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Spring 2020

## Introduction to the Publishing Industry

Krista Beucler

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**ENGL 491: Intro to the Publication Industry**  
College of Arts and Sciences, English Department, Creative Writing  
Honors Capstone

Krista Beucler

Spring 2020  
Advisor: Dr. Warren Rochelle

**Table of Contents**

Final Reflection ..... 3

Cover Letters

    Drafts ..... 9

    Final Versions ..... 11

Selected Journal Entries ..... 15

*Please contact the author for access to the complete novella, The Necromancer.*

## Final Reflection

The Honors Capstone is designed to be a culmination of a student's academic work at UMW. My project built on what I have learned throughout my time at UMW and particularly my major classes. But more than that, my Capstone has been the beginning of the rest of my career. While doing the project, it felt like something I was doing this semester, with a definitive end date. I see now that it is in fact just the beginning of the future. My Capstone project involved revising the novella I wrote for fiction seminar ENGL 470B, finding literary magazines that might publish my work, writing cover letters, and sending out submissions to the selected magazines. Though we structured the project in small steps with clear objectives, it is now going to become an ongoing part of my professional development. I selected four magazines to submit to during this project, but I plan to continue to send out submissions until the novella is accepted somewhere. Of course, this process won't be a one time thing either; I will have to repeat this process with every creative work I produce for publication.

The whole process from the very first idea I had for this story that became the novella *The Necromancer* to its completed revisions, ready for publication took about four years. A friend had suggested I write a story about a barista on Valentine's Day set in a fantasy world. I wrote a few pages of the opening, toying with the characters of Silver and Varior and then I got stuck and put it away for a while. Then in fiction seminar, two and a half years later, I thought this story would be a prime candidate for turning into my novella. Because of the deadlines enforced by the class, and the help of my critique group, I was able to finish the story I had been stuck on for so long. I was pretty happy with how it turned out at the end of the semester and I again put it away for about a year. When this Capstone project was in its early stages of

development I knew I wanted to explore the publishing industry and try to revise and submit some of my work for publication. *The Necromancer* felt like the most complete and best piece I had but I didn't know if anyone published novella length work. My Capstone advisor assured me that some literary magazines do publish novellas and sent me on my way with several copies of the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction. With my completed novella and literary magazines in mind, I designed the project that became my Capstone this semester.

The first stage of the project was revising the novella. The revisions were particularly challenging for me. I tend to have a hard time wanting to change what I have written in the first draft. My Capstone advisor really pushed me to think about world building. In the first draft of the novella, the plot and characters came first and the world came later, and I just sort of made it up as I went along. But for a revised, polished, ready for publication piece, I needed to think more deeply about the history of the world and the people that lived there, and the rules for magic. I read a lot of articles about world building from publications like Publisher's Weekly and Writer's Digest. These included interviews with writers like Margaret Atwood, N. K. Jemisin, and Leigh Bardugo. All of them discussed making the created world believable so that there appears to be more under the surface of what the reader sees. I used my readings and journal entries to help me flesh out the fantasy world of my novella. I wrote a lot of notes and histories of the world that did not actually appear in the novella, but did a lot to inform the action and back stories. It helped me with continuity errors and believability.

One of the other difficult parts of revising is know what not to revise. I had to be able to identify what was working in the story and not mess with that. Just like overworking a painted canvas, it is possible to revise too much. Knowing when to stop revising was one of the

challenges for me; I always felt like I should read it over just one more time before I could send it out.

I had a hard time finding magazines to send my work. At the time I was researching magazines, there didn't seem to be many that were publishing novella length work, publishing genre work, and currently accepting submissions. I had a long list of magazines I wanted to submit to but not all of them were accepting submissions at this time. I think just because of the timing of the project, many magazines were closing for submissions in early March and others weren't opening for submissions again until April and May. I picked four magazines to submit to for the project, but I expect to send more submissions as more magazines and contests open for submissions.

I think the worst part of the process for me was writing the cover letters. Every article I read about writing cover letters had slightly different suggestions about what to include and what not to include. It's really stressful to have that be the first impression you make on the editor. It's also really difficult to distill a whole 24,000 word project down into just one page that is going to make the editor want to read your work. Even if the work itself is very good, the cover letter has to represent the writer and the work well and not be a barrier to the story.

As far as the submission process, it's probably the most nerve-racking part of being a writer. There's also the formatting of the manuscript and trying to make sure you're meeting all the requirements that each magazine has for formatting, and then making sure to upload the correctly formatted version of the manuscript to the right place. As well as making sure you've got the right cover letter going to the right magazine. I definitely didn't want to send the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction a cover letter addressed to the editor of Driftwood Press.

