

Hello Dear Readers,

My hasn't the year flown by? Sure, we've had our ups and downs, and there's been a shadow over the whole year in some regards with multiple unknowns, but still... It's as though we go to sleep one day with high hopes for our new selves in a brand new year, and we awake one day to find that we are counting down the final weeks of the year.

November dawned a tad briskly for where I live, and I set about working diligently on my NaNoWriMo project. The goal, 50,000 words in 30 days. I met my wordage goal, but I confess I feel I have little worthy writing to show for that effort. One short story about a little boy named Jack who went on a fantastical adventure, I hope when I publish it here in due course you'll enjoy it.

The idea came to me one crazy afternoon when I pulled myself away from the writing table to tend to a few household duties: laundry, bathrooms, dinner. I decided to start with throwing dinner in the pressure cooker, starting a load of laundry and then racing through each of the bathrooms in our home.

It was upon entering the last bathroom that things went haywire. Years ago I cross-stitched a whimsical piece for my son's that reminded them to brush their teeth, hang up their towels, flush the toilet, and turn out the light. The final line reminds them that despite the requests Mom loves them. I think, perhaps, over the years the message has been lost because it's a normal part of the bathroom walls. It's one of the first things to be hung at each new home we enter, and thus I'm pretty sure they don't remember a time when it wasn't before their eyes whilst in that special room of rooms.

So there I was, throwing open the hall bathroom door, thinking to myself that it's the bathroom I most dread cleaning. It has no window in it, the door is hung backwards and can't be "fixed" {trust me I tried and managed to get locked in the bathroom, until I popped the hinges..} my son bathes his pet birds in there, and they seem to leave little presents behind form droppings to feathers, and I always find that particular bathroom stuffy. Yet, that day I decided to forget all those issues and throw the door open with gusto and begin the work before me.

As I threw open the door my eyes were on the wall where the infamous artwork hangs, and the first thought on my mind as I proceeded to enter the room was, “Hey, should I pack that up for the upcoming move?” My mind never processed an answer, for moments later I was tripping over a dirty towel, and no sooner had I grabbed the bathroom sink ledge to save myself then I found myself recoiling in horror due to a blob of “something” on the counter top. As I flung myself backwards there was nowhere to go except into the tub. You know, THAT tub, the one that the person who showers in daily never scrubs despite the sign, the reminders, the.. Never mind, you get the drift, I’m sure.

I didn’t fall all the way into the tub. I managed to be precariously askew upon the ledge of the tub with a hand reaching out for the only closest object nearby: the toilet. Now, if I’m very honest with you, I may have a small problem with germs or things I perceive to be germ laden. I can often ignore these issues and overcome the impending screaming voice in my head, but something about being sprawled, most unlady like, upon the edge of a tub, one foot flying in the air, a croc dangling from it, the other foot braced on the nearby sink cupboard, and a hand clutching for safety may have resulted in my inability to shut down said little voice.

Instead, moments later, I was bellowing from the depths for the unnamed child to come and pick up the entire mess. By the time he arrived I was actually back on my feet and laughing as I recalled other such moments, like the time I slid across a much larger bathroom floor and fell into the giant spa sized tub. The young adult, who’d come to rescue the copious amount of towels and hang them up, was disturbed by my laughter, and all I could say was, “I’m just working on a story idea..”

Jack’s Adventure remains in a file unedited, and will eventually be shared with you. Yet, aside from that story I didn’t finish any of my other short stories. It seems I may love words a tad too much to reign them in and contain them to the shorter lengths I was aiming for, and for the ones I was capable of containing, they felt far too “familiar” perhaps lifted in part from other short stories or tv shows.

It left me feeling a little disappointed, but rather than throw in the towel I continued working

on some previous stories. I have many either in progress, in my head, or written that need heavy editing. Rather than focusing on many I opted to focus on two.

One, you've already had the opportunity to read the [first two](#) chapters I shared with you, did you notice a tiny little change I made to one? I called it the "unnamed" story, because I struggled to find a suitable name for it. Yet, in a late night writing session while my husband was traveling interstate, the name fell into my lap- I think. I've run the name by a few people who've read a bit more of the story and they find it fitting, thus far, which is promising. The title is actually a key component to the story, so I'm hopeful that it shall remain and stick! I'm hesitant to share the name, Dear Reader, lest I change it again and you wonder what happened.

Yet, if you are like me, you are probably unsatisfied with such an excuse given, so I shall stop luring you along, with the simple footnote here that the title is subject to change down the road, will that do? Now then, the working title that I feel very settled on is: *The Knight & The Fallen Star*.

The other story I decided to spend a grand deal of time working on is one I've had in mind for many many years. Long ago {no, wait, don't keep scrolling, this is a true story!} I had a book recommended to me, I won't disclose the title of said book lest it be on you love and I upset you for I know that books can be very dear friends at times. The story was a nativity telling, and the objective was to throw us into the real life scenario of being with the young couple as they made their way to Bethlehem. Yet, I didn't connect with the story. I felt that the author's idea was amazing, but that she had some serious flaws within her story telling that left me going, "No, no, no.. that's just..."

It created the desire to write my own version, and yet it's been done more than once. And as the idea played on my mind over the years, I realised that some of the research would be beyond me as it is difficult to write about a place you have never been. Oh yes, we can make lofty descriptions from pictures, but you can't tell what sounds were heard or what smells were smelt. We could leave it up to our imaginations without doubt, but I suppose my own theory was for far more realism then that.

Yet, the idea nagged at my mind for years, until one day I thought about how I could write it in a modern setting. The idea is not to tragically rip apart a most beloved historical event and a story many are familiar with, but rather to bring it to life in a new setting with just enough hints and nods to the real story that one could make the connection if they wished.

I actually began a very very raw edition of this story and wondered if I could shorten it enough to use one week here, but I'm afraid, Dear Reader, that you must squash that excitement {if it was building at all} because I concluded that I could not. Yet, perhaps one day I could share it in portions here, that is if you'd like to read it of course.

I have bits and bobs of other things written, scenes I suppose one could call them. I have a test for things I write, if when I reread them I find myself lost to the words on the paper and not distracted by the birds flying around me, the sniffing of others in the room, the clanking of dishes, or the drumming of music, then I figure it might be good enough to share here with all of you. I still have several such pieces, but they feel unfinished because they are just that, scenes, portions, and I'm not at all sure where to take them from where I left off.

I have considered sharing these, because while they are unfinished they still stir something within me and pass the test I use for choosing which pieces to share here, yet it feels odd to share something that is only half finished!

And this, Dear Reader, is where I must end this note today, for I hear cries of help coming from those in my home as they attempt to wrestle the washing, load the dishwasher, and pick out meaningful gifts for others.

Until Next Week,

The Reluctant Author.
