

Inside this Meandering Author's Mind

***It's time to switch gears.**

I'm currently in the process of drafting my third book in the Dragon in the Mirror series. Well, sort of. It's happening in my head right now, not in front of a computer screen. However, I know one thing for sure: As this is the final installment of the series, I want the cover to be different, Jayden's vision of herself must change, and how the series concludes must be realistic. (Or as realistic as it can be when there are dragons, knights, seers, and magic.)

There's also a scene in *The Bridge of Olin* when Jayden's mother asks her about her future. In the third book, I feel Jayden must tackle some of her concerns about what she wants to do in the future and how she plans to get there. Of course, this doesn't mean that by the end of the book, everything will end ideally like a bow on a wedding dress—but I hope it will be satisfying for readers.

And what happens after the Dragon in the Mirror series ends to this author? I'll keep writing. Will I revisit the characters again? I've contemplated a prequel that centers around Wyndham's early life as a knight and when he first meets Enisseny. Wouldn't that be fun? A younger Wyndham, behaving like Laurence, discovers he's a partner to the dragon and that Enisseny is the gatekeeper of other realms? Yes, that could be interesting.

But if I did write a prequel, it might not be for several years. While I've loved writing this series, it takes time to find my writing groove again when I begin to draft the next installment. Also, a break from a project is a relief, too. I want to write new stories in modern settings and invent new characters. And I want to write standalone books where the end of the book will be the conclusion to that protagonist's journey. It's thrilling when I tap away on my keyboard and form characters, and plotlines take shape. Sure, endings are difficult. Beginnings, however, are exciting.

Before I complete one book, I usually start writing something new. So, after I released *Dragon in the Mirror: Into Canonsland* in 2019, I wrote another manuscript, finished it in July 2020, and spent the last two years editing it while simultaneously working on *The Bridge of Olin*. In the next few months, I hope to release my standalone novel. The book is an urban fantasy and is *definitely* for adults. As the new book is not part of the Dragon in the Mirror series, I won't discuss it in this newsletter. However, I'll provide a glimpse of what to expect in my new novel in the September/October newsletter issue.

*Why did I title this: "It's time to switch gears"? Because I'm going to talk about other projects in the future.

What else have I been up to?

I don't regret the choices I've made during the pandemic: the canceled book signing, my decision not to leave the province or the country over the last two years (in truth, I barely left my home), and when I decided to limit how often I attended public settings.

In the spring of this year, several months after receiving my booster, I waited and held my breath and hoped our case numbers wouldn't soar again in my city and worldwide. Then businesses slowly opened up around me, and limits were increased to store maximums, and masking policies were slowly dropped. The numbers climbed but not by the same volume they had in the past when doctors and nurses were sleep-deprived, and hospitals were overwhelmed with patients.

Feeling that perhaps the worst of the pandemic might be behind us, I decided I wanted to tackle some other things this year. First, I signed up for a half-marathon that I planned to run and then switched to a virtual run/walk when an ongoing health problem made it difficult to run for several months. But in late May, I did a virtual walk. It took me over four hours to complete and is my slowest half-marathon *ever*. I should be disappointed in myself. I'm not, though. I got it done, I felt great, and while it's a crawl of a return to the person I once was, it's still a return. And I'm good with that. (Also, I got some fantastic photos of trees, clouds, and Canadian Geese because I took my time and enjoyed the day because I wasn't obsessing over when I would complete the walk.)

I also recently left the city and, later, left the province. It's been a good month. If our infections rise again, I'll scale back my activities to protect family, friends, work colleagues, and strangers. I'll do whatever Health Canada recommends. For now, though, I'm enjoying the sunshine.

And on that note, I'll say adieu for now. Keep an eye out in the fall for the next newsletter.

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:

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