Even after triple checking each submission, there was still a moment of panic after I hit submit and thought, “Ah! I can’t take it back now.”

I have submitted to the Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction, the Clay Reynolds Novella Prize from Texas Review Press, and Driftwood Press. I tried to submit to Deep Magic literary magazine, but I had some trouble with their website; they don’t use Submittable (an online tool many magazines use for submissions) and for some reason I couldn’t get the form to submit. I tried to send them a message, but they only have one of those Contact Us forms on their website, and when I tried to submit a message there I got a “There was an error trying to send your message, try again later” message. I didn’t know what to do since there was no email or even physical address listed.

I have received an email from F&SF; I have already been rejected. That response was much quicker than I expected. I thought I’d have 8 weeks to feel quietly hopeful that my story was still in consideration. I did not really expect to be published by F&SF since they are a very prestigious and well respected literary magazine. Not many writers who have never been published get their first publication there. However, the note from the editor was nice and he said he hoped that I’d keep them in mind for the future. From the Rappahannock Review, this would be what we call a warm rejection, which is meant to be encouraging so that the writer wants to submit to the magazine again, as opposed to a cold rejection which does not encourage the writer to send more work. Every published writer has stories about how many times they were rejected before becoming bestselling authors (except for Diana Gabaldon and Andy Weir, but they’re not the norm), but knowing that doesn’t really make the process any easier.

I have some doubts about Clay Reynolds and Driftwood; neither magazine says what genre they're looking for but I sort of expect them to pick something more in the vein of literary fiction. Hopefully I'll be able to submit to Deep Magic eventually. I plan to keep an eye out for some of the other magazines that were on my list but not currently accepting submissions, so I can submit to them sometime in the future.

This semester I was the Editor in Chief of the Rappahannock Review, UMW's literary magazine. From reading for the Rappahannock Review as an editor, I know that bad cover letters really bias me against the story. I almost don't even want to open submissions with bad cover letters, and I'm guessing some journals or agents probably don't open submissions with bad cover letters. Being able to read other writer's cover letters was helpful in giving me insight into writing my own. Another thing that was pretty clear as an editor was whether submissions were polished stories or first drafts. Even if it was a pretty good story, if there were typos or grammatical mistakes it reflected really poorly on the professionalism of the writer. Perhaps the most frustrating thing was not having the time to give each writer personalized feedback about their work, or being able to tell them how close they were to publication. As a writer, you only get the rejection, you don't get to see how long the editorial team spent discussing your piece and how close you were to an acceptance.

Before beginning this project, I knew very little about literary magazines and had only the vaguest understanding of the publishing process. I'm very glad I got to focus more on the revising aspect of writing since it's so important and isn't always something we had time for in my previous creative writing classes. I consider myself a much more knowledgeable and skilled writer after this project.

As a senior, it's time for me to transition to life after UMW. I think this process has taught me a lot and I'm really glad I got to experience both sides of the publishing industry, as an editor and as a submitting writer. I hope my experiences with the Rappahannock Review can help me be a better editor of my own work, and maybe lead to a job in editing or publishing. I know my experience submitting my work has helped further my understanding of how professional writers get published. I plan to continue sending submissions of my novella until it is published. I hope to also write a novel set in the same world of my novella, maybe with a few of the characters from *The Necromancer* making cameos. The last part of my project was creating a Domain of One's Own with the Digital Knowledge Center. I plan to use my website as a professional writer's website which will help me grow my online presence.

If I've learned anything from the outbreak of COVID-19 it is that we will always need artists. My parents always wanted me to be an engineer or a doctor or a computer programmer, and I've heard the "Oh, you're an English major, so what are you going to do with that?" line so many times. I think it's pretty clear that the world needs medical professionals, grocery store workers, and delivery drivers, but the world also needs artists. Without music, TV, movies, theater, and books, we're just surviving, not living.

COVID-19 has disrupted my post-graduation plans, but even if I am stuck inside at home all summer and into the fall, I will be able to do one of the things I planned: revising a novel I have written and writing query letters for agents for my novel.

## Cover Letter Drafts

Dear [editor],

It's Valentine's Day and Silver's parents are coming to dinner, expecting to meet the suitor Silver has dutifully told them of in her letters home. Unfortunately, Silver doesn't actually have a suitor. So she decides to raise one from the dead. What could go wrong?

THE NECROMANCER is a 23,500 word humorous fantasy novella set in the Kingdom of Meryn on the edge of the magical Wildwood. Waypoints connect this magical place to the mortal world where tourists, commercial holidays, and even goblins can travel freely between.

