

Story Notes and Behind the Scenes at



No. 76 The Mean Streets of Yorkton

I've been wanting to tell a story using works of art for a while now. This tale is the result. And like other 'unusual' stories required a fair bit of thinking about and planning.

The idea is to construct a tale around several pieces of art the two characters are looking at, whilst they discuss their business walking around the Yorkton Museum. The artwork the characters are viewing accompanying what the characters are saying and thinking.

The painting of the red apple in front of a man's face is based on **Rene Magritte's** famous painting **The Son of Man**, 1946.

The view of House and Grisdale viewing the above painting, whilst they themselves appear to be in a painting is my (poor) attempt at producing a *Trompe l'oeil* painting. I did this by adding an ant to the actual picture frame. Not being an artist I'm not sure I succeeded.

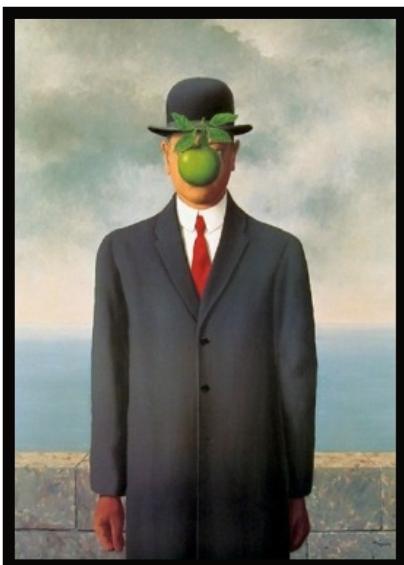
In fine art, the term *Trompe l'oeil* refers to the technique of visual illusion, whereby the eye of the viewer is deceived into thinking that a painting is actually a three-dimensional object, rather than merely a two-dimensional representation of it. (I want to explore using *Trompe l'oeil* paintings in another story at some time in the future).

On page four I have surrounded the two characters with items that could be found in a general *Vanitas* painting. 'A *vanitas* is a symbolic work of art showing the transience of life, the futility of pleasure, and the certainty of death, often contrasting symbols of wealth and symbols of ephemerality and death.' (Wikipedia).

Finally, we have my version of **Rodin's, The Thinker**. 'The **Thinker** is a bronze sculpture by **Auguste Rodin**, usually placed on a stone pedestal. The work shows a nude male figure of heroic size sitting on a rock with his chin resting on one hand as though deep in thought, often used as an image to represent philosophy.' (Wikipedia).

All House, Private Detective stories will be in black and white, but for this tale, the artwork remains in colour, so the artwork stands out. Our friend the backpacker makes another cameo appearance. He does get around.

The advertisement is based on a British Railways poster from the 1950's, reproduced far right. A duck took the place of the Kingfisher bird.



Above the Son of Man by **Rene Magritte**.



Above - an example of a *trompe l'oeil* painting **Escaping Criticism** (1874) by artist **Pere Borrell del Caso**.

