

## Musings

*A space where you are invited to share your thoughts and inspirations  
of the past month*

Since before Christmas I've been usefully working on a written piece entirely without using the definite article; the word 'the'. I intend to limit the story to 1000 words. Beyond that it would probably reach its natural end anyway. I have found it a very interesting exercise. It has caused me to be more observant of the surroundings and feelings I'm writing about. This is so that I use more description to get around the absence of the simple 'the' I might ordinarily have used.

**Debby**

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I asked my grandson if I could read my latest teenage story to him, his comment was, "Oh, Grandma, this is the 6th time. Do I have to listen?" My comment was if you want to use my computer to play games for the rest of the day, then yes, you do have to listen. He complied with my request. I now have a slimy green head exploding in my story, I love his help. HA!!!

**Eileen**

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While not much writing has been achieved in January (alright - none), I've been researching the creative process in a successful writer, Russell T. Davies. Russell is the scriptwriter and executive producer of series 1 to 4 of "Doctor Who", the rejuvenated TV series which achieved ratings of nearly 10 million for the BBC. Russell's book "The Writer's Tale" is a large A4-sized, 512 pages of extremely small text. It's a record of a year's email and text messages between Russell and Benjamin Cook, co-author of the book. It's a fascinating, humorous and sometimes painfully honest peek at the creative process. An extremely busy writer, also writing for several spin-off series as well as "Queer As Folk" and "Bob And Rose", Russell allows us to view early script drafts of "Doctor Who". We can compare these to the finished glossy TV productions. Unfortunately, I'm just shy of halfway through this book which was due two days ago. Never mind, it's worth a few library late fees to finish this tomb!

**Sandy**

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I've been working on some short stories for my grandchildren and also trying to re start my interest in the junior fantasy book that I started last year. I have also joined a site called Fanstory.com and that keeps me busy. Once a person joins fantasy there is lots of free online contests to enter.

**Marilyn**

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A neighbouring friend was telling me about her painting experiences at the Brisbane University of the Third Age and asked if I'd be interested in attending a fitness class with her. We chatted about the groups and on returning home I looked up the website. To my delight I found a number of courses I was interested in and they were all online. In December I finished the Short Story Writing course which I thoroughly enjoyed and benefited from. I have carried on from that and am now in my third week of the Writing Poetry course. Both these courses are broken into eight units over eight weeks and you need around five to six hours free each week to devote to the course. The only stipulation is that you be over 50 years of age. For the cost of \$40 per course they are both very good value in my book.

**Leslee Anne**

I feel that, when writing stories based on actual historical events, careful research is a necessity. If the story is to be of any worth, the writer should have his facts correct. Therefore, when I set about writing, I have several books on hand that contain accounts of the event on which the story is based. At present, the event in question is Napoleon's Austerlitz campaign of 1805. Having several accounts on hand certainly means that every aspect is covered but it creates another problem. Historians contradict each other, not in the main course of events but in the details of minor events. The problem is, which account will I work into the story. Some seem to be very likely to be the true account but are not as interesting as one that seems more fanciful. Is our aim complete accuracy or accuracy spiced with some interesting tit-bits? This, I feel is the constant problem plaguing the writer of historical fiction.

**Jeff**

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My name is Margarita, I am a writer. I love to put into paper what I see, listen, smell, touch, taste and feel. A beautiful sunset, salsa music from El Salvador, a child's smile, a girl's giggle, the smell of a pizza baking, the first bite of a delicious *pupusa* [a typical food from El Salvador] that melts in my mouth, the comfort of my hubbie's arms, emails from my children, my pain, my joys or frustrations. I love to put all this down on paper. Later as I go back and read what I have written, I have this weird feeling that it is also reading me. Yes, the paper is reading the myriad of facial expressions produced by what I read, they are written all over my face. The paper with my thoughts and me... we have merged, we have become one.

**Margarita**

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'Doing a second edition was like renovating a home, once shifting a wall, other challenges faced us. like lifting the roof to show more light in, moving a window and the doors to open up areas for review and concentration. being handicapped by distance, time & budgetary restraints, more needed to be edited and other stuff added. The family law act changed as we tried to finish chapters and in the end it was like birth after a very long and painful labour...'

**Mieke**

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Similar to most Australians, I've been trying to come to terms with the magnitude of the bushfires that ravaged across the State of Victoria and the resultant, colossal loss of lives and dwellings. The awful truth is we live in a land of extremes and need to be prepared for natural disasters. And yet, I can't help thinking how many lives could have been saved if the mobile phone warning system had been given the go ahead sooner. In this era of fast communication, it would surely have made a difference if more people had known that this was a fire-storm like no other and was never going to be fought with simple measures. Who knows how many people perished having placed their trust in the same equipment which had protected them against lesser fires in the past.

**Beverley**