Krista Beucler is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in creative writing at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia. If published, this would be her first publication. She is an avid reader, cat-lover, and traveler, though she always loves coming home to her native Colorado.

Sincerely,  
Krista Beucler

Dear [editor],

It's Valentine's Day and Silver Nightbrace's parents are coming to dinner, expecting to meet the suitor Silver has dutifully told them of in her letters home. Unfortunately, Silver doesn't actually have a suitor. On her break at the apothecary, where she works as a barista, she decides to raise a boyfriend from the dead. Necromancy can't be that hard, right?

THE NECROMANCER is a 23,500 word humorous fantasy novella set in the Kingdom of Meryn on the edge of the magical Wildwood. Waypoints connect this magical place to the mortal world where tourists, commercial holidays, and even goblins can travel freely between. Join Silver and her corpse-boyfriend on their adventure across the Kingdom of Meryn, through the city of London, into the Winter Forest of the Wildwood, and deep underground in the goblin stronghold.

Originally from Colorado, Krista Beucler is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in creative writing at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia. If published, this would be her first publication. Her social distancing hobbies during this time of COVID-19 include scrapbooking, reading, washing her hands, and cuddling her cat.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Krista Beucler

## Final Cover Letters

The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction  
P. O. Box 8420  
Surprise, AZ 85374

Dear C.C. Finlay,

It's Valentine's Day and Silver Nightbrace's parents are coming to dinner, expecting to meet the suitor Silver has dutifully told them of in her letters home. Unfortunately, Silver doesn't actually have a suitor. On her break at the apothecary, where she works as a barista, she decides to raise a boyfriend from the dead. Necromancy can't be that hard, right?

THE NECROMANCER is a 23,778 word humorous fantasy novella set in the Kingdom of Meryn on the edge of the magical Wildwood. Waypoints connect this magical place to the mortal world where tourists, commercial holidays, and even goblins can travel freely between. Fans of fantasy will enjoy this lighthearted adventure-turned-love story that spans across the Kingdom of Meryn, through the city of London, into the Winter Forest of the Wildwood, deep underground in the goblin stronghold, and past even the boundaries of Death.

Thank you for your commitment to publishing great work in the fantasy and science fiction genres. I very much enjoy reading your magazine and it would be an honor to have my work appear in your pages.

Originally from Colorado, Krista Beucler is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in creative writing at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the Rappahannock Review, the literary journal published by the University of Mary Washington. If published, this would be her first publication.

Thank you for your consideration,

Krista Beucler  
601 Fossil Creek Drive  
Fort Collins, CO 80526  
krbeucler@gmail.com

Texas Review Press  
Box 2146  
Huntsville, TX 77341

Dear Hannah Pittard,

It's Valentine's Day and Silver Nightbrace's parents are coming to dinner, expecting to meet the suitor Silver has dutifully told them of in her letters home. Unfortunately, Silver doesn't actually have a suitor. On her break at the apothecary, where she works as a barista, she decides to raise a boyfriend from the dead. Necromancy can't be that hard, right?

THE NECROMANCER is an approximately 24,000 word humorous fantasy novella set in the Kingdom of Meryn on the edge of the magical Wildwood. Waypoints connect this magical place to the mortal world where tourists, commercial holidays, and even goblins can travel freely between. Fans of fantasy will enjoy this lighthearted adventure-turned-love story that spans across the Kingdom of Meryn, through the city of London, into the Winter Forest of the Wildwood, deep underground in the goblin stronghold, and past even the boundaries of Death.

Please note: no table of contents has been included in the manuscript because the novella is not separated into chapters or parts.

Originally from Colorado, Krista Beucler is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in creative writing at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the Rappahannock Review, the literary journal published by the University of Mary Washington. If published, this would be her first publication.

Thank you for your consideration,

Krista Beucler  
601 Fossil Creek Drive  
Fort Collins, CO 80526  
krbeucler@gmail.com

Driftwood Press

Dear James McNulty,

It's Valentine's Day and Silver Nightbrace's parents are coming to dinner, expecting to meet the suitor Silver has dutifully told them of in her letters home. Unfortunately, Silver doesn't actually have a suitor. On her break at the apothecary, where she works as a barista, she decides to raise a boyfriend from the dead. Necromancy can't be that hard, right?

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Thank you for your consideration,

Krista Beucler  
601 Fossil Creek Drive  
Fort Collins, CO 80526  
krbeucler@gmail.com

Deep Magic Literary Magazine

Dear Brendon Taylor,

It's Valentine's Day and Silver Nightbrace's parents are coming to dinner, expecting to meet the suitor Silver has dutifully told them of in her letters home. Unfortunately, Silver doesn't actually have a suitor. On her break at the apothecary, where she works as a barista, she decides to raise a boyfriend from the dead. Necromancy can't be that hard, right?

