



## Newsletter

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### *Welcome to Issue 11 - September 2017*

Firstly, congratulations to **Sue Harris**, who has won the grand prize in the **Booksie Flash Fiction Contest**. We have included her full entry, to give you an idea of what was involved.

This quarter we are pleased to welcome **WD Frank**, who has kindly provided some very useful advice for writers. WD is a writer of powerful, reactionary books, which are certainly not for those of nervous disposition, but he is doing what he needs to do to stand out and be different, and is starting to make an impact on the literary world.

Also, our **James Court** has produced an essential guide to formatting your manuscript. James is offering to take your work, and run it through an auto-formatter to test and set it up as needed for publishing. This is especially useful if you are not using the Inca or Createspace templates.

And finally, congratulations to **Jemahl Evans** for being accepted into the Historical Writers Association. Reading his book, **'The Last Roundhead'**, it is easy to see why.

There are also some more tips, about book descriptions – these are your second shop window after the cover, a helpful link if you are looking for related words to craft your novel, and some different ways of overcoming writer's block that you won't find in the usual sites.

**Reminder:** if you are doing a promotion on your books, please let us know directly because then we can help you to advertise it through the Inca portals. Also, if you have changed your links or cover or have moved your books, please keep us up to date.

As always, in the spirit of the Inca ideals, we would be very grateful if you could each buy, read and review on Amazon one of the other Inca writers. This helps to encourage someone else in the Inca team as well. If you can choose a book with only a few reviews on Amazon, that would be even better. Let me know when you have done so, and we'll be able to promote it via our channels.

Finally, if you haven't done our **author interview**, please have a look at the fun form, based on an imaginary radio chat, and send it in to the 'Welcome' address:

[www.incaproject.co.uk/resources/author\\_interview.docx](http://www.incaproject.co.uk/resources/author_interview.docx)

(Note, hold down the CTRL key while clicking on the links in this newsletter)

Best regards, Bridget

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## Flash Fiction Contest

Congratulations to Sue Harris for winning the grand prize in the Booksie Flash Fiction Contest with her short story 'Flash Fiction Contest'

<https://www.booksie.com/contest/Booksie+Spring+2017+Flash+Fiction+Contest-10>

The challenge was to look at the picture below, and in 200 words or less, choose one of the characters and write a story in any genre about what they are thinking, doing, feeling as you see them in the picture. The challenge of flash fiction is to create a thought-provoking story within the tight word constraints of the writing form, and as you know from trying to write your book descriptions, this is extremely difficult. Well done, Sue.



### Sue's entry

"Okay, I'm listening," Mia barked, her arms folded, green eyes glaring.

Todd steeled himself. "Look, I can explain. Alex is a colleague, we were working together on a project to a deadline. You're just jumping to conclusions."

"So I take it she stays at the same hotel when you're away on business? How convenient."

"Mia, stop." His eyes darted round the bustling cafeteria. "This is neither the time nor the place."

Mia leaned over and reached for his hand, her eyes brimming with tears. "You've changed, Todd, and don't tell me I'm imagining it. Look into my eyes, damn it!"

He snatched his hand away, recoiling at her touch, his eyes burning into the Formica surface of the table.

"Todd, you need to level with me. Our sex life is non-existent, you snap at the kids, and even when you're home, you're miles away. Tell me, is our marriage over?"

Todd lifted his eyes to face those green pools of scrutiny. "Yes, Mia, I'm afraid it is."

"So you're leaving me for Alex?"

"Mia, I'm so sorry, but there's something you need to know. I'm not leaving you for another woman, Alex is a man and we are in love."

## Publishing

### Artwork – Simon Walpole

If I may introduce myself, my name is Simon Walpole and I'm a **freelance illustrator**. If you are looking for artwork for your books, I would like to point you in the direction of my website: <http://swalpole6.wix.com/handdrawnheroes> I specialise in book interior illustrations and maps and have done them for, among others, our very own Robert Wingfield. I have also completed book covers and magazine illustration. My rates are very reasonable and I can offer a quick turnaround. If you interested, please email me at [swalpole6@gmail.com](mailto:swalpole6@gmail.com) and let's see what we can do.

Note: have a peek at **Third Universe** and **Into the Fourth Universe** on Amazon, for examples. You can use the 'Look Inside' option to save having to buy them.

### Publishing on the Cheap – James Court

If you are looking for samples for friends and family only, there is no reason why you cannot publish your book without an ISBN and all the trimmings, and get a production run of as little as 25 copies for less than £100.

