

The Journal, 2017

## The Journal, Sunday, 1/1

January 1, 2017

**Hey Folks,**

Long post today. First, happy new year. Again, I hope 2017 is the best year yet for all of us. And that is within our power. All we have to do is choose to make it the best year ever.

Things will happen that are outside our control. But how we react is ALWAYS a matter of choice.

*From the For What It's Worth department...*

There's another 80/20 truism floating around among humanity. Most humans spend 80% of their effort on themselves and 20% on others (give or take a few points, for the purists out there).

A very wise person (I honestly don't remember who) once told me the broadest path to a happy life is to get out of my own 80%.

Another wise person once pointed out that the more tightly we focus, the less we see. Focusing too tightly clouds our vision and causes us to miss untold opportunities that might have led us to what we want.

\* \* \*

To the writing, all goals reset today.

Looking back, in 2016 I wrote 702,838 words of new, clean, publishable (mostly published) fiction. I wrote 273,460 words of published nonfiction.

**Topic: It's Goal Time!**

Looking forward, for 2017 I will write at least 1,000,000 words of new, publishable fiction. I'm not setting a goal for nonfiction. Knowing me, I'll probably spout about the same amount I spouted this year.

So my personal writing goals are to write

⇒ 3,000 words per day, beginning today, of new, clean, publishable fiction.

⇒ at least 12 novels this year. (Preferably I will write one per month, though end-of-month/beginning-of-month writing will overlap now and then.)

⇒ at least one new short story per week.

Some of you are thinking these are all goals I've set before, and you're right. But not with a new person and a new responsibility in the household.

So some schedule adjustments are coming too. I plan to go back to rising earlier and then using that time to write rather than "wake up," do admin stuff, etc.

Writing production, at its most basic, requires spending hours in the chair. I write 800 to 1200 words per hour. So in a typical hour of writing I get about 1000 clean, publishable words done. (That's only 17 words per minute. It leaves a lot of time for staring off into space.)

My "hours" also more than likely will be segmented now: 15 minutes here, 30 minutes there. That's okay. How I reach the 3 hours / 3000 words doesn't matter. What matters is that I get there.

So another goal will be to renew my commitment to Keep Coming Back. Interruptions happen. We can't control that. But as I wrote at the top, we can control how we respond. (grin) My response will be Keep Coming Back until I hit at least 3000 words per day.

Today I'll hang a sign over my desk in my house office:

**Keep Coming Back  
3000 words**

Also, it's probably important to note that I'm not entering into this set of goals EXPECTING to "fail to success." I think that's a bad idea. I'm expecting to succeed. Period.

A friend emailed me recently about goals and pointed out that goals reset every day or week or whatever time period you use.

That's true, and I preach it constantly. But it's true both ways. As Dean wrote a couple days ago, in writing, Attitude is Everything.

If you MISS a daily or weekly goal, yes, it resets to zero the next day or week anyway. But simply accepting that and installing it in your brain-housing group can kill your writing. It can enable you to become lazy. Believe me, I know. Been there, done that, got the "fail to success" t-shirt.

**Failing-to-success is not the same as succeeding.  
It merely beats the alternative of quitting.**

If you EXCEED a daily or weekly goal, the goal STILL resets to zero the next day or week too.

So if you really strive to meet or exceed your daily or weekly goal, you will "bank" words in your average. And in this game, average is what matters.

I fully intend, right here publically in front of all of you, to meet or exceed 3000 words of publishable fiction per day. If I do happen to miss, at the end of the year all the days that I exceeded will make up for it.

That's the plan.

## **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's place, check out Got Your Goals? (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/got-your-goals/>). Endless gems to be mined here.

Check out the Smashwords blog: 2017 Book Industry Predictions: Intrigue and Angst amid Boundless Opportunity (<http://blog.smashwords.com/>).

For anyone who's interested, [The Professional Fiction Writer: A Year in the Life](#) is available for preorder in all electronic venues. It will ship on January 15.

## **Today, and Writing**

I rolled out at 3:45 after a late (for me) night. I messed around with email, Facebook, and Spider, "waking up" (an excuse that's going away soon).

I wrote much of the above, and at 7:30 finally turned to the story I started yesterday.

Well, within a half-hour I decided to move outside. Then it started raining. So I saved the story on a thumb drive and moved myself and my old writing computer back out to the Adobe Hovel.

But the AC adapter no longer worked. So I walked back to the house to find a good one. Long story short (with much omitted), I finally set to the story from yesterday at around 10:30. Finished it around noon and headed into the house for lunch.

Around 1 I read back over it (just over 3,000 words) and put a few finishing touches on it.

Now to begin another one to knock out my words for the day. (grin)

Nope. The short story that posted free on my site this week is also the first chapter of a horror/crime novel I started awhile back called (at the time) Jonah.

When I read the short story, it motivated me to revive that novel and go back to work on it.

To begin, I threw out everything I'd written earlier beyond the first chapter. Today, I read the first chapter again (also a short story) and then wrote only an opening sentence for Chapter 2. Just enough to give me a jump-start in the morning. So I fell far short of achieving my daily goal today.

However, it's a start, and I'll take it. Tomorrow morning (early) begins a new retraining session. I'm eager and anxious to get started on that.

See you then.

Fiction Words: 1628

Nonfiction Words: 1040 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2668

### **Writing of "Popper"** (short story of the week)

Day 1..... 1890 words. Total words to date..... 1890

Day 2..... 1604 words. Total words to date..... 3494 (done)

### **Writing of Being Jonah** (novel, revived)

(brought forward 4736 words)

Day 1..... 0024 words. Total words to date..... 4760

Total fiction words for the month..... 1628

Total fiction words for the year..... 1628

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1040

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 1040

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 2668

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 1/2](#)**

[January 2, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Ugh. Not doing too well on the retraining thing. But I have excuses. (grin)

Excuse 1. Rolled out late at 3:45 because I stayed up and watched the Green Bay/Detroit football game.

I planned on a quick, abbreviated wake-up period of no more than a half-hour, but...

Excuse 2. I allowed an email from a writers' group to sidetrack me.

The email mentioned that a pulp writer, Van Allen Plexico (<http://www.whiterocketbooks.com/plexico/>), would be speaking at an upcoming meeting. The title of his talk will be “Pulp Fiction Isn’t Just a Tarantino Movie.” Great title.

So I did a Google search and found the guy. When he says “pulp” apparently he means a genre, not production or way of writing. He’s written 17 novels thus far, and he’s been writing for several years.

(In an interview, he mentioned turning out a new book in one series once a year.) I thought I had stumbled across a gold mine. Turns out (for me), not so much.

BUT I also listened to a YouTube interview (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MpbKRWrjktg>) and mined a nugget or two.

I also picked up one of his books from Amazon (free, a short story, I think). If I like it, I plan to buy one of his novels. Maybe.

Okay, so what I’m saying is I totally blew it on the early writing retraining I was supposed to start this morning. Which means I’ll have to piece together writing time through the day today. While other people are awake.

But it’s all right. Missing goals and learning new ways to adjust is all right. Quitting, not striving toward those goals or adjustments, is not an option. Well, it’s an option, but not a good one. (grin)

Also, from Dean, I learned of Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey, a major pulp writer back in the day. By “major” I mean he “wrote 25,000 to 30,000 word books, ONE PER WEEK for two decades.” I want desperately to be able to tell stories like that. Will I find and read (study) some of his books? Yes. Oh yes.

Okay. Today is a complete no-writing day. Just too many other things going on, so no reason to try to force it. Or who knows. Maybe I just need to whine for awhile. Or maybe (shudder) I’ve used up my allotment of fiction words. (grin)

Anyway, instead of writing I did some other things, including updating my website.

Also, from now on when I write a post that contains a topic, I’m going to tag that post with a keyword that points to the topic. That should make it easier to find things.

Now I’m gonna post this, then blow off the rest of the day.

## **Of Interest**

One of Dean’s goals for the year is to learn one new thing about writing/publishing every day. His first installment is at 1/1/17 Daily... Some Learning... (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1117-daily-some-learning/>). It includes hints about the very prolific pulp writer Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey (Nick Carter).

At Kris Rusch's site, Free Fiction Monday (<http://kriswrites.com/2017/01/02/free-fiction-monday-present/>)

Interesting comments on Dean's "Got Your Goals?" (<http://www.deanwesleymith.com/got-your-goals/#comments>).

For anyone interested in more about Pulp Magazines, I recommend [http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Pulp\\_magazines](http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/eng/Pulp_magazines).

Marking the passing of Richard Adams, author of Watership Down: <http://thefederalist.com/2017/01/02/watership-author-richard-adams-knew-rabbits-say-freedom/>.

## Today, and Writing

Nada. I read the sentence I wrote yesterday to continue the Jonah story and I just didn't feel it. So that one's going out the door.

See you tomorrow.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 580

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1628  
Total fiction words for the year..... 1628  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1620  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 1620

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 3248

Categories [Uncategorized](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 1/3](#)

[January 3, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, this is just insane. Whatever else happens today (unless it's earth shakingly momentous) I hope to write SOMETHING. A character with a problem in a setting. That's all I need.

I hope it whatever I write will lead to a novel. I really enjoy writing novels. And when I'm involved with the characters in a novel, my daily word count soars.

\* \* \*

And just like that (snaps fingers), things change. Epiphanies happen. Calming comes. And clarity.

I wrote the first two paragraphs above just before I ventured to Dean's site to check for a new post. Not finding one (at the time) I checked for comments on yesterday's post. I'm glad I did. In fact I'm thrilled I did.

I found the most important gold mine of advice I've ever seen or can imagine in those comments in the form of a link to an article by Frederic van Rensselaer Dey. The superlative is intentional and I am not exaggerating in the slightest.

Although I've included a link to it in "Of Interest" below (just in case anyone skips this part to read that part) I also decided to make it the topic of the day.

This is the most important topic I've written and posted in this or any other blog. It probably is the most important topic I'll ever post.

### **Topic: Writers and Learning**

Despite the inadequate title of this topic, Frederick van Rensselaer Dey's article "How I Wrote a Thousand 'Nick Carter' Novels" is a gold mine of knowledge not only in writing, but in any endeavor and in life itself.

Again, I'm not exaggerating.

Moreover, the article begs the reader to also read Dey's short story, "The Magic Story."

This is so important, I've copy/pasted "The Magic Story" into a Word document, converted it to PDF, and made it accessible via a link on my Free Stuff page. I did the same with the article. And I might even create a new page (or two new pages) on my website specifically to showcase the story and the article.

They are that important. But to the topic....

I've always said continual learning is essential to success in writing. That entails taking classes, reading blog posts and, of course, practicing. (By the latter, I mean

1. learn (conscious mind) something new about the craft in between writing projects, and
2. apply (creative mind) the new thought or technique in your next writing project.

I have known many writers and would-be writers during my life. In EVERY CASE, those who succeeded were not the ones with the best language skills or sense of syntax, etc.

The ones who succeeded (by which I mean continued to write and improve in the craft) were the ones who were willing to put forth the effort to learn new things.

But my take on learning to write has always been limited. “Learn the rules of grammar,” I would say, and “Learn how readers react, in every case, to punctuation” and “Take every opportunity to learn everything you can about crafting a story.”

I always advocate, still, learning the “rules,” but only so you can break them, when necessary, intelligently and intentionally to create a certain effect on the page and a certain reaction in the reader.

Those saws still comprise good advice and I stand by them.

But in reading Dey’s article, and as illustrated in his story[ies], I found that I had omitted perhaps the most important advice of all.

I almost slipped and gave you the answer. But I won’t because I don’t want that to derail you from reading the article for yourself.

Still, I want to make finding those articles as easy for you as I can. So here are the links:

Frederick van Rensselaer Dey’s article [“How I Wrote a Thousand ‘Nick Carter’ Novels”](http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/How-I-Wrote-A-Thousand.pdf) (http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/How-I-Wrote-A-Thousand.pdf).

(If you’d like to see the original article, you can find it at <https://ipeopleblog.wordpress.com/2014/12/29/writer-frederic-van-rensselaer-dey/>.)

Frederick van Rensselaer Dey’s story [“The Magic Story”](http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/The-Magic-Story.pdf) (http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/The-Magic-Story.pdf)

I’ve read both. I read the short story first (yesterday) and was completely awed at how the writer and the writing pulled me along.

I read the article this morning just before I began this topic. I intend to read it several more times, especially at those times when I feel the writing has fled me. But at other times too. When I can’t come up with a story idea. Or when my conscious mind tries to intrude to question something my subconscious wants to put on the page. (Therein lies the personal reason to post both it and the story to my site.)

As an additional incentive, I’ll just say that Dean plans to post topics based on the article over a period of time. So if you read it now (and perhaps again later), you’ll have a solid foundation for reading Dean’s take on it later.

For my own edification, I'm also going to find every book and story I can find by Dey or his pseudonyms (the folks at the original link above included some of them) and read those as well. Voraciously.

So I wrote all of the above to lead to this:

Go. Read. Seriously.

### **Of Interest**

Some interesting comments on Dean's 1/1/17 Daily... Some Learning... (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1117-daily-some-learning/#comments>)

Also, Frederic van Rensselaer Dey (same article I mentioned above) in his own words at <https://ipeopleblog.wordpress.com/2014/12/29/writer-frederic-van-rensselaer-dey/> (from the February 1920 issue of The American Magazine). This is invaluable, even when preaching to the choir.

And finally, Dean's 1/2/17 Daily... Adjusting Slightly (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1217-daily-adjusting-slightly/>) is good.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3, starting to get back to my earlier "normal" time. This is part of that retraining I mentioned.

About a month ago, I started training myself to go to bed later and get up closer to a normal time. But with the recent changes in my family, I realized if I'm to meet my writing goals, I need to go back in the other direction, so I'm working on that now.

I messed around the first hour or so, then checked Dean's site and wrote everything above this. I also added some things to my website (see above) and did some other stuff. It's just after 9 now and I'm going to read Dey's article again. There are some things there I want to revisit.

And now it's almost 11:30. Some things came up, so I dealt with those and read the article again in about four separate sittings. Got what I needed though. And I'll read it again as necessary.

At this point I might or might not write. I'm kind of casting about for characters. I've had a few strong "friends" I like a lot. I'm going to visit with them a bit and see whether any of them want to join me in another novel or twelve.

Definitely not writing fiction today. The rest of today I'm going to explore a few characters from an earlier novel. One of those characters is well-established. A second had more than an introduction, but not a lot more. Two others are incredibly interesting but served only cardboard, background roles in the first novel. I wanted to write more in that world anyway, and this seems the perfect time.

I started that process today. I'll continue it in the morning, probably around 2 or 3. Then, situation allowing, I'll write the rest of the day. The way I see it, I have some catching up to do. (grin)

See you tomorrow.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1240 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1240

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1628  
Total fiction words for the year..... 1628  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2860  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 2860

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 4488

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Frederic van Rensselaer Dey](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 1/4**

[January 4, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

It's going to be a great day. I scanned through an earlier novel and highlighted sections of it for information. I consider this research.

I gleaned characters, situations and places that will appear in the next novel. Unless something untoward happens today, I should have a good writing day.

**Of Interest**

Yet more good comments at Dean's 1/1/17 Daily... Some Learning...  
(<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1117-daily-some-learning/#comments>)

Also check his 1/3/17 Daily (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1317-daily/>)

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30, so I'm at least getting back to normal. By 3 I was going through an old novel, gleaning some bits of it. Finished that in about 2 hours, then took time off around 6 to make breakfast, etc. as everyone else was getting up.

After that I returned, sporadically, to browsing the earlier novel I mentioned. I found four characters or groups of characters that would serve to begin the next novel. Eventually I settled on a group, put my fingers on the keyboard and began typing whatever came.

The opening scene flew out of my subconscious and took off with itself. It felt wonderful.

A little over three hours of writing, and I was sa-MOKIN' (for me) at around 1300 words per hour. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

**Fiction Words: 4391**

Nonfiction Words: 210 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 210

**Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Total fiction words for the month..... 6019

Total fiction words for the year..... 6019

Total nonfiction words for the month... 3070

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 3070

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 9089

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 1/5](#)**

[January 5, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I have to go get labs done this morning (fasting) so that will interrupt the day some. That plus I got up late this morning after staying up too late last night.

But it's already been a good morning.

Probably I should mention some of the entries in this Journal will get a little light as I spend more time on the novel. I'll still try to give you something worth reading, and I'll add a topic when one occurs to me, but the joy of the novel has to come first.

### **Topic: Amazon and Exclusivity**

Yesterday, I finally read the Smashwords blog I mentioned here a few days ago. It's well worth the read, especially if you're a proponent of or participant in Amazon's exclusive KDP Select program (or their exclusive print program).

Please don't fall for their nonsense, folks. If you do, you WILL harm your bottom line (royalties) in the long term, and you will harm all other authors' sales in the near term. In case you missed the link, I've added it again in "Of Interest" below.

Admittedly, the Amazon store is the biggest gorilla in the room when it comes to sales venues for ebooks. But it's still only one venue. If you go exclusive with Amazon, you're cutting away literally dozens of other sales venues and the readers who prefer them. That alone is reason enough not to go exclusive with them.

If that doesn't do it for you, consider this: If something happens to cause Amazon to close its doors (it happens) or to lose its monopoly (more likely) you won't have a base built up at Kobo, B&N, Apple et al to build on. You'll be starting from scratch.