THE NECROMANCER is a 23,772 word humorous fantasy novella set in the Kingdom of Meryn on the edge of the magical Wildwood. Waypoints connect this magical place to the mortal world where tourists, commercial holidays, and even goblins can travel freely between. Fans of fantasy will enjoy this lighthearted, family friendly adventure-turned-love story that spans across the Kingdom of Meryn, through the city of London, into the Winter Forest of the Wildwood, deep underground in the goblin stronghold, and past even the boundaries of Death.

Originally from Colorado, Krista Beucler is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in creative writing at the University of Mary Washington in Virginia. She is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the Rappahannock Review, the literary journal published by the University of Mary Washington. If published, this would be her first publication.

Thank you for your consideration,

Krista Beucler  
601 Fossil Creek Drive  
Fort Collins, CO 80526  
krbeucler@gmail.com

## Selected Journal Entries

Journal 2: 2/3

Readings: Writer's Digest: 20 Things to Consider When Building Fantasy Worlds 9/2/18; Writer's Digest: World-Building Tips from the Masters 5/21/19; Writer's Digest: The WD Interview: Author N.K. Jemisin on Creating New Worlds and Playing with Imagination 3/29/19

Writer's Digest: 20 Things to Consider When Building Fantasy Worlds 9/2/18

Guest columnist Sara Raasch provides a list of things to think about while building the world for a fantasy novel. She is the author of *These Rebel Waves* and *Snow Like Ashes*, both set in fantasy worlds. Her list includes things like the topography, origin, mythology, population, language, level of development, economy, division of power, and system of magic among others. I thought those were really interesting and useful things to think about, though they seem daunting. I felt like I could answer some of those same questions about my fantasy world in *The Necromancer*, but definitely not all of them. For this journal I'm going to try to answer her 20 questions.

1. Country/Place Name: The Kingdom of Meryn (named after the first king's wife), Ening City (the capital city of Meryn), The Wildwood (where the Fae and most magical creatures live)

2. Population: there are many fewer Fae than there used to be. No more than 10,000. Meryn is a small kingdom, probably about a half million with most of the population concentrated in Ening City and other coastal cities.

3. Topography: Ening City is a coastal, shipping city with a climate similar to Paris. The Kingdom of Meryn, is mostly temperate forests and farmland, bordering the Wildwood. The Wildwood is divided into 4 forests (winter, summer, spring, autumn) each ruled over by a different Fae lord or lady. A mountain range divides the forest where the dwarves live.

4. Origin: The Kingdom of Meryn, populated mostly by humans, was settled 200 years ago by colonizers from our world. The Fae and many other magical creatures were subsequently confined to the Wildwood. It occurs to me now that if Meryn was settled by colonists 200 years ago, that would be about 1800, so it wouldn't make much sense for the style of the kingdom to be like the Middle Ages. So either the kingdom had to have been colonized longer ago, or the styles of Meryn are from the 1800s, or they were like the 1800s but have now become similar to ours. I think I'll have them colonize longer ago.

5. Mythologies: There are many stories about how the Fae are evil and dangerous and that those who go into the Wildwood don't come back out.

6. Holidays: They definitely celebrate most of the commercial holidays we celebrate here, similar to how some other countries have adopted the commercial Halloween from the US. They also celebrate harvest festivals and some holidays and feast days from the middle ages.

7. Style/Inspirations: Good question. I mention Silver's skirts, boots and the pouch at her belt, but I don't give much description to how people are dressed. I guess I envision your stereotypical Pirates of the Caribbean meets Lord of the Rings outfits, or like the TV show

Merlin. Corsets, white shirts and heavy skirts for peasant women, cloaks, boots, and tunics for men. My original thought was kind of Middle Ages-like, but like mentioned in question 4, that doesn't make a whole lot of sense. I guess Pirates of the Caribbean is set in the 1750s...

8. Terminology/Language differentiation: some spells use now defunct languages. The colonists were English so Meryners speak English. The Fae have their own language but can speak any language. Dwarves and goblins also speak their own language but most can speak English too.

9. How do they keep time: In the Wildwood time doesn't much matter because the Fae are immortal and the seasons don't change. In the Kingdom of Meryn time passes the same as here.

10. Highest level of development: They have magic but not technology like electric lights, cars, or guns. So definitely more of a Middle Ages vibe than an 1800s vibe.

