

NightScripts



October 2023

Connie Palmer Dodson, Editor

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Writing Prompt:

Does this scene inspire a story for you?

Write a short story of 1000 words or less and get it to me by the end of this month. I'll print my favorite in the next issue.

One entry per member. You can also just use the image to spark a scene or a story.

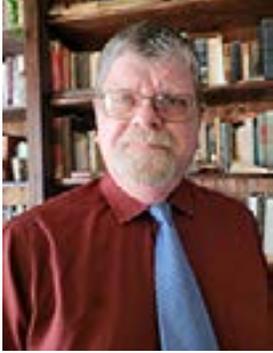
If you submit it to me don't forget to title your story. Put Writing Prompt in the subject line and submit it to: editor@tulsanightwriters.org



WRITE ON

C.O.W.C.

By our President, Merle Davenport



The Craft of Writing Conference is going to be AWESOME!!!

For the first time, we will be partnering with the OSU Center for Poets and Writers for our Fall Craft of Writing Conference on October 21, from 9am - 5pm. Because of this partnership,

we expect a record turnout. It would not be surprising to see 150 to 200 writers attending the conference.

Here are some of the reasons to attend the conference:

1) Accommodations – The [OSU campus](#) has wonderful facilities for hosting the conference. *Note that we have reserved a block of rooms at local hotels for out-of-town visitors.

2) Keynote Speaker – [William Bernhardt](#) hails from Tulsa, Oklahoma. He has 61 books published and has sold over 10 million books. In addition to his many accolades, he is president and owner of Bernhardt Books which publishes fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction.

3) Break-Out Sessions – We have amazing speakers for our [sessions](#). They will talk about everything from how to give a good pitch to a publisher/agent to pacing your screenplay. Follow the link to see who is presenting which sessions.

4) Pitch Room – For the first time, we will be offering an opportunity for authors to pitch their book(s) to publishers and literary agents. Unless you choose to self-publish, you will want a publisher or an agent to pitch your book(s) to publishers. At the conference, you will be given 5-7 minutes to sell your work. This is a fantastic opportunity to talk to publishers/agents face-to-face about your book(s). If you plan to pitch your work, don't forget to attend the session "Pitching an Agent 101" with Amy Brewer

from Metamorphosis Literary Agency.

5) Networking with Other Authors – No, you didn't make all the mistakes possible as a writer. Other authors have learned lessons along the way too. Take this chance to chat, collaborate, learn, or agree to meet for deeper discussions later. The community of writers is filled with other creative minds just like yours.

6) Genre Specific Lunch Groups – Lunch will be provided, so you can meet with others from your genre. Use this time to learn from others who write the same kind of books as you.

7) Author Tables – Several authors will have tables set up with their books available. Get your own autographed book and make new friends in the process.

8) Win Door Prizes – There will be some amazing door prizes given out at the conference. We have some fantastic sponsors this year who are offering some wonderful items to be given away as door prizes. Don't miss out.

9) \$50 for members/students and \$70 for non-members – If you look at other conferences, you will discover that similar conferences will cost double or triple the amount we are charging. Note that membership in Tulsa NightWriters is only \$25. If you are a non-member, you may come to the conference for \$70 or become a member of TNW and attend the conference for \$75.

10) And Much More – Perhaps the best parts of any conference are the unplanned things that happen. It could be a chance conversation or that unexpected nugget you find in a break-out session. It could even be meeting someone who helps your writing improve in some way.

In case you missed it, we are very excited about the conference this year. We hope you will join us.

THE WRITE TOUCH

PLOT DEVICES

By our Vice President, Kathryn Helstrom



Someone recently told me that there is no “craft” to writing. “Of course there is,” I replied. There are plenty of techniques and skills an author must learn and master to become a great writer. Among them is learning to use plot devices to move your story forward. And it isn’t just a series

of events disguised as plot devices, it is a carefully crafted cloaking of each step to dress your story in elaborate fashion.

First, you must lay a strong foundation with your plot structure. Whether you use common structures such as the plot pyramid or the hero’s journey, or some other innovative form, you must design your story into a particular format that allows you to tell it in the best way possible. Once you have developed your structure, then you need to look at devices to move the characters and story forward.

“Plot is what happens in your story. Every story needs structure, just as everybody needs a skeleton. It’s how you “flesh out and clothe” your structure that makes each story unique.”