Now, none of this is to say you shouldn't place your books with Amazon through Kindle Digital Publishing (KDP). Just don't go with KDP SELECT, which is their exclusive program.

Put your eggs in several baskets. In the long term, you'll be very glad you did.

### **Of Interest**

Check out the Smashwords blog: 2017 Book Industry Predictions: Intrigue and Angst amid Boundless Opportunity (<http://blog.smashwords.com/>).

Over at Dean's place, in 1/4/17 Daily (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1417-daily/>) he talks briefly about a new challenge he's starting. Also a couple of other interesting nuggets.

My latest Free Story of the Week will post tomorrow morning at <http://harveystanbrough.com/category/free-short-story-of-the-week/>.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 this morning. But I spent only about a half-hour on email etc. before turning to the novel. I added close to a thousand words in my first session.

Then I took care of some other things, including writing the stuff above this and grabbing my camera to get some pics of the sunrise in the east and its reflection in the west. After that I took a

break to read a couple of newsletters. Pics at <https://www.facebook.com/harvey.stanbrough> (and scroll down just a bit).

I left about 8 to get my labs done, and I was headed home afterward for breakfast. Then I thought of a local place called The Horseshoe Cafe and the thick slabs of bacon they serve there. Well, there y'go. I finally got home around 9:40.

Put on a load of laundry. I was going back to the novel but other things came up. Finally back to the novel at 11.

Another good day of writing, though not a great day. I expect tomorrow and succeeding days to be even better.

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 3632**

Nonfiction Words: 570 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 570

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023

Total fiction words for the month..... 9651

Total fiction words for the year..... 9651

Total nonfiction words for the month... 3640

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 3640

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 13291

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Saturday, 1/7](#)**

[January 7, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a lot to report today. Hope you won't mind a minuscule post. Somehow, I think you'll survive. (grin)

**Of Interest**

At Dean's place, 1/6/17 Daily... Stay Safe (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1617-daily-stay-safe/>).

If you're interested in Dey's Nick Carter books, check out [http://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/islandora/search/mods\\_primaryName\\_author\\_ms%3A%22Carter,%20Nick%22](http://dimenovels.lib.niu.edu/islandora/search/mods_primaryName_author_ms%3A%22Carter,%20Nick%22). (I'll let you copy/paste that one into your address bar.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30 and around an hour later I started working on the novel. I felt (subconscious) something wasn't right, so I went back to the beginning and started reading through it (cycling).

As I mentioned earlier, this is a sequel to an earlier novel, but it's also a self-contained stand-alone novel. I had omitted information the characters were trying to give me but that I knew was already contained in the first book. Tricky. (grin)

But because I allowed my subconscious to play freely as I read back through it, those parts slid into place easily. And (shock, shock) they set up all-new conflicts in this story. Those will enable a few minor but important characters from the first novel to take their rightful place as major players.

God I love this process! This is another future-earth novel of political intrigue with religious overtones.

Not enough writing today to meet my daily goal, but enough on average so I'll take it, especially for a Saturday.

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 2673**

Nonfiction Words: 220 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2893

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023

Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439

Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112

Total fiction words for the month..... 13740

Total fiction words for the year..... 13740

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4330

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 4330

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 18070

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 1/8](#)

[January 8, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Today is going to be a great day. I hope it's a great day for writing too.

As I write this, I'm at my outside desk. My hands are stiff from the very light breeze, but I'm enjoying a good cigar and your company.

As a bonus, I paused for a moment and looked up. The Big Dipper is almost directly overhead.

As it turned out, it WAS a great day for writing, but it was a great day for other stuff too. So no writing today. Back at it tomorrow.

### **Goals Revised**

I'm calling an end to my goal of writing at least one short story per week.

Why? Because although I enjoy writing short fiction and it increases my body of work and name recognition, it adds unnecessary pressure.

So I'll continue to write them, but not in pursuit of any particular goal.

I still expect to write at least 1,000,000 words of published fiction this year. To that end, I will stick to my goal of writing at least 3000 words per day. It's easy enough to do when I just sit down and write. And even when I miss, the average usually holds up.

As it stands, I have some catching up to do. But I'll get there.

### **Topic: Rambling**

I came sideways into a conversation on Facebook. In that conversation, an acquaintance mentioned that he isn't sure how much longer he'll be here. (He was diagnosed awhile back with a nasty cancer.)

Being an intruder in the conversation, I commented that I was glad he and I had met and that I hoped to see him again.

What I didn't say (my first thought) was that NONE of us know how much longer we'll be here. My acquaintance just has a more focused ETOE (estimated time of exiting) than most of us do.

If that sounds cold or uncaring, I don't mean for it to. I personally like the guy. I wish we could have hung out when we were younger.

Occasionally I hear people say what they would do (within their ability) if they knew in advance when they were going to go off-planet.

Every time, my unspoken reaction is that somehow they're missing the point. We all know we're GOING to go off-planet, although none of us know when. So why not do those things NOW? Why wait for a diagnosis that maybe renders us less able to do those things (or causes us to believe we're less able)?

I've actually asked that on a few occasions.

The response always has to do with money, time, or responsibilities. Which is to say it always has to do with excuses.

Usually I just nod, smile and say something like, "Ahh, I understand." After all, there's no reason to argue the point.

Yet here I am. Arguing the point.

If you're one of those who needs an approximate date of ETOE, check your family history for life spans, factor-in the state of your overall health and any "bad" habits you might have that could limit your natural life expectancy, then slap an approximate month and year down for your ETOE.

But if your ETOE is distant, don't use that as an excuse to put off what you want to accomplish or do. After all, you can't factor-in getting hit by a bus or some drunk jerk coming the wrong way on the freeway.

Whenever I think about this stuff, I'm reminded of the penultimate and final lines in the movie, *Secondhand Lions*:

"These men really lived?"

"Yeah. They really LIVED."

## **Of Interest**

I recommend Dean's 1/7/16 Daily (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1716-daily/>) because it's fun.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 3. Checked email and Facebook, then outside for a cigar and to write most of the stuff above this.

I decided fairly early to make this a non-writing day. Cleaned out a storage shed (that doubles as my Adobe Hovel) complete with rearranging shelf units, etc. That took a few hours. I'm going to take the rest of the day to do nada.

Back tomorrow.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 690 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 690

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13740  
Total fiction words for the year..... 13740  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5020  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 5020

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 18760

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 1/9**

[January 9, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Another slow start today, basically doing almost nothing the first two-plus hours.

Also I was beginning to feel a little stalled on the novel. Which is silly. This thing is so rich for storylines and subplots that it isn't even funny.

The difficult part (for me), especially as I write a novel that depends, in part, on characters and situation from an earlier novel is to remember to just have fun with it. I was reminded of that this morning when I read yet another novelist complaining about the actual *physical pain* she endures when writing novels. Seriously? (grin)

Anyway, melding the information from two novels (character names, situations, dates etc.) is serious, conscious-mind stuff. But the actual writing has to be fun or I'd mu-hu-hu-HUCH rather do something else. (grin)

Anyway, the story handed me a twist this morning, so it's moving along fine again now.

### **Of Interest**

Dean's at it again with Introduction: How To Write a Novel In Five Days While Traveling (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/introduction-how-to-write-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>).

Remember to check Kris' site (kriswrites.com) for her Free Fiction Monday installment.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Did little or nothing for the first couple hours, then breakfast for the household (roughly half a ton of pancakes).

I finally turned to the novel at around 9. I worked on it, off and on, for almost 5 hours before calling it a day. A pretty good day.

Not only did the story hand me a twist, but about the time I addressed that one it handed me another one. I hope it continues racing along like this. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 4284**

Nonfiction Words: 240 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4524

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023

Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439

Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112

Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396

Total fiction words for the month..... 18024

Total fiction words for the year..... 18024

Total nonfiction words for the month... 5260

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 5260

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 23284

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 1/10](#)

[January 10, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, today we can call January 1/3 over. At my current rate, I should be able to clear 70,000 words this month. Maybe 80,000. We'll see. I hope you're having similar success.

Now if I can only come up with a novel idea for the January-February transition. (grin) I wanna do something off-planet, something science fictiony or science fantasy-y. So I'll probably write a western. (grin)

### **Topic: Save Early, Save Often**

I know, old advice. Trite advice. But extremely good advice.

This morning, I was outside. I opened my current WIP and was about to start writing when I glanced at the bottom left of the screen.

The word count was 12112. Oh no. Had I lost the last almost 4,300+ words I'd written yesterday?

The file I'd opened was in my Dropbox. It was the most current version synched between my two laptops. Oh no.

My thumb drive was inside in my office. I stopped everything else and made a mad dash into the house (but quietly, as it was only 4:30).

I plugged in my thumb drive, clicked frantically at my mouse, and—

Whew! It was there!

I had saved the file in a folder titled "a Kirski Continued." The "a" precedes the rest of the file name so it will show up at the top of the list of folders.

At the end of each day I always transfer the contents of that folder from the thumb drive to my Dropbox. Always.

Until yesterday. Lesson relearned.

But it was there. I didn't have to begin the day by reinventing the wheel. Crisis averted.

But one thing leads to another. Almost by accident I noticed there was another folder a bit farther down the list in my Dropbox named “Kirski Continued” (no “a”).

So I opened it and “a Kirski Continued” and compared them back and forth. The “a” folder was the more current, and it contained all of the files (but newer) that were in the other one. So to avoid future confusion, I deleted the one that didn’t begin with “a”.

*Future* crisis averted. Never keep duplicate files or folders. More often than not, they aren’t truly duplicates.

I know I’m preaching to the choir here. But I’m the choir advisor, and even for me this stuff is SO easy to take for granted.

So just a reminder: Don’t take it for granted. Save Early, Save Often. Save even when you’re absolutely, positively certain you don’t need to.

\* \* \*

For those of you who don’t do Facebook, here’s a glance at my twisted early morning humor: “I just this moment realized I’m a plagiarist. Everything I’ve written has come straight from the alphabet.” (grin)

And for the more critical among you, yeah, I could’a gone with “dictionary,” but all of that’s plagiarized from the alphabet too. Whatever guy invented that should be making some MAJOR royalties.

## **Of Interest**

Second day of Dean’s trip. Check out Chapter One: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-one-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>). I love passing this stuff along. I hope you read it and it helps.

He also posted 1/9/17 Daily (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/1917-daily/>).

For those of you who enjoy writing SF, check out this headline. The future is today. <http://www.militarytimes.com/articles/pentagon-successfully-tests-worlds-largest-micro-drone-swarm>

While I’m on the topic of research (and learning) if any of you would like to know how weapons “silencers” actually work, there’s a good article. *NOTE: This is a politically biased article that delivers facts but also slams folks who don’t have a clue what they’re talking about. So if you want to avoid politics in all venues, don’t read this.* But if you wanna read it, click <http://thefederalist.com/2017/01/09/progressives-dont-understand-how-gun-silencers-work-here-are-some-facts-to-help-them/>. There are also good gems to be mined throughout the article on related topics. And please don’t email me about this. I didn’t write or title the article. I just found the information interesting.

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out at 3 and just messed around online for a few hours with email, Facebook, Dean's site and writing this stuff.

Finally around 8:30, to the Adobe Hovel and the novel. Got a little over a thousand words in the first session. Then to the house to make a grocery list and go shopping.

Back from the grocery and everything put up and little things taken care of (introduced my little girl to the newly straightened Adobe Hovel) by 12:30. Back to the novel.

Had a pretty good session. Then I had to take some time off to help my grandson with some things he was doing. Then back to the novel around 2:30.

Didn't get as much done as I'd hoped today, but the novel is still flying right along.

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 3159**

Nonfiction Words: 750 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3909

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555

Total fiction words for the month..... 21183

Total fiction words for the year..... 21183

Total nonfiction words for the month... 6010

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 6010

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 27193

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Saving your work](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 1/11**

[January 11, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I learn something new with pretty much every novel I've ever written.

Usually that has to do specifically with the writing process, and more specifically with novels. But sometimes I get lucky and learn or realize something that can enhance any storyline, long or short.

### **Topic: The Five Stages of "Grief"**

More correctly, these should be called The Five Stages of Emotional Upheaval. It seems they don't pertain only to grief.

Most of my stories have a decidedly psychological bent. I love getting deep into the characters' heads, good guys and bad guys alike. I like to experience their motivations and their emotions.

Usually I explore those emotions through dream sequences or soulful conversations with trusted other characters.

But those are isolated blocks of text. Bam. A dream (or nightmare) sequence (and what it reveals about the character). Bam. A conversation (and what it reveals about the character).

But in the current WIP, one of my characters went farther than that.

A young woman is feeling a bit overwhelmed. Like you might be "a bit overwhelmed" by water if you stood in the path of a tsunami.

Of course, I'm writing off into the dark. But during that process, I suddenly realized the character was progressing through what has always been called "the five stages of grief."

Only she wasn't grieving. She had recently shared a brief time, professionally, in an office environment, with a young man.

She never gave any of the others with whom she interacted professionally a second thought. But she couldn't seem to get this guy off her mind.

Still, their paths were permanently divergent. Of that she and he were both certain.

So when she heard from a third party that the young man had named her as the beneficiary of his life insurance, the news came as a complete shock.

To be sure, she was overjoyed to think he might have the same feelings for her as those she continued to struggle against for him, but due to their individual situations, she still expected never to see him again.

So as she considered that, she progressed through the same five stages people typically go through when they lose someone close to them: denial, anger, bargaining, depression and eventual acceptance.

And upon acceptance — since the source of her discomfort is still alive — she has to contact him. If nothing else, just to ask “What the hell?” (grin)

So there you have it. The five stages of “grief” are also the five stages of any other major emotional upheaval. Use it.

Of course, you won’t mention “five stages.” You’ll just let the reader hear and see the character progressing through them.

## **Of Interest**

Dean’s Chapter Two: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling

(<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-two-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>).

Also see his 1/10/17 Daily... Some pictures (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/11017-daily-some-pictures/>).

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out late at 3:45. Same routine with coffee, email, Dean’s site etc.

I started on the novel around 7, cycling back first to take care of a problem that had been nagging the back of my mind. Finally I sliced off the end of a chapter (about 700 words) and nailed it to the front of a later chapter where it made more sense. (grin)

Then I turned on the novel in earnest, knocking out around 1100 words in an hour.

Around 9 I went down to the house and put in a load of laundry. Then I came back up here (Adobe Hovel) and had another, longer session of about 1500 words.

Another trip to the house to put the wash in the dryer and start another load. Then back here to write everything above this.

Back to the novel around 12:30. Another really good session by 2. I’m gonna call it for the day.

Back tomorrow.

## **Fiction Words: 3834**

Nonfiction Words: 620 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4454

## **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023

Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439

Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389

Total fiction words for the month..... 25017  
Total fiction words for the year..... 25017  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6630  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 6630

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 31647

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the five stages of grief](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#), [writing on the road](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 1/12**

[January 12, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

### **Topic: Planning**

This kind of goes along with Dean's post on traveling and writing and my recent post on life events or life rolls and writing. Notice, the common denominator is writing. If you don't write, substitute the activity that is nearest and dearest to your heart and keep reading. (grin)

I was doing the early morning shift for quite awhile (maybe two years?), getting up at 2 or 3 and hitting the sack at 8 or so.

Then a month or two back, I decided to adjust my schedule back to a more normal schedule, getting up at 4 or 5 and going to bed at 10 or thereabouts.

I made that decision for two major reasons: One was the onset of winter. I don't stand cold weather as well as I used to, and I've never liked it. The other was the revival of "real" television shows, as opposed to the glut of "reality" shows that plagued (IMHO) the airwaves for so long.

Then a couple of weeks ago, I experienced a life event in the form of my grandson needing to move in for awhile. I soon realized this will be an ongoing life roll because it probably will be a long-term thing, meaning I expect it to last from a couple of years to four or five. And with that, of course, comes additional responsibility.

Among my new responsibilities are teaching my grandson to set goals and then work toward them. On some of those, my help is required. For example, his first goal is to get his GED.

Like so many unfortunate youths these days, he was “passed” through school despite having learned (read “achieved”) very little. He completed his senior year of high school without having earned quite enough credits to graduate. But given his knowledge base, that probably was a blessing.

As it happens, I was both a college instructor and a GED instructor for a period of years in a college in New Mexico. So I can help him with that. When the materials arrive in a week or so, teaching classes will become part of my schedule.

For a bit of background, my wife and I have been empty nesters since our youngest son left home close to twenty years ago. Also, our lives have changed considerably since then. For example, I’m a full-time fictionist now. My wife works at a job away from the house five days a week.

So all of that conspired to require rethinking my schedule again. If I want to keep writing (and I do), and if I want to get anywhere near my goals (I will), I have to adjust my schedule so I have time to write.

So I started working my way back toward getting up in the wee hours (2-3) and going to bed at 8-ish. Of course, there will be rare exceptions to my bedtime, but I mean to rise and shine between 2 and 3 every day regardless.

But all of that will do me no good if I don’t manage to write during those early morning hours. The eventual goal is to turn my three thousand word daily goal before the rest of the house stirs. Then any other time I get for writing during the day is gravy.

So far it hasn’t worked out that way with the exception of one morning. But there was that one day.

So at this point I need to renew my focus on that, shove the silliness aside and begin writing a little earlier. Say within an hour after I get up. Starting tomorrow.

