Clichés

A cliché is a “tired expression.”¹ The problem with finding new ways of describing things in new ways is that they are seen by many and quoted by everyone. These sayings are so well known that they are no longer original.

Once upon a time there was a cat trapped in a burlap sack. On a dark and stormy night, his owner, a lonely old man, let the cat out of the bag. It was as hungry as a horse and saw as clear as crystal something tasty sitting across the room. Father time was on its side until curiosity killed the cat, and it dashed across the room, which was as useful as an ashtray on a motorcycle, since the man saw him at the last minute. He said no, but the cat was going in for the kill. Since all’s fair in love and war, the man lifted the slightly opened bag of food out of reach, leaving the cat to slam face first into the wall. The cat was all bent out of shape, but the man’s actions definitely spoke louder than his words.

Look at all of the bolded phrases. Each one of these could be considered a cliché. Some are more well-known than others, but they should all be avoided for the sake of creativity. If you avoid using tired phrases, you have the chance to be more creative in your own work. If you create new, unique phrases to replace the tired ones, your work will draw readers in automatically. People don’t want to hear the same things they have heard their entire lives; they want something thrilling and fresh, which only happens if you drop the clichés and write something new.