We have a printer who will do a run off 25 copies and charge you about £70 including p&p. Most printers will have a minimum charge of £50 or thereabouts. If you want an ISBN, then expect to pay in the region of £200 for a single one. Certainly not something us poverty-stricken authors can afford. The ISBN price goes down rapidly though, so if you want to spend £1000, you can get that number of ISBNs, which of course is how Createspace do it. This then puts *you* into the realms of being a publishing company, along with all the complexities that brings.

Regarding the ethics of publishing through CS and then taking your files to an independent printer and using the same ISBN on that book, the jury might be still debating, but would it be possible to have your personal samples printed separately? We are still investigating.

### The full guide to producing books from end to end – Andy Thomas

Andy Thomas covers everything you need to know in this long and informative blog, except for the actual writing of the material. You thought that simply writing the manuscript would be enough—alas, that is only the half of it, as they say (presumably, 'they' is publishers, agony aunts and Johnnie the Boot Black from 'Police Squad').

<http://truthagenda.org/2016/08/21/to-publish-or-self-publish-producing-books-in-the-alternative-sphere/>

## Proofing and editing

As you know from the various missives sent out from professional organisations, proofing and editing costs money, lots of it, and you may only get back something that is clear of punctuation errors, but unenhanced.

This is Createspace's offering: <https://www.createspace.com/Services/LineEditing.jsp>

\$210 for 10,000 words and \$.021 a word after.

This means that an 80k novel would cost just under **\$1700**.

The editor will review your manuscript and provide recommendations on elements such as **Structure, Plot flow, Characterization and Tone**, and also review for consistency in **Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation**

What is not explained is what happens after you receive your report back and make the changes. Do you have to pay for another round of editing or make your changes and add in a load more errors?

This is where the Incas can help.

Our Inca, **Catherine Lenderi**, is doing precisely this for a number of publishers already, because a lot outsource their editing. If you feel you would like to cut out the middle-person and go directly to her, please feel free to contact.

As an example, the above editing comes in at about 20% of the price, and would be completed as professionally as Createspace, but it will also be formatted correctly, plot holes and repetitions will be highlighted and the whole thing will be ready for publishing, rather than be simply a list of recommendations. Once you have made your changes, Catherine will re-read it after your changes, if you like, for 50% of the 20%—anyone who watched the original Dukes of Hazzard will appreciate this reference.

This doesn't detract from the free Inca edit offering, which is there to help and give guidance, but does bump up your manuscript to top professional standards, and therefore when you send to a publisher, they will have no work to do, and will be much more likely to consider it for acceptance.

<http://catsedits.weebly.com/>

## Amazon KDP Pen to Publish Contest

The contest is open to all authors who publish their book through Kindle Direct Publishing on Amazon.in between 25th July and 10th November 2017.

This contest recognizes literary excellence for newly published work in English language in any genre. The grand winner will be awarded a prize of 1 Million Rupees (£12,000), a print publishing deal with Westland, and mentorship by India's best-selling English author Chetan Bhagat.

Further details can be found on the contest page at [www.amazon.in/pentopublish](http://www.amazon.in/pentopublish) but it seems all you have to do is enter the keyword 'pentopublish' as one of the seven as you publish your book. The only proviso is that it must be a book not already published.

## Advice to new writers – WD Frank

Never let yourself believe that you are less than your idols. The first story that you write is going to be terrible. The story might be perfect, the characters might be brilliant, and the jokes might be absolutely hilarious, but your writing style will not have had a chance to evolve properly yet.

I wrote around four novellas and several novels before I felt like my writing style was on the level that it needed to be. It is just something that you have to keep doing. You aren't going to be conscious of the fact that you are getting better because there is no real trick to learn about writing. It is a compulsive task that inexplicably possesses you when you sit in front of a keyboard and the words just pour out like they have a mind of their own.

Because of this, it isn't something that you spend much time thinking about while you are doing it. It is an automatic process for the most part. (In my experience, anyway.) However, you will eventually start spending an ungodly amount of time obsessing over your word choices once your chapter is finished and you begin staring at it trying to figure out what you did wrong. Don't worry about that struggle until you feel that you are reaching the level of the authors you idolize. Don't try to edit until you know that you have something worth publishing. Just always remember that you can get to that point if you have a good story to tell.

There is nothing separating you from those you revere except for experience. Please do not ever let anyone make you feel like you aren't worthy of telling the stories that haunt your mind.