If I get up at 3, I should be awake enough to write by 3:30 or 4 (the leeway is to allow flexibility in the plan).

When the writing’s going well, I generally churn out around 1200 words per hour. So I’ll count on 1000. So by 6 on those days, I should be able to hit around 2000 publishable words of fiction.

If I get up at 2, I should be able to hit my daily goal of 3000 words of publishable fiction. I just have to get my work ethic back to the fore.

## **Of Interest**

See Dean’s Chapter Three: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling  
(<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-three-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>)

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out right at 3 this morning, then set about wondering why. The plan was to wake up, then write for a couple hours before the rest of the house wakes up (see above). But I'd lost sight of that plan recently.

I fiddled around. I actually played Spider solitaire for over an hour. (Yeah, that'll get me to my goal.) As a result, this morning I headed out to the Hovel around 7, and that's when I started writing.

I did some necessary cleaning (rodent leavings on a thick window sill right above my desk) then hit about 500 words in the first session, mostly cycling. I also started a new chapter. Then the topic above occurred to me, so I wrote everything above.

9 a.m., back to the novel.

Up to the house around 10 for a sandwich for lunch and some other stuff, then back to the novel by 11:30.

I had a slow, long session as I had to cross-reference some stuff with the earlier novel. Finished that around 1:30 and took a short break. But I'd surpassed my daily goal, so everything else today is gravy.

Back to the novel at 2.

Good day today. Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 4953**

Nonfiction Words: 920 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5873

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342

Total fiction words for the month..... 29970

Total fiction words for the year..... 29970

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7550

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 7550

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 37520

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 1/13**

[January 13, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I've received some interesting and heartfelt comments lately. I appreciate them. I haven't allowed any of them through as comments on the blog because they were personal rather than of interest to writers. But I'll always respond privately.

Several (thank you) offered blessings. One was a tad derogatory.

What I write in this Journal never is for self-aggrandizement. Trust me, I have a big enough ego that I don't need that. (grin)

In every case, I choose to share personal matters that I feel might help you in your own struggles with writing. This isn't altruism in any form. If it does me no harm, costs me nothing and might help someone else, why not share it?

Some would argue that I occasionally share personal matters that are not related directly to writing. That's true. However, in every case they affect my writing *time*.

From my perspective, I do that because we're all in this race together.

I share non-writing related events that affect my writing time because similar events in Your life might also affect Your writing time. And how I handle them in my life might (or might not) be helpful to you in how you handle them in yours.

The notion that each of us is required, when faced with a new problem, to figure it out and solve it on our own is ludicrous to me. So I share my experiences.

That really is all there is to it.

### **Of Interest**

See Dean's Chapter Four: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-four-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>). Great stuff.

I missed this yesterday: Check out Kris Rusch's Business Musings: All Romance Ebooks & Visions of The Future Part Two (<http://kriswrites.com/2017/01/11/business-musings-all-romance-ebooks-visions-of-the-future-part-two/>)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out way late at 3:40. (I do realize this seems an odd time to put after "way late." If you're used to rising at say 6 a.m., this would be like you getting up at 7:40 one morning.)

However, within about an hour, I was cycling back and writing. The retraining has begun. Now if I can just remember to focus on that.

I got only about 600 words in the first session before my stomach started complaining that maybe my throat had been cut in the night. Food. It wanted food.

Finally out to the Adobe Hovel and back to the novel a little after 8.

By noon, I'd written three sessions (each with a break from ten minutes to a half-hour) and got to within 200 words of my daily word count goal. That feels good. At that point, the rest of the day is easy-peasy.

By 1 p.m. I had another thousand words. Feeling good about the day. As old what's his name on the A Team used to say, I love it when a plan comes together. (grin)

## **Subtopic: Just Write the Next Sentence**

I've mentioned a couple of times that this novel is really flowing along quite well. That isn't to say I haven't encountered difficulties at times.

But most often those difficulties come in the form of my conscious mind wanting to "figure out" what happens next.

I've been fortunate, in that each time that's happened thus far, I recognized it for what it is and remembered to Just Write the Next Sentence (whatever comes) and don't worry about it.

I'm just telling a story here. It's a fun story to tell and I'm enjoying it immensely, but it's still just a story.

\* \* \*

Another thousand or so words. Good day today. Back tomorrow.

## **Fiction Words: 4982**

Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5562

## Writing of **The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324

Total fiction words for the month..... 34952

Total fiction words for the year..... 34952

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8130

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 8130

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 43082

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Conscious mind](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 1/14](#)

[January 14, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

It's Saturday, so I'd like to be done a little early. With that in mind, I set firmly in my brain last night that I wanted to get up at 2 a.m.

I used to do that all the time (set a mental alarm clock) back in the day and it always worked. But I haven't tried it consciously for years. It worked this morning.

### **Topic: A Reminder to Let It Be**

This notion of writing in public, letting others know at least most of the major twists and turns in process, is a little frightening.

I'm human, so I want to impress others. But I'm also striving to be honest in case you might glean something that will help from all this stuff. So I want to lay the process bare.

To that end, despite the fact that the novel has been running, today might be a day of cycling back from the beginning. More likely, it will be a day with a little of that and a lot of letting the story run where it wants to, even though I'm not personally wild about the direction right now.

The novel keeps wanting to turn more to the antagonists' side of things. That is, those characters keep rearing their heads in unusual ways, taking over.

From the beginning, this story has been about one main character: Jonathan Kirski. But in this novel, the bad guys seem poised to take over. Not the world, so much. They already have that. But the novel itself.

Most of the "good" characters' thoughts and actions seem boring and flat. But the bad guys are going nuts.

Now, I write off into the dark. So I have to allow the characters to go where they want to go, do what they want to do. But I'm starting to get the sense that this book might go a lot longer than usual and have more cuts at the end than usual.

One thing is for sure: getting to the eventual end of this one is going to be a blast.

### **Of Interest**

Check out Dean's Chapter Five: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-five-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>).

Of great interest to me and I hope to you, check out Patricia Brink's Interview Questions at <http://www.hurog.com/Patty/interviewQuestions.shtml>. Also click the Mike button next to the Patty button above the interview for her husband's take on "What Patty Should Have Said." Great fun.

Thanks to Dawn Turner, a great professional writer in her own right, for pointing me to this website.

I also recommend reading Building a Strong Story: 7 Critical Elements (<http://www.hurog.com/articles/writing/SevenElements.shtml>). I don't necessarily endorse everything in it, but I recommend reading it because you never know what you might find that will help You.

Hey, the big book launches tomorrow! I know you guys don't need it, but tell your friends, would'ya? They can find The Professional Fiction Writer: A Year in the Life at any online retailer by following this link: <https://www.books2read.com/u/3GMwep>

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 2 this morning. And it's Saturday, so I'd like to reach my word count goal early.

Ideally, I'd like to hit my goal before the rest of the house is awake around 6, but that isn't going to happen today. It might not happen any day. I seem to need an hour for my brain to turn on no matter what time I get up. (grin) One of those age things I think.

I started on the novel this morning around 3. By 4:30 I had just a hair over 1000 words. So one-third of my goal. No cycling back this morning. Just writing. But deep in the psyche of a character (and a female) so my conscious mind messed with me almost constantly.

One of my Brooklyn guys (that's him on the left) dropped in to say, "Hey, whadda you know from females, am I right?" To which I replied, "Wull, yeah. But it has to be done, right?"

From 4:30 to 6 I wrote all the stuff above, read the stuff on Patty Brink's website, Dean's stuff etc. Headed out to the Hovel soon. I'll do the rest of my writing out there. Probably I'll call it soon after I reach my goal.

In the Hovel around 6:30. In two sessions with a short break in between, I knocked out just a little over 2000 words.

8 a.m. up to the house for breakfast and to see how the rest of the world is living.

9, back to the Hovel. I wrote for about another hour and a half, then moved to the house. There, I wrote for another half-hour or so off and on.

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 3618**

Nonfiction Words: 790 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4408

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942

Total fiction words for the month..... 38570

Total fiction words for the year..... 38570

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8920

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 8920

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 47490

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

# The Journal, Sunday, 1/15

[January 15, 2017](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

REALLY slow start today. Not with the story. It's fine. I just stayed up too late and then had a bout of insomnia. So a lot of waking-up, dawdling time this morning.

Drizzling rain here this morning. When I'd been up about an hour, I, a good cigar and my second mugga coffee headed outdoors with my laptop to play Spider, read some stuff (see "Of Interest"), etc.

Of course, halfway through the cigar (about a half-hour) it started sprinkling. I set up an umbrella, but the stuff was just heavy enough that it was still splattering and leaving minuscule droplets on my computer. Sigh.

So inside with the computer (cigar under the umbrella) then back outside to commune with nature for awhile. Huddled under an umbrella. On a cloth office chair. Crap.

Inside to put the chair in the house, then back under the umbrella, this time with just me, the cigar and the coffee. Good stuff.

I was wearing my medium-weight jacket (it's about 45° outside with a light breeze) and the collar wraps around. That put me in mind of an old detective-type trench coat.

And suddenly I was a guy standing under an umbrella in the pre-dawn darkness at an outdoor café in a new town with which I am not familiar. (Character with a problem [rain] in a setting.) Not sure how I got there (or why) except there's a crime to be solved. Don't know what that is yet either.

Maybe my next novel will tell me.

I've been jonesing to write a series with a recurring main character but with different storylines for each novel (instead of one long, ongoing story). Maybe this is it. We'll see.

Or I'll write another psychological/sociological SF. I love writing those.

## **Quick Quiz**

1. What differentiates SF from other genres?

Answer: Setting. (Really. That's it. Nothing else.)

2. What one genre trumps all others?

Answer: Science Fiction/Fantasy. If a story has even one element of SF in it, it's an SF story.

You can write Horror, Psychological Suspense, Western, Romance, Thriller, etc. If you place the story in an SF setting, it's SF.

### **From the Wow Department**

The philosopher Seneca in his letters to his cousin Lucilius, wrote, "Who knows what a day is worth? Who understands that he is dying every day? Our mistake, you see, is in looking ahead to death. A good deal of death has already passed. The years which have so far gone by are in the hands of death. So, do what you claim to be doing, and embrace every hour. In that way you'll be less dependent on tomorrow if you set your hand to today. Life flits by while things get put off."

### **Of Interest**

See Dean's Chapter Six: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-six-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>). Great stuff. Be sure to read to the end. A gem on focus and making choices.

From a comment on Dean's post from Chapter 5, "Here's an older article from Scientific America article that discusses major flooding in the past. It's a current topic and you might find it useful in your time travel stories."

California Megaflood: Lessons from a Forgotten Catastrophe (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/atmospheric-rivers-california-megaflood-lessons-from-forgotten-catastrophe/>)

And a family in Russia lived so deeply inside Siberia that they weren't aware of World War II (<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/for-40-years-this-russian-family-was-cut-off-from-all-human-contact-unaware-of-world-war-ii-7354256/>)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30, but did very little until around 5, when I finally came here to write this stuff. I'll start on the novel shortly.

Finally to the Hovel during a break in the rain, around 7. By 7:30 I had 600 more words, cycling, filling out a scene.

Oof. Hard to stay motivated today. Took an extended break from around 8 to 9:30. Conscious mind keeps saying it wouldn't kill me to take a day off (an unreasoning fear). But I'm still more afraid of missing my word count than anything else.

Well, I made it. Not by much, but I made it. And I'll take it. Off early today.

Back tomorrow.

## **Fiction Words: 3133**

Nonfiction Words: 670 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3803

## **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075

Total fiction words for the month..... 41703

Total fiction words for the year..... 41703

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9590

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 9590

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 51293

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [genres](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 1/16**

[January 16, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I love being my age. It's a built-in excuse for being grouchy about all manner of things.  
Woohoo!



A couple of days ago, I wrote “One of my Brooklyn guys (that’s him on the left) dropped in to say, ‘Hey, whadda you know from females, am I right?’ To which I replied, ‘Wull, yeah. But it has to be done, right?’”

Then I forgot to add the pic. (sigh)

Okay, so THAT’S him on the left.

### **Topic: Words (and Grammar and Syntax)**

When I was teaching grunt English at ENMU-Roswell a billion years ago, I went to the bookstore one day to sign for a shipment of textbooks I’d ordered.

There, stamped on the box in bold black all-uppercase letters was “GRAMMER BOOKS.”

A poignant moment, that.

But I don’t fault the warehouse workers who inked the stamp and applied it.

And amidst the storm of unruly comments and laughter from the bookstore workers, I was gracious. I forgave whoever put the stamp together in the first place.

But secretly I hoped he or she wasn’t also an aspiring writer.

Daniel Webster once said (paraphrasing here) that common use trumps denotation. But I don’t think he meant that to be used as an excuse by professional writers.

Words, grammar and syntax are the tools of your trade. Know how to use them.

Kristine Kathryn Rusch started this with a small post on Facebook: “When did ‘alright’ become all right? (She grumps after seeing the WRONG spelling in an ad for a national magazine. Sigh)”

My first comment was “So called ‘professional’ reporters once said troops had found a ‘weapons cachet’; they also constantly use ‘likely’ when they mean ‘probably,’ and interchanging ‘infer/ imply’ has become acceptable in many circles. The dumbing down continues. Check out the film Idiocracy if you haven’t seen it. Great stuff.”

Seriously, if you haven't seen Idiocracy yet, find it, rent it, buy it, something. Watch it. It's a very funny film that almost made me cry. And not because I was laughing so hard. But because it seems prophetic.

My second comment (because this stuff annoys me practically to no end) was "Oh, and I've seen 'a myriad of' used in two separate articles (one in Smithsonian Magazine and the other [I believe] in Archaeology). So I've seen myriad mistakes, a veritable plethora of mistakes, by alleged professionals, the likes of whom would have Cronkite and Murrow spinning in their graves."

Why Cronkite and Murrow?

Because they were consummate professionals who would be eternally embarrassed had they misused a word due to their own ignorance of the language. An ignorance that shouldn't exist because they're professionals.

Writers should take pride in their profession. But instead, increasingly in our dumbed-down society, writers are shifting the responsibility for their writing to the reader: "It's good enough. The reader will know what I mean."

I'll bet you wouldn't want your heart doctor going in to see whether maybe he could clear that stuff out of those little round tube-thingies leading to your ticker.

Maybe readers will know what the writer means, but not necessarily. And if they don't, that's the writer's fault, not theirs.

My point is, if you want to make your living using words, be more than familiar with the language. Know what words mean, how they're spelled and pronounced and their proper use. Know the formal rules of grammar and syntax too. If for no other reason than so you can break them, intelligently and intentionally, to create a particular effect in the reader. (Like writing a sentence fragment for emphasis.)

And when some moron slaps a "grammar police" label on you, smile. They're only acknowledging your superior knowledge and work ethic, though I suppose it would seem sweeter if they actually realized it.

Okay. Grouch session over.

\* \* \*

My kitten constantly acts as a muse, feeding my imagination. When we're together when a noise of undistinguishable origin occurs, she'll jerk her head around and look at me as if to say, "Uh! What was that?" Then her eyes narrow as she says, "We don't really know, do we?" Then, most often, she licks her right shoulder (her version of dropping the mic) and walks away.

**Of Interest**

See Dean's Chapter Seven: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chapter-seven-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>).

Also, it should be Free Fiction Monday over at Kris' site (<http://kriswrites.com>).

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30 again this morning after sacking out at halftime of the (cough, boring) second NFL game last night. Let's all get together and ban field goals of less than 50 yards. Or until the last two minutes of the game. Or maybe altogether.

By 3 I was ready to start on the novel. Then I went to Dean's page to check for comments. Then I scrolled down farther in Facebook, found Kris' post, and came here to write all of this.

I actually felt my brain kick on around 3:30. (An hour to wake up?) Incredible. Anyway, writing this stuff is almost as much fun as writing the novel, so it's all good.

After I wrote the topic above, I copied/pasted it over to my big blog.

And just like that, it's 4:45. I have to let the chihuahua and the other cat out of their kennels (where they like to sleep). So I'll start on the novel around 5 this morning.

Well, more delays. The girls (cats) both went outside, so I went back outside to make sure the little one stayed in the yard.

While outside, I started reading Dean's latest (see "Of Interest") and in about five minutes a very light snow started falling.

Snow is water, and I've heard that water is bad for computers, so back inside, then out with my flashlight to circle the house, driving cats ahead of me, to get them back inside too.

So now, 5:40-ish, I'm starting on the novel again. Three full hours after I got up. And I have a routine appointment with my doctor at 10:30, so I want to get as much done as I can between now and then.

6:30, 800 words added and I'm taking a brief break.

Well, that turned into a shower and getting dressed for the day. A little after 7, back to the novel.

A good session, though I'll have to cycle back through this very detailed chapter carefully later to make sure all the details are in place. In to make breakfast around 8, back to the novel around 8:45.

I read back over the most recent chapter (the detailed one) and added very little. Close to an hour, mixed with popping up and down to do other things. At quarter to 10 with a little over half

my word count done I stopped writing at a good place. I'll start again after I get back from seeing the doc.

Back later than I expected at 1:20. Then I heated up some beef tamales and ate. I almost called it a day after that because I also have some work I want to do on the 4-Runner. But I'll write a bit longer and see what happens. So 2 p.m. back to the novel.