—Caroline Lawrence

Boring your readers with first this happened, then this happened, then this happened, ad nauseam, does not make you a great writer. There are techniques you can use to make your readers earnestly turn the page. Here are some of them.

Checkhov’s Gun

This is one of the most famous plot devices, from Anton Checkhov’s idea that every element in a scene should be used at some point in the plot. If it is not used, then it should not be there. If a gun is hanging over the mantelpiece in the opening scene, it must be fired at some point in the story (usually the climax). A classic example is in the movie Signs—the glasses of water which end up being the weapon that kills the aliens. This is a type of foreshadowing that hints at what is to come.

Cliffhanger

It can be the catalyst to the next book in the series, or just the panic button for the next chapter. The main idea is to build suspense, which is crucial in thrillers and crime dramas. If you are using it to get the reader to buy the next book, be sure that you have resolved most of the current book’s conflicts. Otherwise, your reader may just get mad at you, and write a bad review.

MacGuffin

Alfred Hitchcock defined it as a person or thing that inspires pursuit throughout the story. It can be an artifact such as the falcon statuette in *The Maltese Falcon* or a person or a bit of information. It only works, though, if the MacGuffin is essential to the plot and to the theme. It is a powerful tool and a compelling device when used artfully.

Flashback

Use this to create context for what is going to happen next. The emotional impact of the events often need more than a shock effect. A minor detail, a phrase, a smell, a familiar place can evoke tremendous reactions in a character, based on some past experience. A Fourth of July display of fireworks can trigger a flashback in a combat soldier’s mind (Continued on page 5.)



With Keynote Speaker

Bill Bernhardt

Bringing Light to the Darkness: Why We Write.

Saturday, October 21st
at OSU Tulsa - Center for Poets & Writers
9:00 am – 5:00 pm

\$50 TNW Members & Students

\$70 Non-Members

We are excited our 7th Annual Craft of Writing Conference will be held at the OSU Center for Poets & Writers, through their generous partnership!

With a wonderful roster of speakers, this event is a great opportunity for YOU to advance your craft, and we hope you join us!

Gain experience on vivid imagery, villains and the criminal mind. Learn about point of view, pacing, editing, poetry, how to write a life story, and how great stories take guts. There are even opportunities to pitch your story to publishers and agents. If you are on a writing journey you won't want to miss this conference.

[Register Here](#)

Many thanks to our current sponsors,



Plottr



**CENTER FOR
POETS AND WRITERS**
at OSU-Tulsa

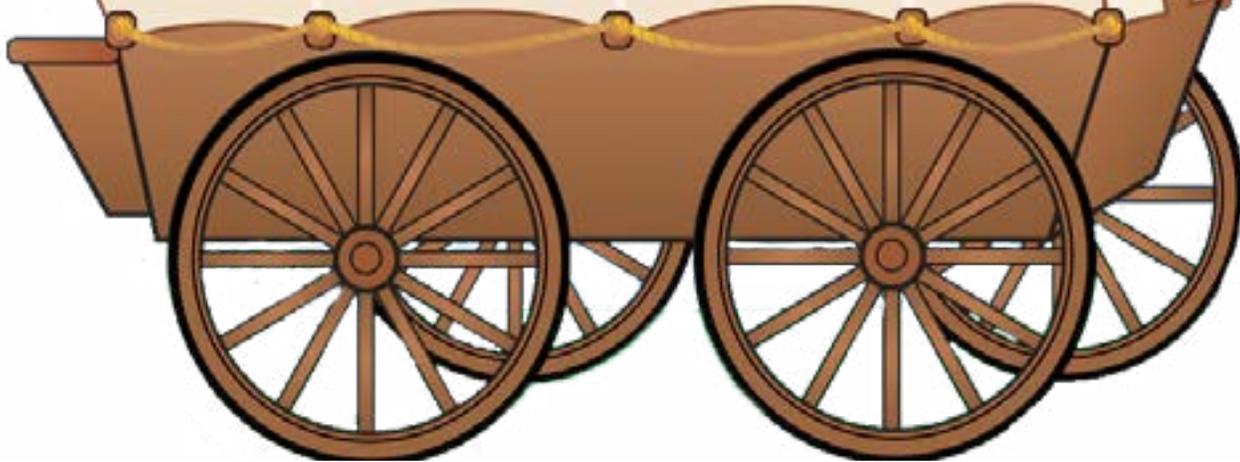


Welcome Wagon

Give a big Howdy to our new members.