## Hot Lead and Cold Streams – James Court

### Formatting your manuscript

There was a time when printers, the grey-skinned, inky-fingered men, spent their time assembling rows of lead characters into blocks to be covered in a goo that imparted an image to paper one page at a time. But times have changed, and if you are planning to talk to the printer—the inky man, not the machine he serves—then he will probably demand a print-ready Portable Document Format file to season his machine's diet of paper with. If you work through a middle man, an agent or publisher, then you may be used to offering them your beloved manuscript in one of a number of forms, but the descendants of the inky finger guild will demand an offering that their beloved equipment can swallow without upsetting their constitution.

So why bother talking to these inflexible craftsmen? The answer, as it so often is, is money. The agent and publisher take your offering and prepare it for printing, but for a fee that is often added to each and every copy that rolls off the presses. Talking directly to the printer cuts the charge to you of each copy substantially—perhaps as much as 50% or more.

So how do you achieve this 'print-ready' status demanded by the guardian of the big grey or blue box humming in the corner of a paper-stacked shed? It is not too difficult if you observe these simple rules:

1. All pages must be exactly the same size. That may sound obvious, but it is easy to end up with the odd rogue page that is larger or smaller than the rest. Often this is a blank page, but it still has to conform to size.

2. All fonts used have to be embedded in the file. It comes as a shock to some writers to find that the font they picked from the drop down list in Microsoft Word may not be installed on a system that uses a different operating system. Even when the printer has a similarly named font installed, it may have extended characters mapped differently to your copy. Embedding the font is the only sure way to know that spacing and speech marks are faithfully reproduced.

3. Artwork within the document has to be flat. That is, no layers within the image, and if printing in black/white, only then converted to an indexed single colour format. Coloured images, for covers, etc, must be in the TIFF format called CMYK, which originally meant that the page went through separate cyan, magenta, yellow and black print runs.

4. The cover must have what is known as a bleed area surrounding the required image, which is trimmed during the final production process, to ensure no ugly white strips beyond your lovingly crafted artwork. And the width of the cover must include the width of the spine—which depends on the number of pages and thickness of each page. Like the inner file, the cover must be presented as a PDF file.

5. And, if that were not enough to remember, you need to check what paper sizes your proposed printer has available, and any rules about page numbers. Some printers require a volume to be in multiples of 4 or 8 pages.

So is it worth the effort? I think so. These days I have a printer in mind before I start to write, and select a suitable template for the file. Text can look quite different when typed directly into the page format that will be printed, rather than the A4 double-spaced pages still requested by some agents and publishers. And if you intend to include illustrations, then it is essential that you see the final format with text flowing around your images.

INCA have recently looked at direct contact between authors and printers, and developed some software to test a file conforms to the rules I describe above. If you use a template to write your opus magnum, then we can convert from most word-processor formats to a PDF and test conformity for you.

## Amazon Adverts – Deanna Cabinian

Here is one person's results from using Amazon advertising campaigns.

<https://janefriedman.com/using-amazon-ads-sell-books/>

Er, no they don't. Summary of Deanna's experience:

"While Amazon sponsored ads haven't been a marketing miracle, I also haven't lost that much money." A very noble response to getting a 50% return on investment. Jane submitted a number of adverts in different formats, but the result was similar with all.

Total sales: 13

Royalties: \$39.63

Ad spend: \$71.32

Net Loss: **\$31.69**

My summary would be that web advertising doesn't work. You'd probably get more sales simply from doing a talk at the local club.

## Writing Tips – Robert Wingfield

### Book Descriptions

Once you've finished your book, you need to provide a short summary to hook in the potential reader. What you write is a make or break, unless you are well established and have a loyal following. Here are a few points to consider:

1. You need a strong hook and compelling synopsis to draw readers in.
2. Use simple, declarative sentences and keep backstory and side plots to a minimum.
3. Get someone to edit your blurb and double check how it looks online.
4. Make your book sound interesting with appropriate and enticing adjectives.
5. Use a call to action at the end of your description to persuade your reader.

### Lost for words?

Everyone is from time to time, but I stumbled upon this really useful site. You have something to describe, but find yourself writing the same word over and over. No more. You will find inspiration here:

<http://www.words-to-use.com/>

Remember though to keep adjectives to a minimum. Use one word where possible to describe more precisely: E.g. replace "Red-haired" with "Auburn" or "Titian" or even "Pre-Raphaelite". Literally paint a picture for the reader.