Well, I knocked out a couple hundred words in almost an hour. I also talked with my wife and let the cats out and back in about four times.

I've had an old quilted black bomber jacket for several years that I really like. The only thing it's missing is a hood, so Miss Mona is making one for me.

The jacket was finished and the girls went into the house just before 3 p.m. So I moved myself and my computer out to the Hovel to get a little writing done. (grin)

Well, for the first day in awhile, I didn't reach my goal. But I stopped at a very good place. Had I continued, probably those 36 last words would have ended up in the "cuts" bin.

I sense the end of this one is near, although (thankfully) I can't see it yet. We'll see.

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 2964**

Nonfiction Words: 1350 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4314

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039

Total fiction words for the month..... 44667

Total fiction words for the year..... 44667

Total nonfiction words for the month... 10940

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 10940

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 55607

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Disruptions](#), [Distractions](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Knowledge](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 1/17](#)

[January 17, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

First, my deep gratitude to Michaela for letting me know the Journal wasn't in her inbox this morning. My apologies. I forgot to check the category box. (grin)

It was a good post. If you're interested, you can find it at <http://harveystanbrough.com/daily-journal/6042/>.

The baby needed to be close this morning for some reason. Who knows what's in a little cat's mind? But that's fine. The time we get to spend with loved ones is limited and it can end in a blink. I try not to take a minute of it for granted.

With the novel I'm in a Catch 22. And I always do this. When I know the end of a novel is approaching I hesitate to write. Why? I don't want the story to end because I enjoy writing it. You see my conundrum.

This is why I like to start another one right away. Though (for me) they aren't nearly as much fun in the early going before the characters and situations mature.

### **Topic: Exciting News About Pronoun**

You will remember I tried Pronoun once before. I was enticed by the fact that they distribute to Amazon, thereby alleviating that particular headache.

Also, Pronoun doesn't take a cut of your royalties. Their service is free.

However, I was less than satisfied with their interface. And what put a nail in the coffin for me possibly using them was that authors weren't allowed to pick and choose to whom Pronoun distributed their books. It was all or nothing. So I chose nothing.

Now things have changed. Here are the highlights from the email I received from them this morning:

We are increasing author royalties to 70% for all books priced \$9.99 or less and sold in the US and Canada. Yes, even books priced \$2.99 and below will earn 70%. For many authors this will translate to double what they were previously earning.

We're giving authors more choice over distribution. You can choose where you want your book distributed when you publish your book.

We've added the option to price your book for free [sic] on all retailers. Based on our data and your feedback, we know that is an important marketing tool for authors.

We're offering Author Pages. You can now send your readers to one place to find information about all of your books — whether or not they're published by Pronoun. Plus it's free.

You can now set up pre-orders for your books across all retailers including Amazon. That means you can effectively plan your book's marketing campaign with complete confidence.

So the bottom line is, I will try Pronoun again, probably with my current WIP.

Just FYI, books distributed by some distributors seem to sell better for some reason than books distributed by others. For that reason, recently I've been tracking sales (loosely) from venues supported by Draft2Digital vs. those supported by Smashwords.

Of course, you can't distribute the same title from two different distributors. But I have enough titles out there — around 250 now — that I can compare sales numbers from one distributor to the other. I will report any findings here later.

You can find the full official press release for Pronoun at <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/pronoun-announces-a-better-royalty-rate-significantly-increasing-self-published-author-earnings-300391506.html>.

## **Of Interest**

Nothing at Dean's today.

If you enjoy casual research, by which I mean mining small gems that might add to your knowledge base, I recommend getting a free subscription to Smithsonian's newsletter. Here are a couple of examples that piqued my interest from the recent edition.

If you enjoy space stuff, in this video you can watch as a Space X rocket delivers a payload to orbit *and then successfully lands back on the launch pad*. This is a first, something that was science fiction and is now science fact. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/after-mishaps-spacex-gets-back-orbit-180961812/>

I also recommend the incredibly interesting <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/necklace-similar-one-owned-anne-frank-found-nazi-death-camp-180961810/> too. Nothing proves guilt like the rush to cover up a crime.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 2. Per usual I didn't get started writing early for various reasons. The biggest reason is that I simply didn't open the file and start on it.

Finally outside around 4 with a cigar and the novel. The day was as socked-in with fog as I am. I opened the novel, but mostly cycled back, adding very little. (That's a good thing.)

Back outside for a bit, but too damp-cold out there to write (stiff fingers) so back inside to write all of this. Now (8 a.m.) back to the novel.

Very very weird day. I wrote almost nothing — DID almost nothing — all morning. From the time I got up until around noon, I wrote maybe 500 words, all in cycling.

Mostly I was staring at the manuscript, willing something to happen.

Then around noon, I glanced back over my reverse outline and picked out a main character who hadn't appeared in the story for awhile. I put my fingers on the keyboard and started writing with that character in mind.

By 1:40, I had another 2000 words. It's a good feeling knowing I'll at least make my word count today. Easily. And the end of the novel still isn't in sight, though I still sense it's close.

Back tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 3410**

Nonfiction Words: 870 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4280

### **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039  
Day 13... 3410 words. Total words to date..... 46449

Total fiction words for the month..... 48077

Total fiction words for the year..... 48077

Total nonfiction words for the month... 11810  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 11810

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 59887

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Distribution](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Pronoun](#), [Smithsonian](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 1/18**

[January 18, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I woke up in a bad mood today and with a bad attitude. Not only do I feel like I could chew wheels and spit nails, but I feel like that might be a worthwhile long-term occupation. However, I'll get over it. Maybe.

I'm not sure why all this is going on, but I'm certain it has something to do with age. Seems everything has something to do with age.

The little girl wants outside badly. But she won't stay outside very long. And she wonders, pointedly, why I let it get so cold out there.

### **Of Interest**

Nada. A second filler post at Dean's today. He should be back in form tomorrow.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2 a.m. Finally got to the novel (in the Hovel) at 7.

Not surprisingly this close to the end of the book, I did a lot of cycling and also moved a few things around. Most notably, some things I'd cut before fit now. So I put them in place and adjusted them a bit to fit the new scene.

All told, by 9:30 I had around 1700 new words. Novel's still moving right along. And the end is just around the corner, but I still can't see around that corner yet.

I kind of hope I finish it today. I'd rather do that, even if in a marathon day, than finish it in a shorter day tomorrow and then have to fill the rest of the day with something else. We'll see.

But the way it's running, the marathon might happen tomorrow or even the next day. I don't think it'll take more than two more days to finish this one. I feel like there are still another five or six thousand words on this one.

Up to the house to change out of my sweats and into my other work clothes. (grin) Back to the Hovel and the novel at 10:15.

Made my daily goal plus a little. As I expected, this is gonna run for at least another several thousand words, so I'm gonna stop early (it's almost noon) and take care of some Life things.

Thanks for being along for the ride. Back tomorrow.

**Fiction Words: 3285**

Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3655

**Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039  
Day 13... 3410 words. Total words to date..... 46449  
Day 14... 3285 words. Total words to date..... 49734

Total fiction words for the month..... 51362

Total fiction words for the year..... 51362

Total nonfiction words for the month... 12180

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 12180

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 63542

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 1/19](#)**

[January 19, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

First, my apologies. This is late. I realized about 7:30 I'd forgotten to post it.

Dean Wesley Smith wrote a great summary of his recent insane challenge/adventure. Of course, you'll find a link in "Of Interest" below.

Damp air and frigid cold (made frigid by the dampness) outside here this morning. In dry cold my old hands begin to warm the instant I put them in my jacket pocket. In this stuff, not so much.

I've spent the first couple of hours this morning doing not much other than reading newsletters. This also is part of my pattern of writing a novel.

Now that it's nearing the end, I'm relaxing my way toward it. Not worrying about it at all (a way to keep my conscious mind from trying to force a resolution) but just enjoying the process.

At this point, I almost constantly remind myself to not 'think' and Just Write the Next Sentence. Just in case that might be helpful for some of you.

### **Topic: Comparisons**

At this (near-end) point in my process of writing a novel, I also try to push down any comparisons.

Comparisons are a major way that the conscious, critical mind strives to stop you from writing.

They go like this:

Well, I didn't make my goal today, but I've written more today than most writers do in any given day.

I didn't make my goal today, but it's all right. There's always tomorrow.

I made my goal today, and I don't want the novel to end too quickly so I'll stop for now. (This one got me yesterday.)

I made my goal today, so now I can stop writing and [fill in the blank].

I made my goal today so that's enough (as if writing is some sort of self-inflicted punishment).

And there are many more. If comparisons start to creep into your mind, just remember they're thinly disguised excuses, nothing more.

And don't indulge them.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, Epilogue: Writing a Novel in Five Days While Traveling  
(<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/epilogue-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/>)

For whatever it's worth, here are BookBub's 7 Top Book Marketing Tips from DBW [Digital Book World] 2017: <https://insights.bookbub.com/top-book-marketing-tips-dbw-2017/>.

From Smithsonian Magazine newsletter (free subscription)

Over 12 Million Pages of CIA Documents Are Now Accessible Online  
(<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/over-12-million-pages-cia-documents-are-now-accessible-online-180961846/>)

Artificial Sixth Sense (<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/artificial-sixth-sense-helps-humans-orient-themselves-world-180961822/>)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 3. Internet, email, newsletters, breakfast etc. Finally moved out to the Hovel to write at 9.

I can't really offer a play by play today. Got out there about 9, cycled for awhile, got about 2000 words sometime during the morning.

During that time I was also visiting the house (about 200 feet away) to eat, do laundry, chat with my baby girl, etc. and lost track of time.

Back to the novel around 1:30, still just relaxing my way through it. More stuff is coming with every session now, faster and more furiously, and everything's compressing itself toward an ending.

Well, it isn't going to end today, but that's all right. The characters are working their way toward the ending and I'm just going along for the ride, so it's all good.

I passed my daily goal again. Today it isn't my conscious mind messing with me. It's getting late (around 4 I have to go to the post office) and I have a load of laundry to fold before that.

Back tomorrow.

## **Fiction Words: 3460**

Nonfiction Words: 560 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4020

## **Writing of The Claim** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023

Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439

Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112

Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396

Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039  
Day 13... 3410 words. Total words to date..... 46449  
Day 14... 3285 words. Total words to date..... 49734  
Day 15... 3460 words. Total words to date..... 53194

Total fiction words for the month..... 54822  
Total fiction words for the year..... 54822  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12740  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 12740

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 67562

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 1/20](#)

[January 20, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I enjoyed the pre-inauguration and the inauguration. I will enjoy watching the parade and what they show of the post-inauguration events. I wish I could be there.

I watched as President Trump escorted his predecessor to the helicopter, and then as he signed his first official documents and entered the inaugural luncheon.

At the moment there are protestors smashing windows etc. and throwing rocks, bricks and bottles in attempts to block or shut down the parade route. Too bad, that. Not something sensible people do, but beyond that I won't comment.

Anyway, a non-writing day here. I wrote a little early, but I'll append that to tomorrow's totals.

I also changed the post time (at MailChimp) to 7 p.m. in case I forget again. (grin)

Have a great weekend, everybody.

**Of Interest**

For something extremely good, see Dean's "A Question..."  
(<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-question/>).

I also recommend reading the comments on his previous Epilogue post  
(<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/epilogue-writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling/#comments>).

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out a little after 3 this morning. Eventually made my way to the Hovel around 7. I wrote for a little while, then remembered today is Inauguration Day.

At that point I decided today will be a nonwriting day. Books, stories, are not important. They're fun. The inauguration is important. I'll be vegging in front of the TV to watch the grandeur of the peaceful transfer of power, and doing my best to ignore the morons.

Back tomorrow.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 250 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 250

## Writing of *The Claim* (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4391 words.	Total words to date.....	4391
Day 2.....	3632 words.	Total words to date.....	8023
Day 3.....	1416 words.	Total words to date.....	9439
Day 4.....	2673 words.	Total words to date.....	12112
Day 5.....	4284 words.	Total words to date.....	16396
Day 6.....	3159 words.	Total words to date.....	19555
Day 7.....	3834 words.	Total words to date.....	23389
Day 8.....	4953 words.	Total words to date.....	28342
Day 9.....	4982 words.	Total words to date.....	33324
Day 10...	3618 words.	Total words to date.....	36942
Day 11...	3133 words.	Total words to date.....	40075
Day 12...	2964 words.	Total words to date.....	43039
Day 13...	3410 words.	Total words to date.....	46449
Day 14...	3285 words.	Total words to date.....	49734
Day 15...	3460 words.	Total words to date.....	53194
Day 16...	XXXX words.	Total words to date.....	XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 54822  
Total fiction words for the year..... 54822  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12990  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 12990

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 67812

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Inauguration Day](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 1/21](#)

[January 21, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Back to writing this morning. Even though I still don't know how the novel will end, I'm looking forward to finishing so I can start the next one.

Rainy and drizzly overnight and this morning, with a little sleet tossed in for good measure, so I'll be in the Hovel soon probably. For now I'm outside. Probably I'll hang around the house until everyone's awake.

### **Topic: Challenges**

One reason I'm looking forward to this novel being finished is so I can set a new challenge for myself. That (burning) desire is based in part on Dean's "A Question..." and the comments that followed it (see "Of Interest" below).

But I also have to be cautious.

Before I can start and take on a new "deadline challenge" I'll need to increase the number of hours I spend in the chair actually writing each day.

So effective today, I've increased my daily word count goal to 4,000 words per day.

I've also rededicated myself to taking a break every hour, even if it's only to stand up and walk around for a few minutes. The sole purpose of that is to give me the opportunity to expand the number of hours in the chair.

The word count isn't really much of an increase, but I'm taking baby steps. Probably I'll increase it again soon, by which I mean within the month. And the increased word-count goal is more to reset my brain (attitude) than anything else. It's a way to change my focus (my discipline) so that I'm spending more of the time I'm *in* the chair actually writing more fiction.

### **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's place, please be sure to read comments on A Question... (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-question/#comments>). Wow. Extremely good stuff there.

The latest Author Earnings Report is out, and it's a doozy:  
<http://authorearnings.com/report/dbw2017/>

After that, strictly for fun, check out A Writer in the Air (<http://www.deanwesleymith.com/a-writer-in-the-air/>). He includes a link to the short version of the ride. You can see the full video (action starts at about 8 minutes) at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxDZjg\\_Igoc&feature=em-subsub\\_digest-vrecs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxDZjg_Igoc&feature=em-subsub_digest-vrecs).

Flash Fiction Contest: <http://www.pikespeakpenwomen.com/2017-flash-fiction-contest.html>

## **Today, and Writing**

Again, I rolled out at a little after 3. Messed around for awhile with email and reading, then wrote most of the stuff above.

Outside by 4 until the sky started spitting at me. The little girl joined me for a few minutes, but water falling out of the sky is not her favorite thing.

Fixed a mess of pancakes around 6, ate a few myself and left the rest for a ready-made breakfast for the woman and the kid I occasionally see around the house here (grin). Then I got dressed and headed out.

In the Hovel by 7:10, wrote more of this Journal entry, and to the novel around 7:30. The end is nigh. Here we go.

Started writing at 7:30 and looked up a little after 8:40. Oops. Time for a break. Up to the house for a little while.

Well, that turned into a whole thing (grin). 9:30, back to the Hovel and the novel.

10:40, time for a break. Not a particularly productive hour as I had to "figure out" some necessary things (who, among 12 characters, are in one place or another at certain times so it doesn't contradict itself).

11:30, back to the novel. Not quite 12:30, time for another break. This is very strange. Even with the less-than-productive session, I'm hitting just below 1000 words per hour. Nice to know the average stands up. Back in a bit.

1 p.m., back to the novel. Almost 2, so another brief break. This time I'm almost having to force myself.

2:15, back to the novel.

3:10, wrapping it up for the day. The novel will definitely be finished tomorrow. Probably another three or four thousand words. Only the climax and the denouement.

So not quite five hours in the chair, a little over 4200 words of fiction plus this journal, a few emails and yes, a little spider solitaire. (grin) And a few good, productive breaks.

See you tomorrow.

### **Fiction Words: 4251**

Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4901

### **Writing of The Claim (novel)**

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039  
Day 13... 3410 words. Total words to date..... 46449  
Day 14... 3285 words. Total words to date..... 49734  
Day 15... 3460 words. Total words to date..... 53194  
Day 16... 4251 words. Total words to date..... 57445

Total fiction words for the month..... 59073

Total fiction words for the year..... 59073

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13640

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 13640

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 72713

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenges](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Goals](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 1/22](#)**

[January 22, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A slightly different format from now on. I realized I was splitting the day into two sections. So one is gone. When necessary, this section will now be introduction and/or a topic.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 2 despite a late (for me) night, sacking out at around 8:40. By 2:30 I was writing on the novel. Anxious much?

But I was in the house. So I transferred the slightly altered WIP to my thumb drive, gathered my stuff and headed to the Hovel, my primary fiction writing space. I was settled in by 2:50.

But I forgot to bring extra coffee. Poor planning. So back to the house.

When I got to the house, the baby was up. I petted her a bit and catered to her while the coffee was making. Then back to the Hovel.

On my way back to the Hovel, the quarter moon was rising. Beautiful. Back to the house for my camera and the baby. I put the baby in the Hovel, then stepped out and got a shot of Miss Luna.