Amanda Wyatt, Tulsa
 Stephen Scott, Tulsa
 Garrett Moon, Tulsa
 Daniel Te, Tulsa
 Holly Skaggs, Jenks
 Shari Wilder, Glenpool

Gregory Bigler, Sapulpa
 M.J. Van Deventer, Muskogee
 Steve Pinnell, Chillicothe, MO
 Brenda Clark Thomas, Bixby
 Rebecca Brennan, Tulsa
 Frostie Uhles, Bartlesville



(Continued from Page 3)

resulting in a physical reaction that changes the path of the story for your characters. A song on the radio or television, a return to a childhood house, the feel of a fabric on the skin can generate emotional memories that motivate or restrain a character's action. Psychologically speaking, smells can be the most compelling.

Deus Ex Machina

As you can guess by the name of this device, it has been around since the time of the Greek comedies and tragedies. This is when someone or something shows up out of the blue to get your characters out of their situation. Zeus

suddenly shows up and uses his lightning bolt to destroy the enemy. It usually is a lazy author's trick when they have written themselves into a corner. However, if it is plausible and if it has been foreshadowed, it can work.

These are not the only plot devices you can use. There are many ways to flesh out your story. Research these and other plot devices. Read books and stories to see how the masters have used them to good effect. Put them in your author tool chest and develop the skills to use them well.

Happy Writing!

**“Learn the rules like a pro,
 so you can break them like an artist. “ --Pablo Picasso**

COVER PROMPT WINNER

NIGHT SHIFT

BY JAMES R. SYBRANT

Night at the county fair after closing is a different experience; no flashing lights, no barkers yelling to patrons, no screams of joy and terror, the murmur of the crowds gone, the smells of food diminished to only a hint, the whir and music of the rides silent. Still, he did notice that the smell of the farm animals reached even the farthest area of the grounds. It was Bobby's first shift as a night guard and he found it eerie to be there alone. Even the men and women that traveled and worked the fair had settled down for the night and only the sounds of insects could be heard.

"I don't know why I'm so nervous, it not like anyone is going to break in," he said out loud in a self-soothing tone.

Still, it was a job he needed, and he'd always been a night owl, so it wouldn't be to tiring on him. However, it was the lack of stimulation that he was going to struggle with. He had ADHD – even as an adult – and walking around at night with nothing to engage his mind beyond his thoughts was going to make for a long night.

Round and round he went; through the barns, the expo buildings, the food stalls, the midway. Nothing changed other than the position of the animals.

Hours passed and he stopped to rest his feet for a few minutes before something different happened. As he was rubbing his foot, after removing his shoe, he heard the pop of metal forced free from wood, followed by something heavy hitting the ground. He hastily put his shoe back on and stood to listen for anything that might point him in the right direction. Not hearing anything right away, he closed his eyes to shut out any visual distraction. Thirty seconds later brought the muffled voices of men arguing. He opened his eyes and quickly moved toward the area he believed the intruders were.

He soon came upon two young men, teenagers, trying to gain access to one of the booths. Pulling his Taser gun and flashlight, he approached them with caution.

"Stop what you're doing and don't move," he said with authority he didn't know he was capable of

projecting. Then again, if it were fully grown men, he might not have found that voice.

The two young men turned toward him as he shined his light upon them.

"What do you two think you're doing?"

"I'm here to get what I'm owed," one of the boys said with a little bit of a slur.

"I doubt that anyone from the fair owes you anything."

"Well, this one does," the boy replied with defiance.

"In what way?"

"I won his stupid game, but he bumped the stall to reveal the color of the circle, and told me I didn't win. He refused to give me the prize I wanted to give my girl, so I came back to get it."

"I don't know anything about this game or the man that runs it. However, I do know you're both trespassing, and what you are doing is breaking and entering. And if you would have succeeded it would also be theft."

"Hey, I don't want to go to jail." The other man finally spoke. "I told you this was a bad idea and that I didn't want to come here."

"Shut up," the outspoken one said back to his friend.

"Listen up," Bobby said to get their attention.

"No one has to go to jail; all you have to do is leave."

"I'm good with that," the friend said.

"I'm not; I want what I came for."

"Then I guess I'll have to call the police," Bobby said with that authoritative voice.

"Wait, please," the friend said, holding up his hands, pleading. "We'll leave. Won't we Mack?"

"Fine, I'll just come back tomorrow and kick that guy's ass," he said, pointing to the booth.