### Focusing your mind and book structure

You have an idea for a new book? Very good. The first one is easy, writing your ideas down in sequence, but what about the next and the one after that? Most publishers are looking for someone with more than just a one-hit wonder, so you have to write more if you want to even have a stab at a writing career. But how do you start a new book and get that idea into some sensible format?

Some authors use white-boarding, which is where you get a large board and write on it with erasable pens, building up the plan of your book in a series of thought bubbles. I would like to suggest an alternative:

Take the Inca template with its 24 chapters, and put a block of text into each chapter, summarising the events inside the chapter. Give it a title, not just 'Chapter One', but something meaningful, e.g. 'Jack goes to the supermarket'.

Repeat for each one until you have the contents of each event mapped out.

Write the parts that interest you most. With Ankerita, I wrote the ending first, sitting on top of a fell on a misty day in the Lake District. There's nothing that can compare with actually being there.

Once you have made a start, you will be surprised how easily some of the other ideas fit in, and it's not the writing, but the structure which gives you writers' block. If you can't think of something for a particular chapter, do one of the others, but keep writing, and that will give you the sense of achievement.

When you have completed the individual chapters, you can rearrange them to suit simply by moving the headings on the right-hand navigation bar in Word.

Now you have the order sorted out, go through the work again, putting all the continuity right and removing duplicates.

If you want to use a flowchart as a mind map, try the free NCH Clickcharts:

<http://www.nchsoftware.com/chart/index.html>

## Padding words – so and so

It is very easy in dialogue to find yourself using the same words again and again (see what I did there). In previous newsletters we have highlighted a few of the deadly ones:

**Just, Well,** etc.

I had my latest novel edited by Catherine Lenderi, and she picked up on another one.

**So**

A lot of my characters were beginning sentences with this, having continued on from a previous conversation.

I found that I could remove it completely in the majority of cases, and not alter the gist of the conversation. Where it really was needed as a follow-on, I simply substituted alternative text. It was a very satisfying operation, and actually sharpened and brightened the dialogue.

**The lesson?**

When you've finished your story, have a look at the first word of a selection of speeches across all your chapters, and see what your own bugbear is. Then search through the manuscript and change or remove it. I spent less than an hour on an 87,000 word novel to remove the 'so and sos' and bring it up to scratch. As a by-product, I also noticed another word I had overused, 'sorry', and was able to change that too.

**Your mission, folks,** is to find your own, and let us know. It would be great to correlate these into a definitive list of padding words to look out for. I'd like to offer a **massive cash prize**, but, hey, us Incas are as poor as church mice when the church has had the lead stolen and the bailiffs are at the door for unpaid parking fines, so all we can offer is fame and fortune in the next newsletter.

## New Books

We rely on you to tell us when you have published if you don't involve us in the editing. Please submit the first few chapters and a brief summary if you would like your work included on the Inca recommended books page – <http://www.incaproject.co.uk/portfolio.html>

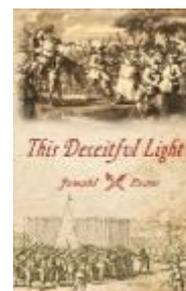
### This Deceitful Light – Jemahl Evans

The second book in the Blandford Candy series. We hope you didn't miss the free offer on the first book, 'The Last Roundhead'. We highlighted it on Goodreads, Twitter and Facebook. If you haven't already, please feel free to connect.

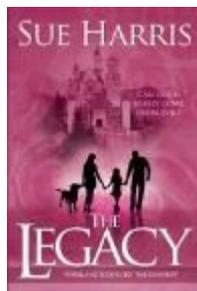
In a time of civil war and betrayal, one drunken fop could be the difference between victory and defeat.

Sir Blandford Candy is an irascible old drunk with a love of hats, a dislike of poets, and an idiot for a nephew. Resting after blackmailing an old acquaintance, he looks back on his life and adventures during the English Civil War.

Young Blandford returns to London after the First Battle of Newbury. He finds a new Lord Mayor in the Guildhall, and a murdered actor in his theatre. Blandford tries to foil a Royalist plot to smuggle gold to Oxford, find a sailor's lost treasure, and hunt for a book that could change the course of the war. His search takes him from the dark streets of London and Southampton to the bloody battlefield of Marston Moor, but only one man can help. A man Blandford has sworn to kill.