Back inside, the baby's little heartrate was up. She wasn't hunting, but freaking out over all the new stuff. (I'm pretty sure cats are autistic in that they have far fewer filters for incoming external stimulus than most of us do.)

She wanted to go back to the house, so I took her. All of that constituted a chunk out of my morning, but worth it all around.

So I got some exercise early and I can enjoy my morning cigar in peace with my friends in the novel. (grin)

I also had to check a few names and assignments on my reverse outline. Finally back to the novel at 4.

Right at 1000 words for the first session. 5 a.m., to the house for a brief break.

5:15, back to the novel.

6:10, a break. 6:20, nobody moving at the house yet, so back to the novel.

7 a.m., a break after a shortened session. I only added about 300 words during that abbreviated session.

7:30 back to the novel. A good session. At 8:30, time for another break.

8:45, back to the novel.

9:45, wrapping it for the day. A little farther to the end than I thought. (grin) That's what I get for thinking. Even this close to the end, the characters continue to throw me left curves.

## **Of Interest**

Not much at Dean's place. Basically a filler post.

Yesterday, I took down the menu item on my website for the page about the closing of All Romance Ebooks and OmniLit. If you need information about that, check <http://HarveyStanbrough.com/omnilitalromanc...ooks-are-closing/>. If you want to check it later, save this URL.

### **Fiction Words: 4283**

Nonfiction Words: 440 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4723

### **Writing of The Claim (SF novel)**

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391  
Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023  
Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039  
Day 13... 3410 words. Total words to date..... 46449  
Day 14... 3285 words. Total words to date..... 49734  
Day 15... 3460 words. Total words to date..... 53194  
Day 16... 4251 words. Total words to date..... 57445  
Day 17... 4283 words. Total words to date..... 61728

Total fiction words for the month..... 63356

Total fiction words for the year..... 63350

Total nonfiction words for the month... 14080

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 14080

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 77436

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 1/23**

[January 23, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

## **Topic: Conscious Mind Rising**

Well, I think I've been letting my conscious mind in a bit and didn't even realize it. These past few days I've been saying I think the end of the book is near.

From there it was a very short slide down the slippery slope from "wouldn't it be cool if it ended like this?" to "yep, this is how it's going to end."

In other words, I "decided" how it was going to end.

Anytime you "decide" anything beyond deciding to just write the next sentence, you've slipped away from trusting your subconscious mind.

When that happens, your conscious, critical mind creeps in and tries to stop the writing. Even now, with over 61,000 words in this book, that's what happened to me the past couple of days.

Since I thought I knew how it was going to end, suddenly I started worrying about making various pieces "fit" so it would end that way. Ugh!

This morning I finally recognized the conscious mind intrusion when I wondered why it felt like the book was so mired. That's ALWAYS a function of a conscious mind intrusion.

Time to relax, put my fingers on the keyboard, and just write whatever comes next. Does it matter whether the book ends the way I think it will?

No. Not in the slightest.

So I'm back to just writing the next sentence. Having fun. Whether the story ends the way I think it will or in some completely unexpected way, the journey to get there will be a relaxed, joyful one.

And that's what it's all about.

Just another note on this: I know about where I "decided" how the novel would end and what little "special" touches I've added since then. I was tempted to go back and remove that stuff, but I won't. When the novel's finished, THEN it will be time to cut what doesn't fit, if anything.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3 and did basically nothing the first hour. Mona works today and Bryan will be busy reading or with games so I have most of the day if I need it.

Being lazy today. I could have started writing almost as soon as I got up, but I didn't. Finally made it out to the Adobe Hovel around 6:40 and to the novel at 7.

A slow start again this morning, with only around 500 words in the first session. But it's 8 a.m. so I'm forcing myself to take a break. Back in a bit.

Well, that turned into breakfast (scrambled eggs and salsa with beef tamales) and changing clothes. Back to the Hovel at 9.

Had a couple emails come in that I had to take care of. Also moved my writing 'puter to the outside desk at the house for a bit while my kitten's outside playing. So eventually back to the novel at 9:30.

Wow. Shaky day. My phone is primarily just a phone. But I also use it as a mobile hotspot for "emergencies" (by which I mean to respond to some emails when they come in) when I'm in the Hovel. Been doing that this morning. WAY too distracting.

So for the rest of today and in the future, I'm going to turn it face-down on the desk so I don't see the indicator flashing. I'll check for emails etc. during breaks.

11:10, past time for a break and only about 1700 new words on the screen. Ugh. Remember that "discipline and time in the chair" thing I mentioned a day or two ago? Back to that.

11:40, back to the novel.

12:45, at last a good session. Still only about 2800 words on the day though. But time for a break. 1:05 back to the novel.

1:40, off for a break. 2:10, back to the novel.

A good final session and I made my word count. Unless the characters throw me a pretty severe curve ball, this will wrap up tomorrow. The denouement is pretty much all that's left.

Back then.

## **Of Interest**

Excuses and the Fine Art of Self Sabotage (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/excuses-and-the-fine-art-of-self-sabotage/>). I told Dean I will assume his permission and cross-post this one to the big blog as a guest post. That's how good it is.

Also, there are even more comments on Dean's "A Question..." at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-question/#comments>.

## **Fiction Words: 4101**

Nonfiction Words: 730 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4831

## **Writing of The Claim (SF novel)**

Day 1..... 4391 words. Total words to date..... 4391

Day 2..... 3632 words. Total words to date..... 8023

Day 3..... 1416 words. Total words to date..... 9439  
Day 4..... 2673 words. Total words to date..... 12112  
Day 5..... 4284 words. Total words to date..... 16396  
Day 6..... 3159 words. Total words to date..... 19555  
Day 7..... 3834 words. Total words to date..... 23389  
Day 8..... 4953 words. Total words to date..... 28342  
Day 9..... 4982 words. Total words to date..... 33324  
Day 10... 3618 words. Total words to date..... 36942  
Day 11... 3133 words. Total words to date..... 40075  
Day 12... 2964 words. Total words to date..... 43039  
Day 13... 3410 words. Total words to date..... 46449  
Day 14... 3285 words. Total words to date..... 49734  
Day 15... 3460 words. Total words to date..... 53194  
Day 16... 4251 words. Total words to date..... 57445  
Day 17... 4283 words. Total words to date..... 61728  
Day 18... 4101 words. Total words to date..... 65829

Total fiction words for the month..... 67457  
Total fiction words for the year..... 67457  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14810  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 14810

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 82267

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Conscious mind](#), [Critical Mind](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 1/24](#)**

[January 24, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Today the novel will end.

And it did. There won't be a sequel, at least with these characters. If they're successful in what they're doing, there won't be anymore conflict. Good for the world, bad for novelists. (grin)

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3 and promptly wasted the first hour of the day. The second went much the same way, but I began the third, at 5 a.m., in the Hovel.

Cycling through the first session and added about 600 words. Took a break about 6:15, to the house for more coffee. While I was there I checked email and Facebook stuff.

7, back to the novel. 8 a.m., a break and up to the house for my camera. Snow on the Whetstone Mountains this morning. Beautiful.

8:20, back to the novel to write the denouement.

9:05, finished. (After it was over, I cut 1052 words.) After running a spell check (that's my second draft) I'm headed to the house for some breakfast and to change clothes. I have to go to the grocery sometime today too.

For now, a shower, doing laundry, etc. Just life stuff.

Y'know, I decided I'm not going to write anymore today. I'll work on the cover for The Claim, etc. I thought this might happen if I didn't start the next story right away.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Become a Better Storyteller... Write Faster (<http://www.deanwesleymith.com/become-a-better-storyteller-write-faster/>)

## **Fiction Words: 1851**

Nonfiction Words: 230 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2081

## **Writing of The Claim** (SF novel)

Day 1.....	4391 words.	Total words to date.....	4391
Day 2.....	3632 words.	Total words to date.....	8023
Day 3.....	1416 words.	Total words to date.....	9439
Day 4.....	2673 words.	Total words to date.....	12112
Day 5.....	4284 words.	Total words to date.....	16396
Day 6.....	3159 words.	Total words to date.....	19555
Day 7.....	3834 words.	Total words to date.....	23389
Day 8.....	4953 words.	Total words to date.....	28342
Day 9.....	4982 words.	Total words to date.....	33324
Day 10...	3618 words.	Total words to date.....	36942
Day 11...	3133 words.	Total words to date.....	40075
Day 12...	2964 words.	Total words to date.....	43039
Day 13...	3410 words.	Total words to date.....	46449
Day 14...	3285 words.	Total words to date.....	49734
Day 15...	3460 words.	Total words to date.....	53194
Day 16...	4251 words.	Total words to date.....	57445
Day 17...	4283 words.	Total words to date.....	61728
Day 18...	4101 words.	Total words to date.....	65829
Day 19...	1851 words.	Total words to date.....	67678 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 69308  
Total fiction words for the year..... 69308  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15040  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 15040

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 84348

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

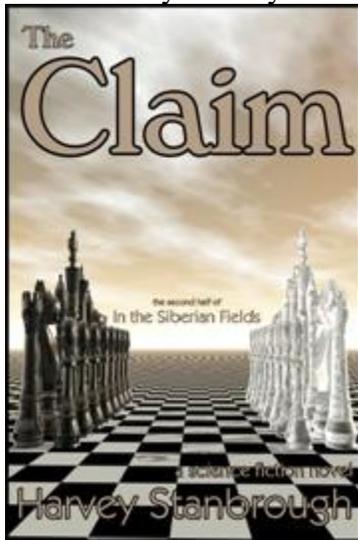
## [The Journal, Wednesday, 1/25](#)

[January 25, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. New day, new story, new attitude. Frankly, I hope it will be another novel.

After-hours yesterday I created a new cover for *The Claim*. That's it on the



left if I remember to put it in here. (grin)

I'm falling behind, drastically, on my free story of the week. And I don't really care. Which leads me to today's topic.

### **Topic: Goals and Reality**

First, for those who haven't "heard" me say this before, Dreams and Goals are different critters.

A Dream is something you'd like to attain or achieve, but you have no direct control over it.

A Goal is something you yearn to attain or achieve and you DO have control over it.

Have all the dreams you want. They're wonderful.

But if you ever want to get there, you have to set goals and work toward them.

The first rule in setting goals, at least in my world, is to keep them realistic.

At the outset, that means

1. making sure your goal something you actually yearn to achieve and
2. making sure your goal something that is within your power to achieve (i.e., not a dream).

So short stories. Now don't get me wrong. I enjoy writing short stories when a good short story idea occurs to me. Maybe a better way to say that is when a story idea occurs to me and it wraps in a short story.

When that happens, I don't begrudge it. I just submit it or publish it. When I publish it, I also collect it with five or ten others, publish the collection and move on.

But the truth is, of late, I just haven't been all that interested in writing short stories. I enjoy reading them and I love it when a story is well-turned.

But actively seeking to write them? Nah, not so much anymore.

Plus I'm bone weary of trying to keep up with the numbers. Did I write one this week? Oops.

And I'm tired of consistently, repeatedly failing to reach that goal — and flat not caring when I miss.

Folks, if it doesn't bother you when you fail to achieve a goal, that goal isn't working for you. Chunk it.

So I've abandoned my "one new short story per week" goal.

Naturally, without more stories coming in every week, soon my Free Story of the Week on the website will be discontinued. I've replaced it with menu item called A Free Short Story, and when I write one, I'll publish it to the blog as well as to the general public.

Now, as an aside, I DO strongly believe in Bradbury's advice to new writers to write at least one short story per week as a way to learn and hone the craft.

I once wrote at least one short story per week for 72 straight weeks without a miss. That's a long time. I learned a ton about the craft, and I got more practice in that 72 weeks than many writers do in a lifetime. And incidentally, I don't know of a longer streak anywhere. Even DWS was impressed.

So for me, my goal to write one new short story per week is kind of a “been there done that” sort of thing.

### ***Shifting Gears***

When I completed *The Claim* yesterday, I realized I’d broken through a barrier that I didn’t even know I’d erected. It was my 21st novel. The first one over 20. Somehow that seemed like a big deal to me.

Why was breaking beyond 20 a big deal? Shrug. I don’t know. But there it was.

And for me that explained why I was mired in a patch of the doldrums after I published number 20. I thought maybe I was through.

Of course, I wasn’t. I was just shifting gears. But for a terrifying moment, my left foot was caught between the clutch and the brake pedal.

But eventually I completed the gear change. I got my head out of my — no, wait. I freed my foot from the brake pedal. That’s better. And it’s full speed ahead to the only goals that really matter to me now:

to hit 4,000 words of publishable new fiction on writing days,

to write at least one complete novel per month this calendar year,

to publish at least 15 new novels during this calendar year, and

to publish at least 1,000,000 words of new fiction this calendar year.

Onward.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just a little before 4. Catching up on my sleep, I think. Per usual, I did little of interest before around 8 a.m. Then I moved to the Hovel and wrote everything above.

8:50, time for a break. During which I will also ship *The Claim* off to my first reader and cast about for a new story idea.

9 a.m., started the dishwasher and went back to the Hovel to add the “Of Interest” stuff below.

Apparently I wasn’t quite finished with Kirski’s world yet. I remembered I had set aside a segment that I thought would make a good, if bone-chilling, short story. So I worked on that for awhile. No new words that I’m counting.

No rush, so I'll do a cover for it another time. But for now the short story — “The Source” — is completed and formatted. And it's 10:20.

Updating themes and plugins on sites a little, and time for another break at 10:30. That break turned into a shower, lunch and getting dressed.

11:40, back to the Hovel. I had the stupid mobile hotspot on and played online awhile. More time in the chair not writing.

At 12:20, a line occurred to me: “Stenson filtered up from a sound sleep.” I know he's in a jungle, and I know he doesn't know how he got there. Oh, and I think it's SF. That's it. Off and running.

12:40, I've put 730 words on the page. Came here to make this note and the one above it. Not a bad pace, writing into the dark. Until I come up with something better, the working title will be Stenson. 12:44 back to the story.

1:20, with 1480 new words on a new novel, I'm off for a brief break. Even after a break of only about 27 hours since I finished the last one, it feels SO good to be immersed in writing a novel again. (grin) I can easily understand why DWS said sometimes he wrote something and forgot to submit it for publication.

2 p.m., back to the novel.

Not a particularly auspicious beginning. The novel is running well, but I started late and ran out of time. So a little short of my word count goal today. Then again, not bad for only about three hours of actual writing.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See the comments on Become a Better Storyteller at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/become-a-better-storyteller-write-faster/>.

Then check out What Is Possible? (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/what-is-possible/>)

## **Fiction Words: 3566**

Nonfiction Words: 1140 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4706

## **Writing of Stenson** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 3566 words. Total words to date..... 3566

Total fiction words for the month..... 72874  
Total fiction words for the year..... 72874  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16180  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 16180

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 89054

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Goals](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 1/26**

[January 26, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Boy am I embarrassed.

I had a great start on a new novel yesterday, even with only a half-day.

I wrote more on it this morning (only a little over 1600 halting words) before I suddenly realized at about 8 a.m. that as I was writing my conscious mind was searching for pre-established facts.

Uh-oh. There are no pre-established facts when writing off into the dark.

And that led me to realize that my subconscious had “borrowed” the idea (a character with a problem in a setting) from a several-volume saga I edited about two decades ago. And yes, it was such a great story that it stuck with me that long. The thing easily rivals the Star Wars saga. Easily. And to me it’s even better. By far.

(The first book, which I think is still in print, is called Last of the Firstborn. It’s by a guy named Glen Glenn.)

Unfortunately, to my knowledge, Glen has never published that saga, except for one foray to a subsidy publisher with the first book. But still, I don’t want to write it. Writing (or rewriting) any story I already know is just boring. That’s why I don’t do outlines.

But sure enough, the character was the same (albeit with a different name), the problem (both immediate and far-reaching) was the same, and even the setting was the same.

For awhile this morning I thought I could change the character from an alien to a human in the same situation and just keep writing. But there was no story there. Nothing.

Now it’s true that there are no truly original ideas, that there is nothing new under the sun, but this was too much. So I stopped writing.

So today will be mostly a nonwriting day, though I'll count the words I've written thus far because they are publishable words and they brought me to this realization.

Maybe I need a nonwriting day or two between projects. I don't know. But I don't want to risk what amounts to plagiarizing someone else's work, so I'm shelving Stenson.

Today I'll maybe go on a hike with my grandson. See what shakes out. I hope you all have a great day as well, writing or not.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30 this morning. Trying to get an earlier start on writing so I can spend more of the afternoon doing other things. We'll see.

Only 24° out there this morning, with a constant breeze. So straight to the Hovel at 4 with two mugs of coffee. In the Hovel, even though I left one window partially open last night, it's 50°.

Nice to enjoy my first cigar of the day without my fingertips freezing.

4:20, I have Internet access from the house (somehow) so I'm gonna read Dean's stuff.

4:45, some very good comments on Dean's previous post, including some things to research later. For now, up to the house to let the pets out of their kennels, then back here to the novel.

5, I started on the novel. Just over 700 words in the first session. But those are usually slow, so no biggie. Around 6:20, up to the house for a brief break.

6:40, back to the Hovel. Just before the last break, I realized the story is going in a wrong direction. (This is when I first started feeling the tugs of my conscious mind searching for facts.)

7 a.m., back to the story. Cycling from the beginning first, then new writing. (This is when I was going to start over with the same idea but a different character.)

