

KWI: Kansas Writer's Ink

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KWI'S 2013

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Inside this issue:

Character Creation	1
Online Workshops	2
Dandu Ruins Park	3
Get Published	3
Upcoming Programs	4
Next Meeting	4

Character Creation

By: Billie-Renee Knight

I was having a conversation with a fellow writer last week and she told me creating characters was one of her least favorite parts of writing. I was so surprised I didn't know how to respond at first. I adore creating characters and I've always thought characters were what drove the writing in the first place. My friend felt she was too limited in creating her cast of characters because she found herself basing them on people she knows in real life. I asked right off the bat why that worried her. She replied it was illegal. That made me step back for a second and consider what exactly she meant. Finally she told me it made her feel like she was cheating. Additionally she worried her friends would recognized themselves in her work and become angry.

I am a people watcher. I pay attention to the people around me – what they look like, what they do, the way they speak and the way they say it. If I see something really interesting I often make a note of it in the little notebook I carry with me all the time. This summer when I was in Yellowstone I noticed the little old lady who was staying in the cabin next to us always had a different

walking stick to match her outfit of the day. Having looked into buying one I knew exactly how expensive they were and it made me wonder about her. We were neighbors at Old Faithful for seven days and I never saw her with the same stick twice. I would also look at my little rucksack and wonder how she packed them and if she always traveled with so many. She and her husband were driving a rental car, so that got me wondering how she traveled and if by airplane how was she going to get them all home. One evening I sketched out an eccentric character based on the lady that I might work into one of my current projects.

While on the same trip I ran into an interesting man of about thirty years old. He was visiting the Buffalo Bill Historical Center and I had seen him there studying the exhibits for three days running. He had incredibly pale skin and silver white hair that reached the back of his thighs. All in all he was pretty striking. He ended up sharing a table with me in the cafeteria. I assumed he was albino, but I was shocked to see his eyes were a pale grey color. I made copious notes on him in my

notebook. He was a musician on vacation and his interesting coloring was the result of an illness in his teens. His hair had changed from light brown to silver white and his skin became nearly translucent. I thought that would be a great background to round out some future character.

Do I base characters on people I know? Heck yes, I do. Do I use an acquaintance lock, stock and barrel? Not so much. I find it much more fun to mix and match characteristics and personalities to make just the right character for whatever project I'm working on at the time. I figure as long as my friends and family cannot readily identify themselves in my characters then there's no harm done. And it's really funny when they try to guess who a particular character is based on because they are rarely correct. My friend agreed to try using a couple of my techniques to help make her character creation easier. Later that night she called me, all excited about this guy she saw at the grocery store. I look forward to discovering him in her next piece of writing.

September Online Workshops By Angela Johnson

Menages, Polyamory, Swingers...Oh, My!

Date: September 1, 2013

Presenter: Dr. Charlie Ferrer. FMI, <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffin.html>.

Writing Steamy Sex Scenes: Making Your Readers Beg for More

Date: September 1, 2013

Presenter: Suzanne Rock. FMI, <http://www.rwamysterysuspense.org/coffin.html>.

Show and Tell, an Interactive Workshop

Date: September 1–28, 2013

Presenter: Shannon Donnelly.

FMI, <http://heartofcarolina.org/calendar/>.

Tips and Techniques for More Effective Proofreading

Date: September 1–28, 2013

Presenter: Ally Broadfield.

FMI, <http://fthrw.com/online-workshops>, e-mail workshops@fthrw.com.

Romancing Resistance

Dates: September 1–29, 2013

Presenter: Hillary Hutchinson.

FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

The Writer's Compass: Plotting for the Directionally Challenged

Dates: September 1–29, 2013

Presenter: Fran Colley/Terry Osburn.

FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

Writing Short Stories to Promote Your Novels

Dates: September 1–29, 2013

Presenter: Rayne Hall.

FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

Scotland & Ireland vs. the Tudors

Dates: September 1–30, 2013

Presenter: Sharon Gunn.

FMI, <http://www.celtichearts.org/workshops>.

Book Promotions for Beginners

Date: September 1–30, 2013

Presenter: Beth Barany.

FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG4>.

Editing Like a Pro

Date: September 1–30, 2013

Presenter: Pat Hauldren.

FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG3>.

I Used to Hate Writing a Synopsis, But Not Anymore

Date: September 1–30, 2013

Presenter: Susan Palmquist.

FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG2>.

Peeling Yourself Off the Wall: Dodging the Writer's Block Bullet

Date: September 1–30, 2013

Presenter: Beth Daniels.

FMI, <http://www.oirwa.com/forum/campus/#AUG1>.

Bare Bones: Forensics Basics for Writers

Date: September 2–13, 2013

Presenter: Kerri Nelson.

FMI, <http://www.yosemiteromancewriters.com>.

The Unique Strength of Damaged Heroes

Dates: September 2–16, 2013

Presenter: Kris Tualla.

FMI, <http://www.carolinaromancewriters.com/online-workshop-schedule.html>

Using the Rule of Six for Plotting

Dates: September 2–29, 2013

Presenter: Shirley Jump.

FMI, <http://www.carolinaromancewriters.com/online-workshop-schedule.html>.

Keeping the Tension Alive in Romance Without Sex

Date: September 2–30, 2013

Presenter: Susan Meier. FMI, e-mail neorwaonline@gmail.com or

visit <http://www.neorwa.com/index.php/Workshops/Workshops>.

Incorporating Humor Into Your Writing

Date: September 3–27, 2013

Presenter: Ally Broadfield.

