**WRITING EXERCISE FOR WW STUDENTS OUT ON 12/14/12**

**What do Etgar Keret’s speculative scenarios reveal? How can we generate ideas to write our own speculative fiction?**

**Raymond M. Coulombe of Quantum Muse**   
What is Speculative Fiction? The classic answer is that it's the fiction of 'what if?' What if we had a time machine? What if we had faster than light travel? What if there was a codified reliable system of magick? What if we had honest government?

For me, that is a nice place to start, and whole careers have been made writing nothing but 'what if?' stories. Writers could do worse. Sadly, many do.

For me, speculative fiction sees the world with new eyes. It can hit like a boot to the head. It can slowly invade your mind, like an infestation of termites that slowly chew away at your supports. Or it can surprise with unexpected delight, like striking a monster and discovering it's just a big Pinata. Speculative fiction is the fiction of unlimited possibilities.

To misquote the U. S. Supreme Court, 'I can't quite define it, but I know it when I see it.'

Think about how Keret’s stories fit this definition of “speculative fiction.” What’s the speculation in each, and what does each reveal about the characters involved?

Writing exercise:

List 15 routine things you do in your life:

5 you don’t like doing

5 you enjoy

5 that are routine and you don’t have any particular feeling about

List 10 possible interruptions – things that could go wrong/couldn’t really happen.

Choose one from each list, and – 10 minutes – write a story in which this routine is interrupted in this way. Other than that, the world is normal. Any POV: 1st, 2nd, 3rd.

HW: 2-3 pp short shorts due Monday. Longer story workshop Thursday.