8 a.m. This is when I called it.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See the (25!) comments on Dean's "What is Possible?" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/what-is-possible/#comments>.

Then check out What Is Special? (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/what-is-special/>) Naturally, I felt as if he was talking personally to me. (grin)

**Fiction Words: 1634**

Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2284

**Writing of Stenson** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 3566 words. Total words to date..... 3566

Day 2..... 1634 words. Total words to date..... 5200 (killed)

Total fiction words for the month..... 74508

Total fiction words for the year..... 74508

Total nonfiction words for the month... 16830

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 16830

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 91338

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Getting in your own way](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, 1/27](#)**

[January 27, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

After yesterday's sob session, a few very nice people sent me story ideas. Thank you. I really appreciate it, but frankly I wouldn't know what to do with any of them.

That doesn't mean they weren't good ideas, only that they didn't grab me in particular. But again, thanks so much for taking the time to send them. That means a lot to me.

Regarding some of the comments on Deans' stuff, maybe it's just me, but if you spend a lot of time thinking about how to NOT make something special, isn't that just another way of making it special? Yawn. Stretch. And maybe another way for the conscious mind to consume your writing time? Just sayin'.

**Topic: An Homage to Jack Williamson**

I've mentioned Jack before. I was fortunate enough to get to study fiction writing under him for one semester when he was a professor emeritus at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales.

For that semester, I wrote a story called "Proportional Space." He gave me a C+, and I suspect he was being kind. Across the top left of the first page of the story, in red ink, he scrawled, "This is not science fiction — but it's pretty good science fantasy."

See, Jack was a stickler. Science fiction had to adhere to the known rules of physics. As for the story, many years later it evolved into the novel *Terminus Loop*.

Jack began writing science fiction before the term was born. He was 17 when his first story was published in a pulp magazine. I especially recommend *The Humanoid* (1947) and *With Folded Hands* (1949).

Jack turned out about 120,000 words — two novels — per year, many of them for the major SF publisher TOR. That isn't a particularly spectacular word count, until you realize he did that for over 60 years straight.

I was in Jack's modest home in Portales NM one day in 1995 for an end of semester party. He showed me and the other students into his study, where he wrote.

There was a computer on his desk alongside an old Royal typewriter. He never cared for the IBM Selectric. But what was truly remarkable were the walls.

There were no windows. Every wall was covered (save the door) from floor to ceiling with bookshelves, and each was only about a foot and a half apart. And they were squeezed full. Of his own books.

But there was only one copy of each book. In each language in which it had been published.

When he passed away on November 10, 2006 at age 94, he had published one novel that year and was almost finished with his second.

But what's amazing about Jack, to me, was his mind. From that mind came terms like "prime directive," "android," "humanoid," "terraforming" and several others. Have you ever tried to make up a completely new new word? It isn't easy.

A few years later, when I was editing and publishing a magazine called *The Roswell Literary Review*, Jack graciously sent me a copy of *People Machines*. It was a paperback book that contained "With Folded Hands" as well as several other of his stories.

Each story was accompanied by an essay explaining a technique of writing that was illustrated in that story. And you might wonder, did I run reprints of the essays in my little magazine? Oh yes. Oh my yes. You can get a copy of *People Machines* for as little as 19 cents on Amazon. Unbelievable. To me, it's priceless.

Jack is also the first person I remember saying to me that energy never dies; it only changes form. He believed the same about the human spirit.

Dr. Jack Williamson, as you soar among the stars, safe and wondrous travels, my friend. May your energy ever continue.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3. Coffee, email, read a couple of online magazines (Popular Science and Popular Photography), political and world newsletters, then comments on Dean's site.

4:15, extra coffee made and headed out to the Hovel. It's my workspace, so I intend to spend time there something comes. I did nothing the first hour.

At 5 up to the house, then to create a cover and promo doc for "The Source" (short story derived from the Jonathan Kirski world). No new words there, but it will publish today and on the blog later. Back at the Hovel, I did nothing to speak of again.

Back to the house at 6 to publish "The Source," email it to donors, etc.

Okay, 7 a.m., finally got the thing published, sent to donors and posted it to the website (it will go live on Feb 15) and back to the Hovel.

I did very little for the first few hours. I browsed a few old files and notes. (I checked in again on The Three Year Turn last night and even added a few hundred words to it. That one might take off again someday. But not now.)

Back to the house at 8, helped my grandson with an uncooperative CD game he was trying to play. Eventually I read the back of the CD case. It wasn't compatible with Windows 10, so.... Back to the Hovel a little after 9. More browsing old stuff.

Around 10, I finally settled on something I want to write. My fingers flew. I borrowed an old idea (from myself), three sentences I really liked. I'm still kind of stuck in the SF genre, which is fine. We'll see how it goes.

Up to the house around 11 for a break and more coffee, then back to the Hovel and writing at 11:20.

Off for another break around 12:20, but back to the Hovel with only a few minutes' delay.

I lost track of writing and breaks. Really enjoying the story. Still, we'll see. A good first day. See if I can jump on it early tomorrow. Off at 3 p.m.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

You can see comments on What is Special? at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/what-is-special/#comments>.

Also see More Questions at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/more-questions/>.

**Fiction Words: 4219**

Nonfiction Words: 950 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5169

**Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219

Total fiction words for the month..... 78727

Total fiction words for the year..... 78727

Total nonfiction words for the month... 17780

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 17780

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 96507

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Jack Williamson](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 1/28](#)

[January 28, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30 again, but the kitten let me sleep uninterrupted. Apparently she didn't feel the need to knead on my bicep to soften it up before she lay down. (grin)

Normal early routine, then out to the Hovel by 3. I had Internet from the house (weird, but good). I remembered I hadn't sent the new story to a new donor so I did that, then updated the Short Fiction page on my website to include the new short story.

All of that took an hour. But I have coffee and cigars, so I just stood up and stretched a bit, then visited Dean's site to read comments. That took awhile. Up to the house to let the pets out.

Finally to the novel at 5:20, and up to the house around 6:30 for a visit and more coffee. Only several hundred words in the first session today.

At almost 5000 words in (total), I finally did some world-building. For that I make notes on a Notepad document. I also caught up with my reverse outline on the same document. I should have done that yesterday.

The rest of today I'll work back and forth between the notes and the novel. Of course, as the novel progresses I'll need to make fewer notes.

Over the next few hours, a couple of breaks to change clothes and swap coffee for tea. It's 9:15 now and I'm back to the novel.

At 10:30, a break.

Well, that turned into a long one. I ate lunch and helped my wife at the house a bit. Now, at 12:20 back to the novel.

1:30, made my word count for the day and it's Saturday, so going to take the rest of the day.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Twenty great comments on Dean's "More Questions" from yesterday at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/more-questions/#comments>. Love the "plan not play" analogy. There's also a question in one comment that illustrates the person hasn't been around Dean's site very long. Or mine at all. (grin) See if you can find it. Finally, if any of you have questions re anything you see in these responses, and if you don't want to write Dean or comment for some reason, feel free to email me.

Then check his "Questions and Lecture Announcement" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/questions-and-lecture-announcement/>. His lectures are excellent, by the way. I've listened to several. Questions on any of them, feel free to ask.

### **Fiction Words: 4003**

Nonfiction Words: 420(Journal)

So total words for the day: 4423

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219

Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222

Total fiction words for the month..... 82730

Total fiction words for the year..... 82730

Total nonfiction words for the month... 18200

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 18200

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 100930

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Reverse Outline](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 1/29](#)**

[January 29, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, Sunday. Sunday mornin' comin' down. And I got a late start, thanks to waking up with mind twisted up and wrapped around a ball of crap.

The "Today and Writing" segment is still below, but I won't belabor you with an hourly accounting today. Or probably any day in the future unless something important happens that I think might be of interest.

Just know that I'm now firmly trained to write while I'm in the chair and to take a break roughly every hour. And I recommend both.

**Topic: In My World (somewhat political)**

Kristine Kathryn Rusch posted something political on Facebook yesterday. That plus some supplicant's comment on her post hit me so hard that it actually visited me in a dream last night.

If I were a lesser person, I suppose I would say I was assaulted during my somnolent phase with a micro-aggression. Or was it macro? Anyway, it bothered me so much that I woke up with this crap on my mind.

Of course, I take full responsibility. I had checked Get Notifications on Kris' FB page, mostly so I could see when new stories or new Business Musings blogs popped up, partly for myself and partly so I could pass them on to others, including you.

I truly admire Kris' writing ability, I'm happy for her that she's made a b'jillion dollars doing what she loves, and I only wish I had even a little of her business sense.

But my admiration for her talents no longer outweighs what I personally see as her one-sided, myopic view of the world. So I can't follow her anymore. It's too much like risking walking into an ambush. And I won't promote her or her work anymore.

You all know her website or can find it easily enough, and you can befriend her on Facebook or whatever if you haven't already. I even recommend it if you can stand it or if you sympathize with her point of view. But I can't and I don't.

Many years ago, I wrote in some longer writing that "The one thing I cannot tolerate is intolerance." Honestly, at the time, it was probably a tongue-in-cheek play on words. But the fact is, it's true.

In my world, everything goes to intent. If your intention is to twist and mislead, stay away from me. Please. Likewise if you're ignorant of facts, intentionally or otherwise.

Politically, I'm a conservative. In my world, that means I am the most tolerant of people. That's born of my habit of checking character by comparing words to actions.

I DON'T CARE what color you are or your nationality or your religion. I don't care about your gender, your lifestyle or your sexual preference.

Nor do I care either way about your political leanings, geo- or otherwise. I don't care how you feel about global warming. I don't care whether you agree with me or disagree with me on anything. And I mean AN-NEE-THING. But have enough respect to disagree with what I actually say, not what maybe your perception hears.

Furthermore, you have the right to "self-identify" in any way you wish. You can self-identify as a male with a vagina, a female with a penis, or a Coke bottle cap with a serrated edge for all I care.

Seriously, I flat don't care about any of that. If I were running a business and you were my employee, I would care only that you show up on time and do your job. Period.

Personally, I would much prefer that all human adults also take responsibility for themselves and their own actions. But really, I don't even care about that. 'Cause in my world, that's where I'm going to place responsibility, firmly.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 and promptly wasted three-plus hours dealing with political crap, writing and rewriting stuff (intent, remember?) that ended up being the topic above. Ironically, most of the crap was intolerance, primarily from people who preach tolerance. Sigh.

7:10, finally to the novel.

Well, several small breaks and then a long one around lunch time and a trip to dinner and the grocery with my wife. Now my belly's full so I don't wanna play anymore for awhile. (grin)

Calling it early at 3 with a little less than my desired word count.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

I recommend checking the few comments on Questions and Lecture Announcements at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/questions-and-lecture-announcement/#comments>.

And then, of course, Some Fun Stuff at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-fun-stuff/>.

**Fiction Words: 3383**

Nonfiction Words: 730 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4113

**Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title... I think this is going to end up being called The 13 Month Turn, but no relation to The Three Year Turn)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219

Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222

Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605

Total fiction words for the month..... 86113

Total fiction words for the year..... 86113

Total nonfiction words for the month... 18930

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 18930

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 105043

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 1/30**

[January 30, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Almost. The month is almost over. Yay. I'm tired of seeing the number in Total for the Year matching Total for the Month. It's like nothing's moving.

Today begins the GED course of instruction for my grandson. The plan is to write this morning, then begin his schooling later today.

Well, during a brief break I looked over the GED course materials. There's not a lot for me to do at first beyond basic supervision. There's a lot of reading. So I need to be more available. But I also need to continue to pursue my own goals.

To that end, I decided to move my writing 'puter up to the house for the foreseeable future. The transfer will enable me to be available to my grandson while also continuing to get my own writing done with as little change in my routine as possible. (Same keyboard, etc.)

I can't be sure how much the writing might suffer, but at least this situation makes hitting my goals more of a moving target. So more fun. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 2 after a very short night. Spent awhile waking up, then to the Hovel about 2:40.

Then I spent close to an hour trying to identify and silence a mouse whose sole purpose in life seemed to be scratching on the loudest box he could find.

I finally found and moved the plastic chest full of small drawers (I keep carving slabs of rock in them) that he was scratching on, then shooed him away. Peaceful now just before 4, finally, so to the novel.

I took a brief break around 6 and the GED stuff in the Intro occurred. Initially I went back to the Hovel to write. But with the GED situation on my mind, little progress there.

I moved my writing 'puter to my home office at 7, then came here to write all this, then take care of some other things.

8:30, back to the novel

Well, going the wrong way on my word count goal but I actually got more done today than I expected to with the new goings-on, so I'll take it. I suspect it'll take awhile to work into this new schedule.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Dean's The Fear of a Real Paycheck at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-fear-of-a-real-paycheck/>.

Fiction Words: 3124

Nonfiction Words: 390 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3514

## **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219

Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222

Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605

Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729

Total fiction words for the month..... 89237

Total fiction words for the year..... 89237

Total nonfiction words for the month... 19320

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 19320

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 108557

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 1/31](#)

[January 31, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Yay! The last day of January! Beginning tomorrow, the Total Fiction Words for the Year will actually be larger than the Total Fiction Words for the Month! Fingers crossed. (grin)

It's like sending up a rocket and watching as the booster falls away. Now I'm hoping for huge ignition on Stage 2. (grin) I have the daily word count goal in place to help me achieve it, and I have a great cast of characters in the current WIP. This is what we used to call All Aroun' Cool Beans.

Thanks for the emails re my post from a couple days ago. Not a big deal really. I was just letting everyone know why I won't be making reference to Kris Rusch's stuff anymore. Probably I should have just stopped referencing her without mentioning it.

I spent a rough night under the weather last night. I'm a tad irritable this morning, so I will avoid human contact whenever possible.

Within minutes of rising, actually, I considered making this a nonwriting day, but I'm just not gonna do that. Irritability feeds stubbornness, don'tcha know.

So I'll hunt and peck my way through the novel today as I can, and when the dust clears we'll have what we have. And tomorrow, Thank God, begins a new month full of possibilities.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a few minutes after 3. Very slow, sluggish start this morning but that's all right.

Came here, wrote about a b'jillion nonfiction words, decided to delete them. Suffice it to say it was all about appearances. But I don't do anything myself for the sake of appearances, so I see no reason to give even adverse publicity to those who do.

Enjoyed a cigar, read some newsletters and Facebook stuff, checked Dean's site.

Finally, around 8:15, opening the WIP to play with my friends.

Wrote off and on with two good hour-long sessions and several bits here and there. I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

There are some really good comments on Dean's post from yesterday at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-fear-of-a-real-paycheck/#comments>.

And he just keeps on comin' with another excellent, must-read post: See Official Approval Fear at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/official-approval-fear/>.

Is this guy a great resource, or what?

### **Fiction Words: 3373**

Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3743

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102

Total fiction words for the month..... 92610

Total fiction words for the year..... 92610

Total nonfiction words for the month... 19690

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 19690

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 112300

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 2/1](#)**

[February 1, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

For those who wonder (and thanks for your comments), my grandson Bryan is doing well.

He's working into a routine, spending about 4 hours per day reading and doing some self-study toward his GED.

Yesterday he also started looking around and applying for jobs online. That is primarily to take up some of his current spare time vs. playing an online game he's fond of.

He recognizes his own weaknesses and limitations and is seeking to improve. Instead of giving in to his desire to play the game during every spare moment, he wants to find something else to balance that time. His idea. My encouragement. He's a good kid.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out WAY late at almost 4:30 this morning. Wow. 10 hours of sleep. I don't remember the last time I did that.

Still a little under the weather (allergies, I think, and sinuses) but not a big deal at all. Actually, when I feel a bit poorly it motivates me to write. Nothing like a good jab of mortality to urge a guy to action.

Around 9 a.m., to the Hovel to write. I hit about 600 words in the first hour. Then I stopped to do some world-building (in a few drawings on a sheet of paper with a pen.

When that was completed, it was clearer in my mind and I transferred it to the novel. This is a blast! So by 11 I had only a little over 1000 words, but it's all good.

Another thousand words on the day, then up to the house to start a load of laundry. And a brief walk while that's washing.

Well, not an auspicious beginning for the month. I hate to start a month on a low note. Missed my daily word count goal, but I'm tired so stopping a little early today.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

As has been the trend, great comments on Official Approval Fear at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/official-approval-fear/#comments>.

Then see End of Month Catching Up at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/end-of-the-month-catching-up/>. Not a lot there, but when you're referring folks elsewhere, y'never know what they might find that will help.

### **Fiction Words: 2294**

Nonfiction Words: 350 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2644

### **Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729

Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396

Total fiction words for the month..... 2294  
Total fiction words for the year..... 94904  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 350  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 20040

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 114944

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 2/2**

[February 2, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Very short post today.

For the past several early mornings, I've noticed a planet high in the sky. I kept wondering what it is, assumed either Jupiter or maybe Saturn.

This morning, finally, I got my camera out and zoomed in on it. Just Venus. That was annoying. I've had several shots of Venus and was hoping for something new.

Cold this morning, but at least the wind's laid down for now. Without the wind it's practically tepid. I'm at the outside table on the north side of the house. Ironically, that's the warmest area at the moment.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3:30. I'm happier to be up earlier, but getting a slow start again this morning. Still under the weather a bit.

Finally outside and to the novel at 5:30.