11. Politics: Meryn is ruled by a king who isn't very effective. The goblins run a black market trade and have bought out most of the king's advisors, so they effectively run the government. In the Wildwood, each Fae lord or lady rules his or her own forest (The Raven King rules the Winter Forest, the Erl King rules the Summer Forest, the Blossom Queen rules the Spring Forest, and the Bear Queen rules the Autumn Forest). But the Raven King is kind of in charge of all the Fae.

12. Ruling Family/Group: Maybe the goblins have family groups vying for power? Or warlords?

13. Division of Power: The King is mostly a figurehead and the goblins mostly control politics, but there's also a lot of infighting among the goblins. The king had the ring that contains the Raven King's name and so controls him and the other Fae but he didn't know how powerful and important the ring was (the knowledge of it was lost through generations). The goblins don't know how powerful the ring is either, they just want it back because it was made by goblins and is rumored to have magical properties.

14. Economy: Trading economy, Meryn ships trade with other countries across the sea, as well as getting goods from our world through Waypoints.

15. Greatest weaknesses: The precarious relationship between species.

16. Most common prejudices: humans and Fae generally hate each other. Some humans think magic is evil. Goblins hate everyone and everyone hates them.

17. Greatest strengths: The Waypoints make travel between this world and Meryn and the Wildwood pretty easy. There are Waypoints all over the earth that lead to different places in Meryn and the Wildwood.

18. Recent wars: There was a war when the humans came to colonize the Wildwood (it was once all Wildwood and dwarves' mountains) but the humans cut down some trees and pushed the Fae back (like we did to the Native Americans).

19. Surrounding countries/peoples and relationships: there is tension between the humans and the Fae because the humans trapped the Fae in the Wildwood.

20. Magic system: Some creatures have an affinity for certain kinds of magic, particularly Fae for natural magic, pixies for mischief magic, and dwarves for craft making and way finding. Humans are capable of learning magic from books or teachers but rarely

have natural talents. Witches and wizards both exist in this world, but won't be particularly relevant. Unions between Fae and human result in a demi-fae who can pass as human and can usually do magic. All magic has a price and true names have power. The Waypoints were created by a spell gone wrong, which ripped little holes in the fabric between worlds.

#### Writer's Digest: World-Building Tips from the Masters 5/21/19

WD talks to five speculative fiction and fantasy authors to get their take on world building. Brandon Sanderson invokes the metaphor of the iceberg; the top is what the reader can see and what the writer has to create, the bottom is what the reader has to assume is there under the surface but doesn't necessarily need to be created by the author. The author just has to make the reader believe that it's there. Margaret Atwood talks about learning simple things like what the characters would have for breakfast and where they would get the food and how they would cook it and what they would wear while eating it, etc. She takes a pretty simple concept and finds out everything she can about it. V. E. Schwab sees the world as a character, as the first character in the story and has to flesh out the world's norms and cultural expectations before anything else. Chuck Wendig starts with the story and uses the world building to support the story. He doesn't want the world to eclipse the story. Finally Leigh Bardugo (one of my favorites) talks about supporting how the reader can understand the story from the first chapter, what context they need to understand what's going on. She says the hardest part for her is giving the right amount of information, and not too much.

I'm going to consider Margaret Atwood's breakfast question. The morning the story starts Silver probably didn't have a very good breakfast, that's part of the reason she was in such a bad mood. The apothecary sells little pastries like croissants, banana bread, bagels, fairy cakes (little, airy, sugary things that can have different magical effects depending on the type of frosting on them; for example chocolate frosting does nothing, but a precise mix of lemon and lavender would cause you to grow larger, and bergamot helps you remember and anise helps you forget). Silver probably had a croissant that morning and cup of black coffee. A lot of the bread recipes come from our world. Some ingredients, like wheat, can be grown in Meryn but others, like bananas have to be imported from our world. Some ingredients also come from neighboring countries across the sea, like exotic fruits. Inherently magical ingredients come from the Wildwood or from across the sea, but mundane ingredients can be mixed in a way to create a magical result.

#### Writer's Digest: The WD Interview: Author N.K. Jemisin on Creating New Worlds and Playing with Imagination 3/29/19

I thought this article was going to be about world building but it wasn't. Jemisin is a black fantasy writer that has recently switched to writing full-time with the support of readers on Patreon. So a lot of the article was about that. She did mention briefly that she sometimes writes shorter stories to sort of test out a fantasy world before trying to write a whole novel. That's sort of what I'm doing with *The Necromancer*; I have an idea for a full novel set in the same world but I'll need to hammer out some more details.

Journal 3: 2/10

The history of Faerie

“They say the Raven King was sculpted from a snow drift. No one knows by whom. Some say the world made itself for him, but I don’t think so. I’m sure the Wildwood existed long before the Raven King or the Fae or the nymphs or the myriad magical beasts that live beneath the trees.

