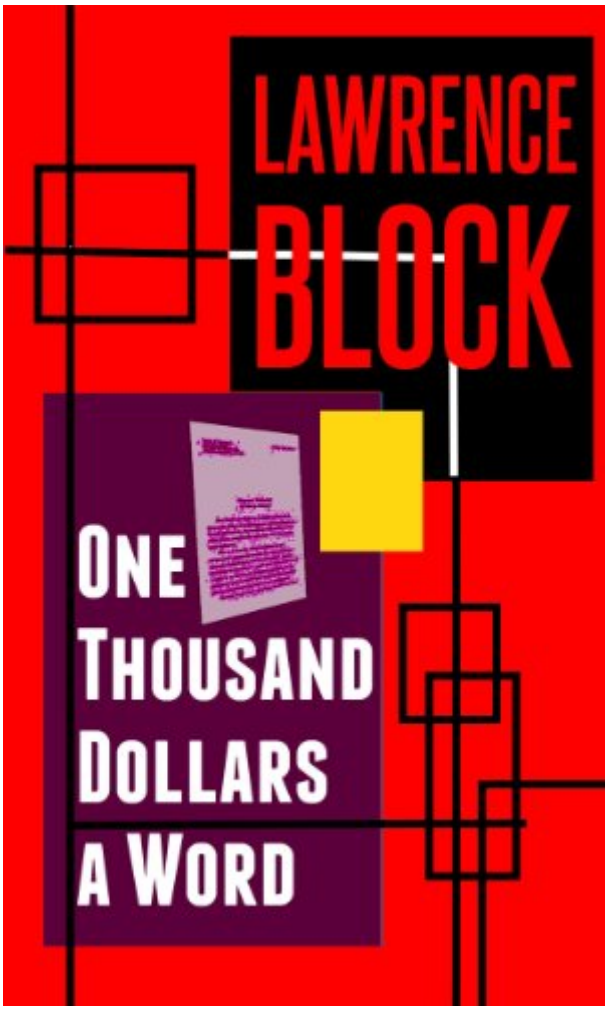
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One Thousand Dollars A Word



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Synopsis

It’s not hard to figure out where "One Thousand Dollars a Word" came from. The situation it describes was authentic enough, although I never heard of anyone who found the protagonist’s particular solution to this dilemma. Back in the first half of the twentieth century, and even well into the 1950s, a prolific writer could make a respectable living writing short fiction for magazines. There was a great profusion of markets; the better ones paid generously, and even the markets of last resort would put food on a writer’s table.TV and paperback books changed everything. Magazines folded left and right, not to mention right and left. The ones that survived were hardly thriving. They had to hold the line, and they did so by making their payment to writers the world’s sole hedge against inflation. Everything else went up in price; a writer’s words stayed where they were, or drifted gently downward. Some writers crossed the street to write paperback novels, or crossed the country to write television shows. But there were others who were born to write short stories, and that left them high and dry, and even dry and high.Thus this story. It was, as you might imagine, hugely popular among writers; Whenever our paths crossed, one colleague simply intoned, "One. Thousand. Dollars. A. Word," sighed, and walked off shaking his head. It’s been anthologized from time to time over the years, and I included it in Sometimes They Bite as well as my omnibus collection, Enough Rope.Its first appearance, ironically enough, was in Alfred Hitchcock’s Mystery Magazine in 1978, where it earned its creator the munificent sum of 5Ã Â¢ a word.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jim Trevathan has been writing detective stories for twenty years. He’s still making the same rate per word that he did twenty years ago: 5 cents a word. He’s barely making ends meet.When Jim turns in his next story, he asks his editor, Warren Jukes, for a raise. Warren can’t give him a per word raise, instead he suggests Jim find another more lucrative genre to supplement his income.Jim goes home wondering what kind of writing would pay more?This is a short story that includes the first chapter of the book, "The Burglar Who Counted The Spoons."I’d recommend this story to readers who like Lawrence Block’s twist endings, because this one has a definite twist at the end.

This is one short story worth recommending to everybody! Just when you wonder where it’s going ... there you are!And the surprise ending comes so quickly, I didn’t have time to think that I might be disappointed. Lawrence Block has been around for quite a while but his talent has not diminished one iota. He has grown sharper and more gifted with age!This one is worth $1K a word, for sure! I guess you can tell that I enjoyed every expensive word.

"Trevathan sat at his battered Underwood and stared at a blank sheet of paper. The paper had gone up a dollar a ream in the past year, and he could swear they’d cheapened the quality in the process. Everything cost more, he thought, except his own well-chosen words. They were still trading steadily at a nickel a piece."James Trevathan just earned a nickel a word for the detective story he sold to the magazine.He’s been earning a nickel a word for the last twenty years.Now he sits nervously in front of his well-groomed editor asking for a raise. After the editor lists all the reasons that the magazine cannot afford to pay its writers more money, he suggests that Trevathan might want to "branch out in a new direction."And that, my friends, is exactly what Trevathan does...Block has crafted a fun and witty short story. It is sparse and lean, but it gets the job done.Currently $2.99, you do the math to figure out how much YOU’LL be paying per word.

This is a very short piece that anyone who has tried to make a living at writing will enjoy. The

dialogue is crisp. And, surprisingly a minimal amount of sex, violence, and dirty words so all can enjoy even those who don't enjoy much.

Maybe it's because I'm a writer, too, but I love the premise of this story: Writer told they can't pay him anymore money than he was making years ago, so he comes up with a creative solution that will pay him a thousand dollars a word.Worth noting (as is noted in the product listing, as well) that this story is included in his omnibus collection "Enough Rope" Do yourself a favor and buy the whole thing -- it'll keep you reading for a long time and is filled with great stories by this master.

Block is the master of the short story and this little tale will put a big smile on your face when you get to the end.

Now see, this is a smart short story, which begs the question, now why couldn't I think of this? I have to admit, I'm not objective when it comes to Mr. Block's body of work, I love it all. Thanks for the freebie sir, yes, I read it years ago, but these E-Readers books are so handy they are fun to read again.

A story that as an aspiring writer will make you think and as a reader of short stories enjoy. The writing is tight and loose enough to stretch your imagination as to where the story is going. If you are are lover of the short story genre then let Mr.Block entertain you. No disappointment here.

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