FMI, www.passionateink.org/workshops.

Making Scenes Come Alive

Dates: September 9–30, 2013

Presenter: Dee Lloyd.

FMI, <http://lowcountryrwa.com/workshops/all-workshops/#SEP>.

The Writer's Primer of Common Errors: Head-hopping and Roaming Body Parts

Date: September 16–29, 2013

Presenter: MM Pollard.

FMI, <http://www.frwriters.org/events/online-workshops/>.

Write in Passive Voice and Be Passed Over by a Publisher

Date: September 30–October 27, 2013

Presenter: MM Pollard.

FMI, <http://www.marylandromancewriters.com/>.

Dadu Ruins Park

By Eleanor Liu

Kublai Khan, the great Mongolian warrior established a new city northeast of the Jin capital and named it Dadu. It was 18 years in the building and became a great city and the capitol of the Yuan Dynasty.

Marco Polo visited the city and fascinated European readers with his tales of its magnificence. The Silk Road ended at its western gate. The walls of Dadu city were earthen and were 16 meters high by 24 meters wide. The moat formed from water of the Xiaoyue River fed into the Grand Canal which connected Dadu to Hangzhou and from there to the sea.

Trees have been planted along the walls that remain and have been called the Tucheng Forest

since 1974. The park today is a lovely one and contains a recreation area; several sculpture parks, and some wetlands for plants and wildlife. There are beautiful walking paths and parts of the old wall where one can walk on the wall itself.

The first section of the wall has two stone steles with dragon carvings; the crest of the wall is an unpaved path between pine trees. There are steps at various places where one can descend to the walkway beside the water. Benches here and there have sides featuring chariot wheel supports. There are arched bridges over the waterway, and several pavilions for rest and contemplation.

At one place there are two flocks of stone sheep beside pavilions which look like carved tree stumps. The largest sculpture park in Beijing is

also here and depicts much of the Yuan Dynasty's political, economic, military and cultural life. There are 19 other characters besides Kublai Khan and his wife, among them Marco Polo. Also featured is a long fresco depicting the period's urban life.

Other sculptures in the park are horses and elephants, along with replicas of Persian pottery and large "coins" to represent the bustling trade along the walls. There is a tunnel beneath the road that leads to the Asian Village. The environmental theme is promoted with signs such as "We need green grass and they need our love and care."

Get Published Or Miss Out!

Don't forget about this exciting opportunity to get published. The deadlines are fast approaching and I don't want you to miss out. In case you forgot dates, rules, formatting, etc., here is a recap:

Bloody Gavel E-Book

Write a Bloody Gavel Story—5,000 words or less and submit it by August 25th, 2013 to Morgan. She will edit and it will be included in the Bloody Gavel Anthology. Ian Hall will be designing the cover.

KWI Last Line Contest

For those that participated in the First

Line contest in January, we talked about putting together another anthology using first lines and last lines as the theme. Thus, a new contest was born. The contest is open to all members. You must write a short story of 5,000 words or less. Next, you will take one of the previous first lines in your last submission and make them the last line of a new story. In case you forgot what the lines were, here they are: She would go to hell for what she was about to do," or "I distinctly remember blowing this mother-fucker up a few days ago." Deadline for submissions will be Sep-

tember 8th, 2013. Once again, please send entries to Morgan. Upon request, she will edit the stories for you. Please allow two weeks for editing/polishing, with a tentative completion date of October 13th, 2013.

There will be a meeting to discuss the contests right after the KWI meeting on Saturday August 24th, 2013. For those that are wanting to take part in this, please plan on attending.

www.kswritersinc.com
www.kswriters.wordpress.com

Message from Billie-Renee Knight

Hi, I will be taking over the website management for KWI and I would like to set up a members page with photos and biographies for our members. I will also need to know if you write under a pen name and you prefer that to be the name publicized on our site. Once I get things set up if there are changes or corrections, please feel free to email me and let me know. I am looking forward to hearing from everyone! Thanks.

Contact Billie-Renee at knightdrk2@yahoo.com

**Next meeting: August 24th, 2013
10:00 AM—2:00 PM**

**Location: Topeka Shawnee County
Public Library**

Upcoming Programs

Fiction Writing Nanowrimo Webinar

Shake up your writing routine and recharge your imagination with a 90-minute webinar that challenges those who love to outline and those who write by the seat of their pants. National Novel Writing Month founder Chris Baty leads this session for fiction writers.

Where: Marvin Auditorium
101C (TSCPL)
When: Tue Sept 17th 6:30-8:45

SpeakEasy Community Novel Book Launch Party

Honor the work of 20 Topeka authors who penned Speak-

Easy, our 2nd annual Community Novel. Meet the authors, editors, and librarians involved and have them sign your print copy of the completed book. Or read it online at tscpl.org/community-novel. Bring your questions about self-publishing or how to be part of our next Community Novel Project.

Where: Marvin Auditorium
(TSCPL)
When: Sunday Sept. 8th, 2013
3:00pm-5:00pm

The Friends of the Library Book Sale

September 20th-22nd. Kansas Ex-
pocentre AG Hall

Friday 6:00-9:00 NEW THIS
YEAR! \$5 ADMISSION FOR
non-members- Friends Still Get
In Free! Memberships sold at the
door.

Saturday 9:00am-5:00pm
Sun 10:00am -5:00pm Free Ad-
mission. For more information
call 785-580-4445 or 580-4443

Kansas Book Festival
Saturday September 7th, 2013
from 9:00am-4:00pm
Kansas State Capitol
300 SW 10th.