They say the Raven King came first of the four, but no one knows for sure. The Erl King was born of summer moss and the Blossom Queen grew from the foam of the rilling brooks and the Autumn Queen was made of falling leaves. They were children together, the four rulers of the forest, raised by wolves and bears and ravens and deer. And all the creatures of the forest felt their power and knew the time of the Fae was upon them.

The Fae ruled the Wildwood for centuries in harmony until a spell gone wrong opened up the first waypoint and magic began to leak out and other things, less friendly things began to leak in.” —bedtime story.

The goblins came first, tunneling in from their underground world (a volcanic planet) and soon they had built underground warrens under the Wildwood. They are constantly battling each other for territory. They can’t be above ground during the day, the sunlight burns them, even through clouds. They have very little interest in gaining territory above ground however, so the Fae tolerate having them underground. The goblins pay tribute to the Fae.

The dwarves came in from their mountain world and built workshops in the mountain caves. There are some magical hot springs and lava flows that the dwarves find useful and different from their home world. No Fae lived in the mountains above the treelike and the dwarves also pay tribute. In exchange they sometimes get help from the Fae with enchantments or are allowed to use magical wood. Dwarves can create magical items by working with magical materials and can do way finding magic, but can’t spell cast.

Goblins also have forges and metalworks which they use for weapons and jewelry. Dwarves make just about everything.

In England in the 1100s (around 1189 under King Richard I) Crusaders set out to ‘liberate’ the Middle East from the Muslims. By accident, a group of crusaders stumbled through a waypoint in Jerusalem and ended up in the Wildwood.

Their first meeting with the Fae was fairly peaceful. But the Fae wouldn’t convert to Christianity and the crusaders then assumed the Fae were pagan animists who worshipped nature spirits and trees. They started cutting down the trees. This greatly angered the Fae but also weakened them. The crusaders had iron armor which made them immune to spells. After cutting down trees along the edge of the Wildwood, they sowed iron into the soil so no magic trees could grow again and the Fae could not pass the boundary. The crusaders would have wiped out the Fae out completely but the Raven King negotiated with the leader of the group and gave up his true name so that his people would be safe in the Wildwood and the crusaders would stop cutting the trees. In return for a treaty with the humans and power over the Fae, the goblins made a magic ring to contain the name of the Raven King. This bound the Raven King to the crusade leader, so he was often called upon to do magic for him.

The leader of the crusade renamed himself Solomon (after King Solomon from the Bible; I changed this from Andronicus) and pronounced himself king of this new land (he told his men God had given him a vision in a dream of him ruling a new holy land, safe for Christians). Exploring, they found other waypoints to other parts of the world and they established guards to keep out people they didn't want in their new country. All the men on the crusade (there were probably about 1000) were able to go home and bring wives and families along with livestock and seeds, secretly. King Richard I never knew what happened to this group and they were known as the Lost Crusaders.

Solomon kept the real power of the ring in which he had imprisoned the Raven King's name a secret; he only claimed that the ring was a gift from God and proved that he was ordained to rule.

Solomon had four wives like Jacob and had 12 daughters, which was very frustrating to him. In exchange for a son, Solomon traded all his daughters to the Raven King, who cast a spell on one of the wives to ensure she'd have a boy. The lieutenant, who had been lined up to marry the eldest daughter and be king, was left both wifeless and out of the line of succession. This drove him to murder the king, all the king's wives and the unborn baby. He blamed the Raven King publicly for the deaths, claiming the spell had been a trick, a sickness that killed the king and his wives and the future king. The lieutenant took over and his line has been uninterrupted until our story.

For about 100 years the Kingdom of Meryn guarded its waypoints jealously and tried to limit travel between this world and theirs. They didn't want the English to claim sovereignty over them and they didn't want undesirable people moving there. But technological advances stagnated and they couldn't get a lot of the food they wanted from the old world.

So they opened up the waypoints and sent envoys through, claiming to be an independent country interested in trade. Some limited travel and trading occurred. Iron tools and technology could be used in Faerie but electronics with iron in them don't work in Meryn because of the magic in the atmosphere. For this reason, there aren't cars or cellphones. I think there is electricity (as far as I know it uses copper and not iron). They do have things like coffee makers, gas stoves, cameras, movies. They still celebrate mostly Christian holidays.

Tourists and immigrants: For a long time the only people who could move to Meryn were devout Catholics, until about the Enlightenment and then ideas about religious freedom proliferated into Meryn. The church is still important and the king is still head of the church, but they have become more tolerant. Tourist visas are hard to get and there aren't many of them awarded each year. Tourists are required to travel with designated guides, after a rash of backpackers went missing in the Wildwood and were never seen again.