### The Legacy – Sue Harris



With the evil Hugh safely behind bars in Cyberia Prison, Eemay and Scott, the new Duke and Duchess of Candara, spend their eventful honeymoon on Cloud Nine, a tropical island in the Calibrian Ocean.

While there, a fortune teller predicts a forthcoming event that will change their lives forever, which Scott dismisses as scaremongering. While Eemay wants to believe him, the prediction continues to haunt her. Just when she had allowed herself to believe everything in her world had turned out so perfect, was it about to change, again?

On their return from honeymoon, the couple forge ahead with exciting new plans for Cyberia Palace. However, in due course and as predicted, everything in their world is rocked by a life shattering event, linked to a secret that Scott had vowed never to share with anyone, but which ultimately threatens to derail their marriage and haunt their future.

A compelling fantasy, prepare to be shocked and enthralled.

## The Accidental Scoundrel (Rochdale Manor) – Andrew Chapman

The Accidental Scoundrel is a comedy about a stoic sort of chap called Richard who gets caught up in the roguish antics of Lord Rochdale and his ilk. In order to remain with his fiancé (Lord Rochdale's daughter), he is faced with a challenge. He must steal the rarest and most expensive bottle of Whiskey in the world. With the help of a genius street urchin and a slightly odd horse, Richard tries to survive Rochdale's madness and violence. Will it work out? Will Richard just get drunk and forget about the whole damn thing? Is Baldric confused by his own thoughts? Is Tommy, the street urchin, more than he seems? I don't know. I can't remember. To find out, you must read the book. Off you pop.



I thoroughly enjoyed it, and I think we may have a new PG Wodehouse here. Rochdale Manor has the same feeling as Blandings, only brought up to date and housing a bunch of geriatric rogues who perform heists simply for the challenge and to make life more interesting, or in this case, for drinking. [Ed]

## Adel's Crossing – WD Frank – in progress



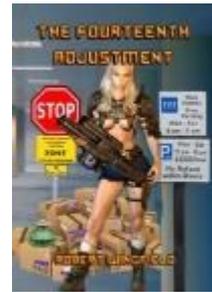
The book is nearing completion, and is not for the squeamish or easily offended. As Oscar Wilde said, "There is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book. Books are well written, or badly written, that is all." This is well written.

Adelbrecht Malboro believes he has been banished to the land of the dead when he is forced to move back into his adoptive father's dusty hometown. However, he soon learns that Jake's Crossing has countless temptations lurking beneath its squalid surface. The drug trade is booming, the criminals wield dark magic, and the police force is the size of a cucumber. Twisted by the tragedies he has endured, Adelbrecht becomes a prime target for Edgar, the manipulative and mischievous deity who rules the town of villains from the shadows... as well as his proud pawn, the ruthless crime boss, Salem Fatima. Soon, the tormented teen finds himself trapped in a bizarre game of greed, sex, survival and power that threatens to enshroud him in the deepest levels of darkness. As the lingering fragments of his world's sanity come crashing down, it soon becomes apparent to Adelbrecht that the question isn't whether he will make it out alive, but if he will survive with his humanity still intact.

## The Fourteenth Adjustment – Robert Wingfield

When Tom's non-payment of a parking fine coincides with the breeding season of his security forces, and the rise of a vehicle storage junta, he is forced to adopt a life as a fugitive.

Accompanied in a converted cruise ship by erstwhile private detective and ale-slinger, the Magus, Young Pete—a techie, and a pair of renegade barbarians, he sets about kicking back against extortionate car-parking charges, the proliferation of revenue speed cameras and the new 10 mph national speed limit.



Regrettably, the laws of the land don't apply to the rich people who might have done something about it, or the poor, incarcerated in enclaves of antisocial housing, so Tom's reign of unrest, despite offering loyalty cards for repeat plundering, comes to an end when he loses his life in a freak copper-sodium-flavoured pizza incident.

Is there hope for the common citizen, now that the figurehead of rebellion is gone, and the authorities continue to impose draconian traffic restrictions across the galaxy?

Stepping into the breach, and a lot of the dung, comes the Magus, his herd of belligerent bovines and the ultimate weapon of destruction. Could this be the undoing of the junta, or will the treachery of the inconsistent crew result in his own downfall?

Here we have the savagely satirical fifth venture into the chaotic universes of Two-Dan \$mith (sic), this one swiping at the way personal liberties are subtly being eroded by the greed of the real people in power, and the advantage taken of decent folk.

This book has been entered in the KDP Pen to Publish Contest.