I wrote off and on (mostly off) until around 12 when I went to the grocery. Wrote a little more after that, but mostly cycling, clearing some things up.

I'm having some sluggish days, but at least the novel is advancing. Just waiting for it to break loose. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

A few more interesting comments at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/official-approval-fear/#comments>.

Dean's sort of taking a day off today. Mostly a placeholder post.

### **Fiction Words: 3102**

Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3302

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498

Total fiction words for the month..... 5396

Total fiction words for the year..... 98006

Total nonfiction words for the month... 550

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 20240

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 118246

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 2/3**

[February 3, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I almost made this a topic, but it's mostly rambling so I didn't.

Dean often says "Check in with yourself." And I often do.

I've checked back over a lot of my Journal entries (that's what it's for on this end), and I'm seeing what I suspected. I tend to do my fastest and cleanest writing in that limited few hours from around noonish to 4. (But not today.)

This doesn't mean I'm going to eschew writing from whenever I get up until noon. But it does mean one more stab at an adjustment (or perhaps a refocusing) on my work ethic and my physiology. (Starting later. I've already screwed up the morning today.)

Here's the rationale: My body is already in the habit of waking from 2 – 3 a.m. Now I need to get my mind in the habit of writing from then until 5:30 or 6. Absolutely no reason I shouldn't be able to knock out 2000 or more words early in the day.

But let me back up a bit for some of the newer subscribers. Why the odd hours?

Because I'm a stubborn sort.

I love the quiet of the world from 2 a.m. or so to 6 a.m. Also, I really don't care for much of what passes for entertainment after around 8 p.m. Less-skilled actors delivering flat, lifeless lines and automatic laugh tracks killed that awhile back.

So why not sleep away B(rain)D(ead)TV and rise in the tranquility of the early morning?

Also I've never been good at bending to rules when the primary justification for those rules is "because everyone else does." Ptah!

So I don't "require at least 8 hours of sleep every night." What a terrible waste would be spending a full 1/3 of my life in what amounts to suspended unanimation. (Of course, feel free to spend yours however you want.)

In fact, I hate that my stupid body seems to require even six hours of sleep. Even at that rate, if I lived to be 80, I would have spent 1/4 of my life in Catatonia Land. No, gracias. Or maybe I should say No, por favor because it seems to be happening that way.

But I digress.

Once I kick or adjust-to whatever currently has me all but locked in its evil clutches, I will focus on WRITING FICTION during those first few precious hours of the day.

But seriously... we're all in the same footrace with Mortality, folks. And we all know up front that Mortality is going to win. What matters, at least in my corner of the world, is What Have I Accomplished?

And for me at least, that's the best incentive of all.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 again, but another sluggish start. Generally did nothing of importance until around 6. Then I came here and wrote the stuff above this.

To the novel off and on. I "kept coming back," but I didn't do a lot while I was there.

A sluggish day in general. Ugh. But it'll get better.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Smashwords to Supply Nearly 300,000 Titles to Bibliotheca cloudLibrary  
(<http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/02/smashwords-bibliotheca-cloud-library.html>)

Only a very short explanatory post over at Dean's place.

### **Fiction Words: 2578**

Nonfiction Words: 490 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3068

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076

Total fiction words for the month..... 7974

Total fiction words for the year..... 100584

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1040

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 20730

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 121314

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Smashwords](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 2/4**

[February 4, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Ugh. Allergies on overdrive this morning.

**Topic: Fixing Things (with the Subconscious)**

The novel has ground to a temporary halt. But I know why, so it really is only a temporary halt.

All books (stories) are different, and they can all write differently, even from the same writer. I suppose that's part and parcel of writing into the dark too.

The last few days, even as I typed, a nagging little voice was telling me the overall story was overloaded with one couple, one ongoing situation. This morning as I cycled through, the voice was stronger and more insistent.

It's as if my subconscious was crossing its arms and holding its breath, refusing to give me more of the story until I right the ship here. It's like dealing with a petulant 4 year old.

So I sat back in my chair, physically crossed my own arms and thought "All right. Tell me what's wrong."

And it did. This sort of thing happened exactly this way once before in one of my novels, but not to this level of severity.

"Come look at your reverse outline," the subconscious said, tugging on my arm.

So I did. And I was surprised.

Currently there are three separate major groups of characters, plus two minor groups (at present) who keep peeking in from the wings. Each group has its own interlaced story to play out.

Recently I've been "stuck" on telling one of those stories, with the others making almost token appearances. As a result, the one story has eleven of the fifteen chapters. That isn't a good balance.

Interesting to note, the characters who currently have eleven of the fifteen chapters are the only ones who weren't yelling at me. (grin)

So today might be a nonwriting day. First I'll spend some time rearranging some chapters to balance the story. (Note: If you decide to do something similar, be sure to change the file name of the novel document first and Save As so you retain the original.)

When I start writing again, I'll write at least five chapters that will insert between pairs of the current chapters. But I'll need some distance from the novel before I start writing again. That might take an hour or it might take a day.

But I'll start again soon. And the world will be right again.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 2, opened the novel by 2:40. Realized I was stuck, my subconscious screaming at me.

That was around 4. I stopped and wrote everything above, then began working on the reverse outline and then on the actual manuscript (after adding a B to the file name and hitting Save As).

Definite nonwriting day today. I'll be back tomorrow, but tomorrow might be a nonwriting day as well. Going to bed late tonight and getting up late tomorrow so I can stay up for the Super Bowl. At least that's the plan. We'll see.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's, basically another placeholder post but also one about BundleRabbit. If you haven't found that yet, this might be the perfect opportunity.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 530

## **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 7974  
Total fiction words for the year..... 100584  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1570  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 21260

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 121844

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Fixing Things with the Subconscious Mind](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Reverse Outline](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 2/5**

[February 5, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I received my first reader's notes on *The Claim* this morning. This time, too, I asked him to read it at least twice, once for pleasure and once critically, not only for typos etc. but for content. I just had a feeling about this one.

He did his job in the same excellent fashion as always, pointing out typos and so on. I agreed with most of those and repaired them within a few minutes.

He also pointed out a few things that were unclear to him in details, including some very important process stuff (this, then this, then this, detailed to draw the reader in and ground him in the scene). Those, too, I corrected quickly and fairly easily since I was able to concentrate on specifics (thanks to him).

But he also made some overall notes regarding the "big picture." And that leads to a very important topic for the day. Interesting that this also follows closely on the heels of my recent topic on using the subconscious mind to make "fixes."

### **Topic: Cycling Redux, Plus Process**

You will remember that both parts of the mind have specific purposes.

The conscious mind is a guardian that protects you from harm, but it's also the part of your brain with which you learn. It's the finger-wagging critical side.

The subconscious mind is a free-wheeling two year old who just wants to play and have fun. It's the creative side.

This also explains the massive difference between "cycling" and "rewriting."

The former is accomplished by the creative subconscious. The critical mind has nothing to do with it. NOTHING.

The latter is strictly a function of the critical, conscious mind. Nothing good in writing fiction ever was accomplished by the critical mind.

With that in mind, my first reader Kenneth's "overall" impression was that I need to let the reader see more color (when there's color to see) and the general population. In his words,

- 1) For me, the story unfolded in black and white. Except for mention of a pink shirt and describing earth as a blue marble (both of which appear as unexpected breaths of fresh air), it is almost devoid of color.
- 2) A larger world population was referred to and must have been present, but I couldn't sense it. The main characters almost seem to be alone on a barren planet and its barren moon.
- 3) The absence of a connection to landscape left me feeling estranged. The part that attracted me the most, and felt most human, was the mining camp in Siberia. I enjoyed everything about it.

Folks, this stuff is invaluable to me. Of course, it's also annoying in a very personal, writerly kind of sense. (grin) But I asked for it because I trust my first reader. And he delivered because he trusts me.

This input is invaluable because Kenneth pointed out major flaws that I believe most readers would notice.

So with those specific items in mind, I suddenly find myself writing two novels. I want to finish *The Claim* and get it out there, but I'm also in the midst of writing *Will Perkins*.

However, I believe finishing *The Claim* will help in the writing of *Will Perkins*, so I'm going to do that first. I can't imagine it taking more than a few days.

### The Process

I'm going to cycle through the entire manuscript from page 1 beginning tomorrow morning. I'll read through it for pleasure, but with Kenneth's thoughts in the back of my mind.

As I go, I'll allow my subconscious to play.

That's the sum total of the process.

And yes, I'll report below on *The Claim* as I do it. It will appear above *Will Perkins* below.

### Today, and Writing

Rolled out way late at almost 5 this morning. Probably back on schedule tomorrow.

I'm taking the rest of the day off, making this a nonwriting day. I won't even think about either novel. Instead, I'll be focusing on which snacks I want to munch on while watching Atlanta win its first super bowl (fingers crossed).

Back tomorrow.

### Of Interest

If you're interested in online workshops from Dean in February or his Coast workshops from now through April 2018, I recommend you read this Full Workshop Update (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/full-workshop-update/>).

If you're interested in images of Pluto, check out <http://thefederalist.com/2017/02/05/10-sweetest-pictures-pluto-nasas-latest-release/>. Some great pics and also a very short film.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 660 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 660

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 7974  
Total fiction words for the year..... 100584  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2230  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 21920

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 122504

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 2/6](#)

[February 6, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

Wow. That has to have been the best super bowl ever. And I saw only two blatant penalties that could have been called on NE and weren't (and one on Atlanta), so no asterisks by this game.

### Topic: Allowing Myself to Change My Mind

Slow start this morning, which means...

I was slow to decide which novel to open.

As I wrote here yesterday, in public, I planned to cycle through The Claim, beginning to end, and touch it here and there as my subconscious dictates. Then put it out there for readers and let the (remaining) chips fall where they may.

But I don't really want to do that. As I told Kenneth when I sent it to him, something really bothers me about it. It still does.

Plus another part of my psyche wants to get back to Will Perkins, ride it to whatever, whenever, wherever the end is, and ship it off to my first reader, Kenneth. Then move on to something else.

And that's what I did.

In the interim, I wrote Kenneth again and asked a few questions that hinted at one problem I thought The Claim had. (That, while trying not to lead him to a particular answer.)

He got back to me a few hours later, and wow did he help.

I won't share everything here, but the upshot is this: While writing The Claim, I got in a hurry.

When I finished the first book written in that world (In the Siberian Fields), I made a note to myself (and maybe even in the Journal) that I might write several more books in that world, to wit

- the lunar colony and possibly beyond
- the Inter-Arab war
- the group that has established itself as the world government and all that derives from that,
- the attempted and mostly successful major purge of an entire race of people,
- the survivors of that purge and what they're doing and why,
- the leavings of a semi-world war

and probably more.

When I wrote The Claim, I tried to put ALL of that in one book.

As a result, at various times I pushed my subconscious to move from one section to the next, and in doing so I skipped over a LOT of the sensory detail and psychological and physical descriptions that draw readers into my fictional worlds.

Uh, that isn't how it works. Not when it's fun.

As I told Kenneth in my response, this isn't a quick fix, and it will take more than a read-through (as my fingers play) to accomplish it.

So I'm going to shelve The Claim for the foreseeable future and move on with my current project. More about the world of The Claim will become clearer to me later (or not) and I'll return to write in that world again (or not).

Isn't this fun?

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 3. Coffee, email and Facebook to wake up. Then I just screwed around for awhile. Finally I started the topic above. That was around 7 a.m.

I wrote for awhile, helped my grandson for awhile, and wrote the rest of the topic above around 11:30 after I heard back from Kenneth. I'm telling you, a good first reader is invaluable.

Took Bryan to Benson to make the rounds, picking up job applications. I'll do a little more writing while he's filling them out. Then probably back to Benson to drop them off.

Not as good a day as I'd hoped, but I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's place, Logic: The Lost Art in Being a Fiction Writer (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/logic-the-lost-art-in-being-a-fiction-writer/>). He's spot on the money, as usual.

From the Really Cool Stuff department, check out the artwork at <https://www.facebook.com/Calvin-Nicholls-Paper-Sculpture-105056349661882/>. Incredible.

## Fiction Words: 2111

Nonfiction Words: 630 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2741

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187

Total fiction words for the month..... 10085

Total fiction words for the year..... 102695

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2860

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 22550

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 125245

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

# The Journal, Tuesday, 2/7

February 7, 2017

## **Hey Folks,**

To the few of you who might have known him, Colonel Robert “Bob” McCartan, USAF Retired, signed off on his last tour of duty last night in Tucson, Arizona.

I first met the colonel several years ago at either the SSA Wrangling with Writing Conference in Tucson or at one of the several writing seminars I taught. It was my great honor and pleasure to call him Friend.

After undergoing successful knee replacement surgery on Friday, the colonel suffered a major stroke on Friday night. His family moved him into hospice care yesterday.

I had the colonel’s “type” in mind when I created the protagonists in two short stories: “Blue Bell and the Roses” and “The Spring.”

I will always wish I’d known him better.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 3. Relaxing my way through the morning. Per usual. Breakfast around 7.

Well, no clue how much new writing I’ll get done today. From computer and WIP to grandson, back and forth.

I wrote a little today, cycled a lot. The novel did take a sudden turn and gave me a clear vision of who and what it’s about. (Hint: It wasn’t who I thought.) This might be a very long one.

The turn required me to cycle back and tweak a few things. But it’s all right. It’s moving along, and that’s what matters.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Some good comments on Logic at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/logic-the-lost-art-in-being-a-fiction-writer/>.

And I strongly recommend reading Throwing Away A Life (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/throwing-away-a-life/>), both poignant and practical.

## **Fiction Words: 2561**

Nonfiction Words: 250 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2811

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748

Total fiction words for the month..... 12646  
Total fiction words for the year..... 105256  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3110  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 22600

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 128056

Categories [Pro Writers](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 2/8**

[February 8, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Welp, I lost a subscriber. Either too little in yesterday's Journal or too little about writing. Mea culpa. Sorry. I hope the guy will occasionally drop by the website to see what's there.

That being said, I can't be 'on' all the time. Been there, done that, got the shirt. Maybe somebody can, but I can't. So....

I'm expecting the novel to break loose and run any time, especially now that it's taken on a huge, wide, tall new direction. I hope it's today.

Either way, unless something unexpected happens, I should have a good day of writing today.

**Topic: Thoughts on Goals**

I learned goal-setting from Dean. I wanted to add “at least as it pertains to writing,” but really that doesn’t fit.

I did set goals in my pre-Dean past and accomplished them, but I didn’t really realize what I was doing. It was kind of haphazard.

Now, as I’m teaching my grandson to set goals, I’ve had cause to explore the process of it.

Recently, Dean mentioned in his blog or a comment that he doesn’t do any of the “silly” daily goals for word count.

I do.

When I set a distant goal (for example, to write 1,000,000 words of publishable new fiction in a calendar year), I know that’s too big to manage. It’s overwhelming.

So I break it down into smaller goals, as I learned from Dean.

I know folks who set their sights on monthly or weekly goals, but those are also too large to work for me. Also, the end of a month or even a week is too far away for those goals to push me much. Finally, they’re easy (for me) to put off. After all, I have 7 or 30 days to accomplish it.

That’s why I set a daily word count goal. It works for me. It makes every day a new beginning. Whether I go over my word count or fall short, it resets to zero the following morning.

Once I set a large goal, to find a smaller goals that I have to accomplish to get there, I just do the math.

If I want to write 1,000,000 words of publishable fiction in a year, I have to write 83,334 words per month. Or 19,231 words per week (for 52 weeks). Or 2,740 words per day for 365 days.

You can also plan vacation time, etc. by deciding how many days you want to write.

For example, if you want to write only 5 days per week and 50 weeks per year, but you still want to write 1,000,000 words of fiction during that year, you still have to write 83,334 words per month.

But now you have to write 20,000 words per 5-day week, or 4,000 words per day for 5 days (or 2858 words per day for 7 days).

My current daily goal is 4,000 words per day. For me, that’s around 4 hours of writing time.

But I also know that Average is what really matters.

So if I miss my goal one day (or several days in a row), I don’t panic and worry about “making it up.” I just keep writing.

I also don't contain myself to writing only 5 days per week. If I need a day away (or if a day away becomes unavoidable), I take it. If not, I write.

If you keep the immediate, short-term and long-term goals in mind, the average will work out.

Figuring the mean average now and then is also a good way to gauge your progress and guide you to get back on track.

For example, the year thus far (through yesterday) has held 38 days. In that time, I've written 105256 words of new, publishable fiction. The mean average is only 2769 words per day. (As of today, the mean average is 109,329 words / 39 days or 2803 words per day.)

So that tells me I need to lean a little more heavily toward spending time in the chair and then actually writing while I'm there.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 3. By 3:30 I was outside with a cigar. Got a few good shots of Luna and posted them to Facebook.

I wrote off and on all day in increments of no more than a half-hour. Today I focused on Keep Coming Back. Finally hit my daily goal for a change.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

I hope you'll take time to read at least the first long comment on Dean's post from yesterday. It's here: <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/throwing-away-a-life/#comments>.

Also see Perfection and Writing at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/perfection-and-writing/>.

If you enjoy the magic of math, check out this link: <http://www.anonews.co/tesla-secret-numbers/>.

### **Fiction Words: 4073**

Nonfiction Words: 750 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4823

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102

Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821

Total fiction words for the month..... 16719  
Total fiction words for the year..... 109329  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3860  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 23550

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 132879

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 2/9](#)

[February 9, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a long post today. A little under the weather again here.