Waypoints: Waypoints are controlled by border security checkpoints (mostly, all the known ones are) and traveling between them is much like traveling between countries. (Think of waypoints like the windows from the Golden Compass books, like a slit that was cut between worlds. They can't be closed though.) There are waypoints in the Wildwood but the Fae aren't allowed to go through them. There is so much iron in the human world that they can't even cross. The creatures of the Wildwood (nymphs, dryads, pixies, woodland animals, unicorns, centaurs, etc.) are also sensitive to iron and won't cross waypoints. The Fae have put repellent spells on

their waypoints that pretty much keep people from coming through unless the Fae want them to. Animals from our world (horses, cows, goats, pigs, cats, etc.) have no problem with iron or crossing waypoints, though some wild species don't manage to survive after crossing the waypoint because of the magic in the soil and atmosphere (this controls invasive animal species). Seeds were brought through the waypoints into Meryn for farming. Other invasive species of plants have blown through. Some strains are killed by the magic in the soil, others flourish. This is becoming a problem for the Wildwood, as the native trees and plants are being choked out, but this won't be addressed in this story.

Some known waypoints (meaning someone controls them, a country a family, a gang):

- a pub in east London connects to Silver's apothecary
- a phone booth in Trafalgar Square is the official tourist entrance and connects to a tourist information station in downtown Ening City
- a rug shop in Fez, Morocco
- a staircase in Valparaiso, Chile connects to the goblin tunnels
- an alley in La Boca, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- a mask shop in Venice, Italy

Some unknown waypoints (meaning they aren't guarded or controlled):

- a tree in Hampstead Heath connects to the Winter Forest
- the Roman Baths in Bath connect to a spring in the Spring Forest
- a field in Kansas, USA

Fae and Demi-Fae: There are rarely marriages between Fae and humans. Fae are immortal and there are rarely full Fae children. The origin of the Fae is not known but it is conjectured that they came from nature spirits and nymphs and dryads. Occasionally humans wander into the Wildwood which sometimes results in unions between Fae and humans. These children live unnaturally long lives, but not forever, and have an affinity for magic and an immunity to iron. (There are some questions about iron in human blood and viability of pregnancies. Perhaps only people with iron deficiency can mate successfully with Fae.) The Spring Court likes to keep a few humans around, mostly as servants/slaves (paid in drugs). The Spring Court is known for its hedonism and psychedelic drugs. Fae from different courts have different magical affinities: Spring-plants, growing things; Autumn-healing; Summer-animals, shapeshifting; Winter-black magic, necromancy. The most powerful Fae can master any of the affinities, but will be strongest in one area, usually corresponding to what court they live in. Simple things like truth potions, compulsion, small remedies, etc. all Fae can do.

Demi-Fae born to Fae mothers are usually sent to the human world as changelings, outcast from Fae society. They are also not likely to survive because of the iron in the blood of the fetus. Demi-Fae born to humans are usually kept and are sometimes the family is treated with suspicion and outcast from human society. But these children have an affinity for magic so they often become witches or wizards.

Long enough ago that everyone has forgotten about it, a female ancestor of Silver's disappeared into the Wildwood for a year and returned with a baby. So Silver has a Fae ancestor

somewhere in her line. Probably a fairly unimportant Winter Fae, maybe a guard in the Raven King's castle. He's still alive and the Raven King probably knows him. Because she has a Winter Fae's blood, she has more of an affinity for black magic, including necromancy.

Readings: Publisher's Weekly: Ask the Editor: Tips on Revising a Novel 7/28/17; Publisher's Weekly: Ask the Editor: When to Stop Revising 10/25/19

Publisher's Weekly: Ask the Editor: Tips on Revising a Novel 7/28/17

The first suggestion is to put the manuscript away for 2 weeks, check, I put it away for like a year. Then you can come back to it with fresh eyes. The editor suggests: "making sure that the story is worth telling and you have told it well; the opening sentence is an attention grabber and helps the reader anticipate what's to come; the characters are believable and well developed; the plot moves along swiftly without repetitions and the storyline always holds the reader's attention; and the prose is clear, engaging, grammatically correct, and concise—try to lose the adverbs." I do think my story is worth telling and I think I have told it pretty well, though I definitely see room for improvement in description, continuity, and perhaps pacing. I think the opening sentence is an attention grabber, or definitely the first 2 sentences since it sets up that we're not in our world, but the worlds are connected. I think the characters are believable and well developed. The plot does move along swiftly, but perhaps too swiftly at times? The story takes place in just 3 days and sometimes I wonder if that's too quick. Overall I think the prose is clear and engaging. I'm working on making it more concise in places and I feel like I've fixed most of the grammar errors. Also, I kinda like adverbs. I know you shouldn't overuse them, but I think a few can't hurt.

