowned publications with just typing skills, you know.

**"You must have a day job as well."**

If I keep popping out more writing for my readers, it helps to pay my bills and vice versa. I try to write as much as I can but naturally, my private life tends to become inundating and I have to prioritise. After

running back and forth from classes, I hardly get a chance to eat my dinner let alone study and that's how writing and I become estranged sometimes.

**"How can you make typos? Are you SURE you're a writer?"**

I am humane.

**"Can you write..."**

FOR CRYING OUT LOUD, I WILL NOT WRITE YOUR TERM PAPER, LETTERS TO YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER, PHOTO CAPTIONS OR JOB APPLICATIONS; I WILL NOT RATE YOUR ARTICLES, NEITHER WILL I HELP YOU WIN INTERNET ARGUMENTS WITH FANCY WORDS.

Maisha Maliha speaks what crosses her mind in the most positive way but is often misinterpreted and thought to be a lunatic. Unfollow her at [www.facebook.com/MyshoeMaliha](http://www.facebook.com/MyshoeMaliha)

