

## *This November 2022*

### **When I can't do it all, I choose not to.**

So, I haven't started drafting the third book in the Dragon in the Mirror series yet. I've realized something about myself over the last few years: I have difficulty working on new projects when I'm close to releasing a book because it takes all my brain power to get the beastly book into the final stages for readers. Over the final days before the release, I will second-guess every word, double and triple-check plots to make sure they make sense, and review every scene to ensure it serves a purpose and is not overdone. (I sometimes have a flair for the dramatic.)

Oh, and then there's formatting . . . Don't even get me started . . .

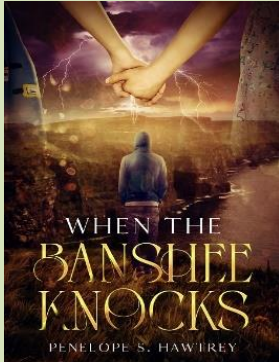
A few years ago, I would fight the need to dedicate all my time to a sole task. I would consider other authors and wonder: *Why can't I be like that person who has four babies at home, can write thirty thousand words in a day, and advertises on TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram? Ooh, and they also wrote a six-thousand-word story that was picked up by the New Yorker.* So, I would try to do it all, and then I found I was struggling to finish everything—even a short story. This led to questions of, *What's the matter with me that I can't get anything done?* I also frequently found mistakes in whatever I had completed, and this would be followed by a frantic attempt to make corrections. From there, imposter syndrome descended and stripped away the thin layer of self-confidence I had felt some days.

I did this method of madness over several years. But this year, I realized the old way wasn't working—so I needed to change. I have no problem tackling multiple projects in the early stages of drafting. However, when I'm in the final phase of releasing a book, I can't. The anxiety alone makes my hair fall out. Well, not quite. But I am prone to an unconscious nervous habit of picking my skin, sometimes, until it bleeds. Thanks to a book I read in the last few years, I know this is an indicator of anxiety. And what I realized was the cape-wearing author who's scribbling fifty thousand words on their fifteen-minute break doesn't exist. (Probably.) Or maybe those writers do exist, but they have help. Or perhaps they don't. And that's wonderful, too. Because you know what? We're all different.

That's my way of apologizing for this delayed newsletter. But by focussing on one task, *When the Banshee Knocks* (my adult urban fantasy standalone novel) is now available on Kindle, and the paperback should be complete by the end of 2022. Still, proof copies are sometimes delayed, and formatting issues appear unexpectedly. But as the paperback is nearly done, things look good to meet the deadline. In early 2023, I will also make the ebook available on other devices.

Next up, let's check out some updates to the website, shall we?

## Updates to My Website



As mentioned, *When the Banshee Knocks* is now available on Kindle. The link for Kindle can also be found below. 😊

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0BLD1Y7WD>

The prologue is available as a PDF and can be downloaded from [www.penelopeshawtrey.com](http://www.penelopeshawtrey.com). The link for the PDF is located directly below the image of the cover.

## In conclusion . . .

This will be my last newsletter for 2022. Expect to see the next newsletter in February 2023. By then, I will have begun drafting the third book in the Dragon in the Mirror series. *I promise.*

At the end of every year, I sometimes forget what I've achieved over the last 365 days. So I thought briefly about listing some of my accomplishments in this newsletter. But I like keeping some things private, and some of my successes have been personal. I also know that I sometimes see other people's achievements as a benchmark for what I should or should be doing. For example, many authors say that self-published authors must write and release a book every six months. *Sure.* But I know that's not going to work for me. And I'm okay with it.

As this tumultuous year closes (another one), this is what I'm grateful for: To still be here with friends and family and to write and share stories. I wish everyone all the best in 2023 for happiness, health, and prosperity. And above all else—peace.

All the best,

*Penelope*

P.S. Why is this letter green? During the pandemic, I realized half my wardrobe was green. I had no idea why. Then it dawned on me: Green is my “come home” and “everything will be all right” colour. And it's my favorite.

## Author Bio

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