Publisher's Weekly: Ask the Editor: When to Stop Revising 10/25/19

The editor talks about an author they worked with who spent a year and a half revising and the result wasn't much different from the draft they had a year and half before, except that it had "lost some of its energy and freshness." In art they always talk about not overworking a painting and I think that's relevant for writing too. The editor points out, "There's a point at which you're not making the book better; you're just making it different." The hard part, of course is recognizing when that is. The suggestions for getting better at this include trusting your instincts and not changing things that don't leap out at you as inaccurate, intrusive, or ridiculous, and asking several trusted readers to look at it for you. I have sent it to two trusted readers, one of whom has sent me back comments, the other is still working on it. I might send it to one more. The editor also suggests hiring a freelance editor, which is a good idea but not something I would do at this stage in my career.

Journal 6: 3/2

Readings: *Bartleby the Scavenger* by Katie Boyer from *Fantasy & Science Fiction* 2014

This was a science fiction novella set in a post apocalyptic southern USA. I liked the way the author built the world and gave it to the reader bit by bit. The story starts at the end of the narrator's life. You know it's science fiction by the end of the first paragraph, because the narrator says that he is being 'decommissioned' in the morning for being old and injured. The story is structured as like a last confession that he writes in his cell before his execution. The author hints at the dystopian society and all-powerful Mayor that brought the narrator, Boss, to this point. I liked how she did this. She gave us enough information to be interested, but not so little that we were confused, and not so much that we were overwhelmed or were drawn out of the story.

After introducing Boss and the framing of the story as a last confession, the story circles back to the beginning where we learn how the world as we knew it ends. A civil war between Democrats and Republicans results in the bombing of the southern US and all of Boss's family is killed. He manages to move to Brook, a town in the mountains that managed to escape destruction. Almost immediately a woman named Peighton has assumed control over the town and locked it down to keep the residents safe. Boss convinces Peighton that he has useful skills to offer so he is allowed to stay. Then we see how Peighton gradually gains more and more power and slowly starts to punish people who aren't productive enough and eventually to 'decommission' them.

Another thing I thought was done well was the development of Boss from the beginning of his story to the end. At the beginning he sort of sets out to tell the real story of how terrible Peighton is in the hopes that someone can stop her, but by the end he realizes that his own actions have been essential to help Peighton get where she is. He thinks he is trying to save himself and his workers by helping her get what she wants, but really he's just hurting the whole community by cementing her power.

Right at the end we get one last twist. Boss tells us that he had heard on his scavenging trips outside of Brook that it's possible that the rest of the USA still exists and it was only the southeast that was destroyed in the civil war. He told Peighton this but she decided to keep it a secret from the rest of the town, so the last part of his confession is hoping that someone will find out that maybe Brook isn't the last civilization left.

Journal 9: 3/23

Readings: Locus magazines 1991, 2004, 2008, 2018

I can definitely see that it would be great press to be mentioned in Locus, either to have a story reviewed, or to be interviewed, or to be on one of their lists, either recommended reading or even just their list of what's new.

I didn't know novellas and novelettes could win Hugo and Nebula awards, that's cool. The form must be somewhat more prominent than I thought it was. And I see that both the Hugo and Nebula nominations for 2007 and 2008 include novellas and novelettes published in F&SF.

I like the Locus Looks at Short Fiction columns. There's almost always a recommended story or several from F&SF. There are a few other regulars like The Del Rey Book of Science Fiction and Fantasy, Asimov's Science Fiction, Apex, and Analog, but F&SF definitely appears the most regularly.

In their year in review there are a bunch of charts about book sales and publishers and types of books published. I'll be honest, charts sort of make my eyes glaze over—reasons I didn't become a scientist—but it is useful to see how many SF or Fantasy novels have been published year to year (SF held steady from 1996 to 2004 by Fantasy increased), or which publishers are publishing the most books, or which publishers published the most of Locus's Recommended books (Harper Collins, Tor, and Penguin Group).

I loved reading interviews with authors I like (somehow you managed to give me only copies of Locus with interviews with Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, which is just fine with me).

I downloaded their 2018 magazine from their website and I'm interested to see some news related to Tor. It looks like their publishing team went through some significant changes, so I wonder if that has anything to do with the fact that they haven't been accepting submissions since 2018. They were a place I wanted to submit but their latest update on their website says something like 'we probably won't reopen for submissions in 2019, we'll keep you posted.' But as far as I can tell, they're still not open. Not sure what that means for their future.