"That's fine by me; you work it out with him during operating hours. But one more thing before I walk you from the grounds, you," he said to the friend. "Don't let this guy drive."

"Hey, it's my car," protested the slighted young man.

(Continued on next page)

BULLETIN BOARD

"Your story is bouncing around in your imagination. Let it out."

Writing Our Hearts Out: Writing Workshop and Retreat

**10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Saturday, October 14, 2023
Free. Limited to 25 participants**

This is a Member Workshop
Not Nightwriter Sponsored

For those who have experienced the death of a husband, wife, or life partner, writing about that loss can be a helpful and healing process.

Whether the death of a loved one is after a long illness or is sudden and unexpected, many life-changing disruptions occur. Ranging from reduced income to the dynamics with friends when you are no longer part of a couple, many new issues and situations arise.

This writing retreat is a day to focus on you, and to share with others who have lost a wife, husband or life partner. You will have an opportunity to listen, learn and heal through writing and sharing that pain and grief.

The writing workshop will be led by three widows who have lost their spouses within the past three years. They are teachers and professional writers who will offer advice and expertise as you write about the loss, using the time in the workshop as a healing exercise.

Details and registration at: jbnicholson-hunt@gmail.com

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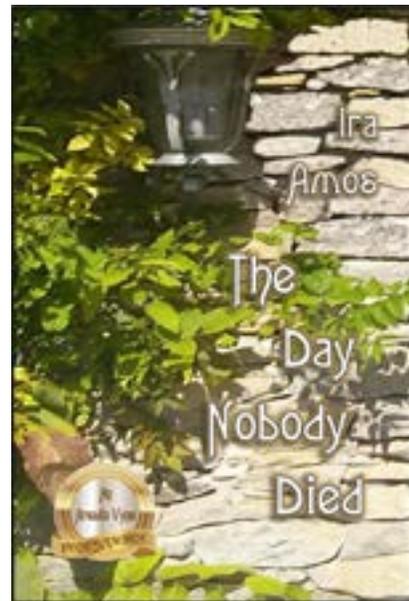
"I don't care if it is or not. I can tell you've been drinking and I will call the police if I think you plan on getting behind the wheel."

"I'll drive," his friend promised. "Please don't call the cops, we don't need the hassle."

"And I didn't need the hassle of having to deal with the two of you. Now, come on so we can get you out of here."

"Yes, sir," the friend said with relief. After walking them to the gate, and watching them until he could no longer see them, he let out a little giggle.

"If that's the worst I have to deal with, this should be an easy week."



Derek Bullard's alter ego, Ira Amos, recently published his second novel in the Arcadia Vyne Mystery Series titled *The Day Nobody Died*. Available on Amazon or through www.jameskaypublishing.com

NightScripts Submission Guidelines and Wants

From Members: Currently accepting ads (for books and services), articles, short stories (100 - 200 words), poetry, and event information.

Submit To: editor@tulsanightwriters.org
 Deadline: Last Day of the Previous Month
 Specifications: Please format your text as follows:
 Times New Roman, 12 pt
 Single Spaced
 Attach as a doc or pages
 Attach graphics and / or photographs

From Non-Members: Paid Ad Space Available, contact editor@tulsanightwriters.org



Mugs
 Mousepads
 Notebooks
 Journals



If you don't see your genre in our online store, send us an e-mail... - We can custom design!

GiftsForAuthors.etsy.com

giftsforauthors@gmail.com

2023 TNW Board & Meeting Information

Merle Davenport
President
President@tulsanightwriters.org



Tulsa NightWriters will meet at 7 p.m. Tuesday, October 17, 2023, location information below.

Kathryn Helstrom
Vice President
VicePresident@tulsanightwriters.org



October Meeting
Share Your Tips & Tricks
Come prepared to engage and share ideas.

Bill Wetterman
Treasurer
treasurer@tulsanightwriters.org



Directions

Carolyn Steele
Hospitality Director
hospitality@tulsanightwriters.org



Take the I-244 to downtown Tulsa, and exit on Detroit. If you are coming from the west, the exit for the OSU campus is on the LEFT.

From Detroit Ave., turn right onto JH Franklin Road. You will see the Auditorium and Conference Center (North Hall) on the left. You can park in Lot E (first parking lot on left), or across the street in Lot D. We meet in Room 150. Look for signs posted at both entrances.

Parking is free and open to the public. It is a very short walk, and handicapped accessible. Campus security patrols the parking lots regularly.

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