Writing Exercise #4

These exercises present photographic images to be used in fifteen-minute fast writes. At first glance, you may find nothing especially promising about them. But these exercises are not about the pictures. What is important is learning how to use them to explore the richness of your mind. Think of them as tools. They are gateways to your unconscious.

Focus your mind on the image rather than your thoughts about it. Whether you like the picture or not is beside the point. Learning to focus is the important part. Just allow your thought to flow.

You need not answer the questions that accompany the exercise. They are here to help generate material, nothing more.

Do not spend time studying the photos before you write. Think about them as little as possible. Look at the picture for a minute, read the questions, and write for fifteen minutes.

Here are the cues:

Part I

1. Look at the photo of the room by Tom Benham on page 123 of The Eloquent Umbrella.

2. Consider the following questions.
   • Whose castle is this?
   • Who just left the castle?
   • What kind of work is done here?
   • What unusual transaction took place here?
   • Who made a deal in this castle?
   • Who occupied this castle before the present occupant?
   • Is the person working here honest or dishonest?
   • What worries the person living here?
   • Who cried in this castle?
   • What surprising communication does the person make?
   • What surprising messages will the person receive?
   • What will happen in this castle?

3. In fifteen minutes, write a short, one-page story or poem about the photo.

Part II

Now take another fifteen minutes and write a brief, two-paragraph critical analysis of your writing. Mention what worked for you, what did not, what was difficult or problematic, how you solved these problems. Mention what you learned from the exercise and what you would did differently than in the first such exercise.

Take the writing exercise home and print it up in MLA format to be handed in next class.

Total: 10 points.