

21 hours ago

Pretty Dust

“Fiction is about everything human and we are made out of dust, and if you scorn getting yourself dusty, then you shouldn't try to write fiction. It's not a grand enough job for you.”

— *Flannery O'Connor*

Flannery O'Connor understood the beauty and necessity of dust. Her stories weren't clean or polished; they were jagged, raw, full of grace and grit. Like the prophet Jeremiah, she named uncomfortable truths—and met resistance from the very culture that should've understood her best. Pretty stories, please, Flannery. Keep it clean.

Even now, when a writer dares to let the dust settle into their stories—their doubt, grief, longing, questions—they often face criticism. Stories, especially in some circles, are expected to shimmer. No cracks. No shadows. Just smiles and tidy endings. But when we force art into a glittering shell of perfection, it loses its soul. It becomes hollow.

If you're a new writer—especially one trying to write from a place of depth or purpose—here's what I want you to know: **You don't have to keep it pretty.**



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You don't need to sanitize your sorrow, or cover your flaws with high-gloss prose. You're made of dust. Your characters are, too. And the truest stories come from that place—where truth meets imperfection, where honesty dares to outshine polish.

I've stood at that same crossroads—wondering if I needed to soften what I felt or make my voice sweeter to fit a mold. But I've learned this: the stories I believe in, the ones that last, are the ones unafraid to get a little dirty.

So go ahead—write from the cracked places. Let your stories breathe dust and grace. That's where the real beauty lives. . . that's how the light gets in.

Posted 21 hours ago by [Patty](#)



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