

Dragon in the Mirror Newsletter

Better late than never.

I woke up early last Saturday (one week ago) and started to draft my newsletter at 5:17 AM since I'd been awake since three. Why was up so early on the weekend? Well, I've noticed that when I have several outstanding tasks on my to-do list, I have difficulty *staying* asleep. I fall asleep with no issues. But if I wake up during the night for any reason, my brain will be—*BAM!!! Let's get cracking!*

And one of the things I should have done was finish this newsletter. And maybe cleaned the floors. Or finished editing the other book I drafted in 2020 so that I could send it off to an editor for copy and line edits. And maybe finished writing chapter eight of my new book. (No, not the third book in the Dragon in the Mirror series. It's a different work-in-progress—something else my brain thought it would be fun to write.)

This newsletter . . . where to start? First off, I need to apologize to readers of this newsletter for my tardiness. It's been a difficult month with many personal changes that I won't get into here. Secondly, I also want to apologize to my Facebook followers for deleting my Dragon in the Mirror Facebook account in late January/early February because I never made an announcement before I hit that delete key. I have several reasons why I left the social media platform: some pertain to political reasons, some relate to new anticipated time limitations, and others were simply an attempt to protect my own mental health. In the end, though, it came down to this: I want to write. That's it, that's all.

Over the last two years, I've learned that some writers can write and manage their social media accounts. That's awesome! But, after two years, I know I'm not one of them, and I'm not alone. And that's okay. We all do things differently. But I know I don't have the energy to get involved in Twitter or Facebook wars, or become anxious over what I think someone might have meant by some tweet or post, or should I or shouldn't I follow that person?

In the last few months, I've also found that I have fewer hours in the day to work on my manuscripts because of other new personal commitments. So, when I have a few "free" hours, I prefer to spend my time producing the best story I can and promoting my books through specific marketing platforms that work for me to give each new novel the best chance of success. I know it might take me longer to get to where I'm going because I have only a couple of social media accounts, and that's alright. I've been writing for ten-plus years—so I'm in this for the long haul.

The step back from social media has made me less anxious and more productive. But unfortunately, it didn't stop me from my obsessive doom-scrolling of news events. I was feeling better until—I think you know. So, let's just leave it at that.

Let's Talk About Writing Now

What have I been up to with my writing?

Currently, I'm in the process of releasing a series of short stories on Tortuous Tales. They are a mix of flash fiction and primarily fantasy short stories written over the last two years. Tortuous Tales has been terribly neglected, so I'm recommitting time to my blog again. And on that note, there's a new story available to read titled, "The Lights Out Theater," about a vampire, an award-winning photojournalist, a philanthropist, and a regular girl. What do they all have in common? Read the post here to find out: <https://tortuoustales.com/2022/04/13/the-lights-out-theater/>

As mentioned earlier, I'm currently prepping a manuscript to send to an editor for additional revisions. My next book, which I hope to release by the fall of this year, is a story set in a fictional town in British Columbia and Ireland and tells a tale of two sisters searching for missing medical research at two different points in time. This story is an urban fantasy, and it's geared to adults and is not recommended for young readers.

Book three of the Dragon in the Mirror series, I plan to start drafting in the fall of 2022. So, by the time of the next newsletter (that will be June), I'll perhaps have the outline and can share some tidbits about what to expect in the final book. As well, there might also be a title, and a cover reveal.

😊 I can't believe it myself: I'm a writer who struggles with both titles and covers, and yet, I already have the title and an idea for the cover.

I know that's not much about writing. However, my experience with this journey is this: Whenever a book is close to release, there are many things to share, such as the title and cover, excerpts from the book, and general plot details. But whenever I start something new, I find most of my time is spent working with my head down, hunched over my keyboard, and typing as the sun peeks out over the horizon. That alone would make this job annoying if I didn't love writing so much. But I do love it—so it doesn't bother me.

Stay safe, everyone, and do whatever you need to do to take care of yourself and your loved ones.

All the best,

Penelope

Author Bio

Penelope Hawtrey is a writer of short stories and novels and is the author of the Dragon in the Mirror series. The third and final installment of the series is tentatively scheduled to be released in 2023.

Book 1: *Dragon in the Mirror: Into Canonsland*

Book 2: *The Bridge of Olin*

Connect with Penelope at the following sites:

Website: <http://www.penelopeshawtrey.com>

Goodreads: <https://www.goodreads.com/penelopeshawtrey>

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