

Behind the Nib - by Lou Metcalf

Installment #4

Your reservoir. Is it really full or only partly full?

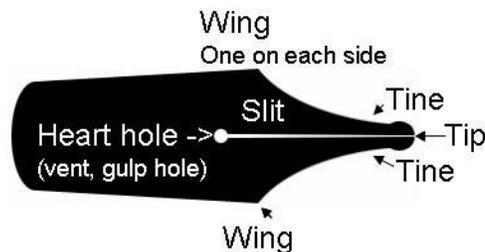
I received the following emails over the past few months. They are representative of many I get regularly from new fountain pen users (and some not so new users).

"This may be a stupid question, but here goes. I recently bought a *brand name withheld*. I've filled it successfully several times via its *brand name withheld* piston, but notice that the ink reservoir only gets to be about half full even before I expel the "three drops." While the pen writes a while, it'd write even longer with more ink in the tank, as it were. Anyone have a similar problem? Or is it just the nature of this pen?"

"My (insert name of your current 'carry' fountain pen) only fills about half way. Do the more expensive pumps hold more?"

Just as you can "top off" your car's gas tank, you can "**top up**" your fountain pen reservoir! I have used this method on lever-fillers, button-fillers, piston-fillers and aerometric- (vacuum) fillers. I haven't figured out how to apply the process to eyedropper-fillers, but that's probably because I don't own one!

Regardless of your filler-system, when filling your pen, make sure the nib is fully submerged (past the vent hole) in the ink.



If your reservoir is only partly full "top it up"! With the nib point turned upwards twist the actuating knob (or squeeze the pressure bar) until the ink nearly floods the feed. Without releasing, return the nib to the ink bottle and twist the actuating knob back the other way (or release the pressure bar) until pen is full. You may have to do this twice to completely fill the reservoir. Drop out the three drops as usual and your pen reservoir will be full...minus the three drops!

Be careful and attentive and you won't spill ink down your fingers! Otherwise, you'd be well-advised to keep some INK NIX on hand.