During my morning reading, I got stuck for a little while on an opinion columnist named Ian O'Doherty. He writes for the newspaper, Independent Ireland.

I enjoy his columns not because I agree with everything he says (I don't) but because his arguments are well-reasoned and well-written. In case you're interested in a foreign perspective, I've included a link in "Of interest" below.

\* \* \*

My most recent post over on the other blog is [The Only Five Comma Rules You'll Ever Need](http://harveystanbrough.com/pro-writers/the-only-five-comma-rules-youll-ever-need/) (<http://harveystanbrough.com/pro-writers/the-only-five-comma-rules-youll-ever-need/>).

I was pleasantly surprised at the response I got from that one. There were a couple of comments on the post itself, as well as several emails. I even got one request to reprint it in *The Write Word*, the newsletter of the Society of Southwestern Authors.

I'm always a little surprised when that happens. If you haven't seen it, you might stop by to take a look.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3, then spent four hours on reading email, Facebook and newsletters. Chief among the latter was a columnist a friend told me about. He's the columnist I mentioned above.

Finally to the novel around 8. Yesterday I cycled a little bit and then wrote two new chapters. Today, probably, will be mostly cycling, checking timelines and stitching some things together.

These are usually things I save for the end game on my novels, but this novel took such a major twist yesterday that the process is necessary at this early stage.

So my writing effectively ground to a near-halt for today. Once the stitching is finished and the timeline works, I can move forward with the rest of the story.

Might have a little more cycling and stitching to do tomorrow too. I'm just not feelin' it today. Hey, some days you eat the bear....

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you're interested, Dean talks more about the estate he's helping liquidate in <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/big-estate-move/>. I tend to read pretty much everything he writes since I get so much from him, and probably half of that comes when I'm not expecting it.

If you enjoy reading well thought-out opinion columns, I recommend visiting <http://www.independent.ie/opinion/columnists/ian-odoherty/are-irish-politicians-stupid-or-do-they-just-think-we-are-35401761.html> as an example. Other columns by Mr. O'Doherty are listed below that one under Read More.

### **Fiction Words: 1721**

Nonfiction Words: 360 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2081

### **Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)**

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648

Total fiction words for the month..... 18440  
Total fiction words for the year..... 111050  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4220  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 23910

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 134960

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 2/10**

[February 10, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Today in my writing I'll begin with more cycling and a little more stitching. I could have maybe done another hour yesterday and finished that up. A big part of the reason I didn't is in the topic below.

This has been a physical trial of sorts, and to a greater degree, a mental and emotional trial. You'll see what I mean.

I hope within a couple of days I'll be back to my version of normal as far as the writing goes.

### **Topic: Yet Another Life Roll**

I've debated with myself for several days about sharing yet another life roll here. But it directly affects both my writing and the new responsibility I assumed back in December, so I've decided to talk about it. Maybe it will help someone out there with a life roll rippling through your life.

This will be a necessarily long-winded explanation, so feel free to skip it if you want. Or scroll down to "But the point is...." (grin)

Like many people, I've had lower back pain for several years. It most often manifested, off and on, as sciatica. At one time it became so bad I had to use a cane. That was a few years ago.

I love irony. One of the best ways to deal with sciatica is to walk. But sciatica makes walking a lot more difficult and hiking (uneven surfaces) almost impossible.

The pain became much worse around a month ago. Still, it only came and went during the day. Notably, though, if I coughed or sneezed while standing up, the pain and weakness that washed through my glutes and down my thighs almost brought me down.

Think of a deer who's been shot through the lower back. That's how I sway when that happens.

Around the same time, sleeping a night through became all but impossible. I wake up several times each night, glutes and thighs deeply aching, to turn over or lie on my back and go back to sleep. An hour or so later, I have to repeat the process in a new position.

Generally, I consider visits with doctors a necessary waste of time. I visit with my heart guy twice a year, mostly for a check on my pacemaker battery and to see whether my valves are still behaving themselves. I visit with my primary care guy once a year so he can renew my prescriptions.

I don't do individual visits to complain about stuff. I learned long ago, the usual response is something like, "Dang, huh? That's too bad." (grin)

But when my annual visit with my primary care guy rolled around a few weeks ago, since I was there anyway I mentioned this to him. He ordered xrays.

Turns out I have "severe arthritis" in my lower spine, transcending most of the lumbar (L4 up) and lower thoracic regions. Not life threatening, but debilitating. This is especially annoying for a guy who's always been active and enjoys charging into thunderstorms.

By the way, my doc is a funny guy. He says regardless of what specifically caused this condition (bull riding and carrying lots of heavy stuff), it's primarily an effect of TMBD: too many birthdays. (grin)

Back to reality. Fortunately, I'm most comfortable in any of my three desk chairs with the lumbar support. And walking remains the best therapy. So I have to get back into that. Maybe. I guess.

But the point is, this whole thing has caused me to both focus more tightly on my writing goals and to not worry about them as much.

Lemme 'splain.

In my writing life, ever since I started back in April 2014 with short fiction and October 2014 with novels, I've wanted to learn as much as I can about writing fiction, practice as much as possible, and turn out as much quality fiction as I can.

But a couple of months ago, I also took on another responsibility.

My grandson is currently going through a self-study course for his GED. Successfully completing that is key to his future, and I don't mean for the piece of paper.

It's important for the piece of paper and more so for the knowledge he'll gain, but it's even more important that he will have accomplished something. He will know how it feels to set a goal and reach it.

My plan all along was to have him do the self-study. (Important that he does that ‘on his own.’) Then I’ll administer an assessment test to see what he knows and doesn’t know, then go deep into teacher mode before sending him to get his GED and then on out into the wide world.

But with the recent diagnosis, I’ve become more sharply focused on that process.

While Bryan’s finishing his self-study, I’ll finish my WIP and probably start another one.

When he’s finished with the self-study and the assessment test, though, the teaching will become my first priority.

Right now, when and how much we talk about GED stuff is up to him. When teacher mode begins, it will be up to me.

That doesn’t mean I’ll stop writing, but it does mean that I’ll adjust when I write and probably how much I write. I probably won’t write every day. I still plan to publish the Journal every day, though, most often with something useful in it.

I’m not sure what that will mean re daily word count goals, etc. Once I get a firm handle on how many hours I’ll spend teaching each day, I’ll reevaluate those goals and revise (or not) as necessary.

I already know I won’t teach more than six hours per day or more than five days in a row. And I already know I’ll do the six hours in two or three sessions, depending on the subject matter. (Yes, in my world, a 50-minute class followed by a 10-minute break is ridiculous.) How many days it takes overall will depend on the progress of the student.

Hey, life rolls happen, both internally and externally. The key, maybe, is to roll with them and not let them wash you out.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30 and started the day in the usual way, doing little that has anything to do with writing.

By 6:30 I’d written the topic above, then went to check Dean’s site. Around 7 I was finishing a cigar and about to move back into the house to begin cycling and stitching.

7:30, breakfast and listening to a little Joe Bonamassa on Facebook.

By 8 I started on the novel. By ten I’d fleshed out a chapter I started yesterday, then wrote another new chapter. That was a pleasant surprise. So the cycling and stitching will come later.

Around 11, laundry, lunch and a break for Facebook and Bonamassa. If you like blues, this guy is The Man.

12:30, back to the novel.

By 1:30 I had around 2700 new words on the novel. Time now for some cycling and stitching. I don't remember from yesterday how much of this I'll have to do. Might take the rest of the day, and maybe I'll get new stuff written. Depends.

I wasn't watching the time and it got late. Not a bad day. Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Dean reports he should be back to HIS version of "normal" in a couple of days. (grin) For today, he's wrapping up estate stuff with <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/workshops-bundle-and-big-estate-move-day-one/>.

## Fiction Words: 3289

Nonfiction Words: 1200 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4489

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937

Total fiction words for the month..... 21729

Total fiction words for the year..... 114339

Total nonfiction words for the month... 5420

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 25110

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 139449

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Life Rolls](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 2/11](#)

[February 11, 2017](#)

## Hey Folks,

Well, I have to go grocery shopping sometime today, and Mona and I might make a trip of it. So I want to get some writing done early.

I'm also feeling a little pressure (so good pressure) to write more. I'd like very much to finish this one and be well underway on the next one before Teacher Man has to make an appearance. (If that doesn't make sense, read yesterday's post at <http://harveystanbrough.com/daily-journal/the-journal-friday-210/>.)

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out shortly before 4 a.m. Coffee, a cigar and nonsense until around 6, then checking Dean's site.

Around 6:30 I moved to the novel.

At 9:30, everyone was ready to head for Sierra Vista. At this point I have just over 1900 new words. Back in a bit.

Back about 2, stuff put away about 2:30, and back to the novel.

Stitching and piecing, got a few hundred more words done. I expect the novel to take off tomorrow.

See you then.

## Of Interest

At Dean's place today, There Can Be Only One Topic Tonight: Ed Bryant (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/there-can-be-only-one-topic-tonight-ed-bryant/>).

## Fiction Words: 2311

Nonfiction Words: 190 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2501

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396

Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248

Total fiction words for the month..... 24040  
Total fiction words for the year..... 116560  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5610  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 25300

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 141950

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 2/12**

[February 12, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I encourage you to read the topic below, and tomorrow's topic as well. Both rehash things I've talked about before, but in a different way.

### **Topic: Writing Off Into the Dark, Revisited**

When I was a GED/college instructor, and later when I taught writing seminars, I soon found that not all students "got it" when I approached a topic from a certain perspective.

So I soon learned to gauge student reactions, most notably their eyes or the general look on their faces.

When I saw that some didn't understand, I came at the topic again from a different direction. I like to think I did so seamlessly. Ahem.

After the second or third iteration, new segments of students would nod or smile (or both) and the little light in their eyes would come on.

It is in that spirit that I revisit this topic.

I'm about to return to my WIP novel for the day. As I was considering that, I felt invigorated.

Why?

Because I'll be writing off into the dark. (I added "off" because somehow, some folks equate "writing INTO the dark" with "writing IN the dark." Not the same thing.)

The thought that I would be writing off into the dark invigorated me because I won't be going to the novel with any preconceived notions.

I won't be writing things I know the characters will say. I won't be writing solutions to problems the characters encounter. I won't be writing any preformulated "this happens, then that happens" scenario. All of that is just massively boring to me.

Frankly, I don't have a clue what's going to happen beyond an alien force landing on Earth.

And the lack of knowing is invigorating. It's exciting.

I'll sit at the laptop, put my fingers on the keyboard, and write whatever comes.

Not what I want to write, but what the characters do and say. Not a preconceived setting, but what the characters allow me to see of the setting.

For example, I might finally be allowed to see the interior of the bridge on an alien ship. I might be allowed to see other areas of the different kinds of ships, if the characters feel they're germane to the story they're telling.

And that's the whole point.

The characters are down in the story.

I can choose to be the Almighty Writer on High, controlling what each character says and does with my Mighty Hand and tell exactly the same story others have told countless times.

Or I can resign as General Manager of the Universe, drop off my self-installed pedestal, roll off the edge of a trench and drop into the story.

Then I can get up, dust off my jeans, and look aghast at the characters who are pointing at me and laughing quietly.

I'll say something like "Hey, I'm just here to record for posterity what you guys do."

They'll discuss it briefly — if they aren't under fire — and then they'll gesture with a "well, come on" motion and take off through the story.

And I'll keep up as best I can, scribbling furiously as I go and hoping I don't miss too much.

And at the end of the day, I'll be the first "reader" to be completely entertained by these exciting, strange new folks.

And I have ZERO idea what they're going to say or do, so how can any other reader possibly foresee it? As Bradbury said (I'm paraphrasing), "How can you hope to surprise the reader if you don't surprise yourself?"

Try it. You'll love it. I promise.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 4. I did the whole coffee, cigar, Facebook and email thing for the first hour, then spent two hours writing the topic above and tomorrow's topic and cross posting them to the big blog.

Got a shower, then breakfast, and came back to the 'puter to find I had left it unplugged. I usually start writing the new day's stuff outside, so I had to run my charging cord out the window. (grin)

8, finally to the WIP. Just under 2000 words by 9:40 and taking a break.

Wow. Long break. I worked cleaning out my trucks (4-Runner and Tacoma), then broke down some cardboard boxes for recycling. Took a few pics of bees on dandelions, then messed around on FB for awhile.

1 p.m. Now back to the WIP. Nope. Norton saw what it thought was "suspicious outgoing activity" and recommended I run Power Eraser, so I'll do that. While that was going on, I ate too much lunch.

2 p.m. finally back to the WIP.

Not going to be as good a writing day as I'd hoped. I wanted to hit at least 3,000 words, but I screwed around too much. Been a good day, though.

See you tamale.

## **Of Interest**

Not a lot at Dean's place today: Busy Day for a Saturday (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/busy-day-for-a-saturday/>) and a bit about the Superstars Workshop at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/superstars-workshop/>. Just something to look forward to if you're interested.

**Fiction Words: 2262**

Nonfiction Words: 820 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3082

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510

Total fiction words for the month..... 26302  
Total fiction words for the year..... 118912  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6430  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 26120

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 145032

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 2/13](#)

[February 13, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

This Journal is kind of a social thing for me, isn't it? I enjoy chatting with my friends each day. Thanks for being there.

If you didn't read the topic in yesterday's Journal you might want to read it before reading the one below. Just sayin'. You can find it at <http://harveystanbrough.com/daily-journal/the-journal-sunday-212/>.

\* \* \*

Very strange night here.

One of the things that annoys me most are when people say, “One thing about [whatever state they happen to be in], if you don’t like the weather, wait five minutes and it’ll change. Hyuck hyuck.”

I think the annoying part is that they say it, every single time, as if they’re imparting some great wisdom that nobody has ever uttered before.

The other annoying part is that it’s not only a trite cliché (because it’s true) but that it’s true of pretty much every state in the Union. Arizona is no exception.

Yesterday a cold front moved in. Temps dropped from 80° to around 50°. Last night it started raining at around 6. Thunderstorms with heavy lightning started around 7. Sometime around 9 the very heavy rain started.

Around midnight we had heavy nickel-sized hail. At about 1 I went outside to gather some of it. (After an hour at 48°, the hail was still dime sized.)

It’s now almost 3 and the thunder is still sounding. Oops. Just started hailing again. Pea-sized this time. Oops. Heavy rain now.

But it’s all right. This is Arizona. I’ll wait five minutes and it’ll change.

\* \* \*

My little girl slept part of the night on my left arm per usual. But most of it she spent under the bed. I’d rather she was with me, letting me “protect” her. On the other hand, under the bed she’s taking responsibility for her own warmth and safety, a lesson many humans need to learn.

\* \* \*

The Superstars Workshop (Seminar) Dean mentioned yesterday probably is good. But a tad pricey for me. If I had that kind of bucks, I’d sign up for one of Dean’s coast workshops.

Interesting to note, though, there are a LOT of books on the writing business and the writing craft, some by those who will present at Superstars, for a LOT less money. Just sayin’.

### **Topic: How Does Cycling Fit with Writing Off Into the Dark?**

Some have confused “cycling” with “rewriting.”

One very good student of several of my own writing seminars recently wrote that she was about to perform “cycling or rewriting or revising or redrafting or whatever other name you want to call it.” (Again, I’m paraphrasing, but you get the gist.)

As I’ve written here before, the difference is that cycling is done with the subconscious, creative mind.

Rewriting and revising (and editing) are done with the conscious, critical mind. And redrafting — well, that means tossing out the whole thing but retaining the original idea and writing it from scratch again.

I mentioned in yesterday's Journal that when I write off into the dark, I'm down in the trenches with the characters.

I'm running through the story with them, struggling to keep up, and writing down what they say and do and the settings they allow me to see.

After I've written a segment, usually after a break, when I return to the WIP I go back and read over what I've written on the characters' behalf.

I'm reading it just as any other reader will read it: For the story. In other words, I'm not reading critically. I'm not critiquing it. I'm enjoying the story. I'm reading strictly for entertainment. Let me say that again. I'm reading *strictly* for entertainment.

I'm not looking at sentence or paragraph or chapter structure. I'm not counting to make sure I included all five senses. Of course, I'm also not checking to make sure I put a period after a declarative sentence or a question mark after an interrogative. Get it?

Don't check for stuff that I've already learned how to do.

But as I read, my fingers are on the keyboard.

Sometimes, a character says something a little differently than I thought I heard him say it the first time.

Sometimes a character notices something in the setting that I didn't see him notice before.

Sometime some action occurs that I missed while my attention was on some other part of the action.

And when any of that happens — again, as revealed to my subconscious mind by the characters in the story — I allow it to flow through my fingers and into the keyboard.

Ever watch a really good guitarist (think Clapton or Bonamassa or Walsh) as his or her fingers fly through a great lead riff? Do you really believe he (or she) is consciously fingering each note and plucking each string?

Uh, no.

He's down in the song with the notes, recording on his guitar what the song gives him as he goes.

I can't do that on my guitar. But man, I can do it on my keyboard. (grin)

And so can you.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 2 after being awake for an hour in bed. No telling what today will hold for writing. Spent the first couple of hours with email, coffee, Facebook, enjoyed a cigar and checked weather radar online. I also wrote the stuff above.

4:30 I was going to the novel but allowed myself to be distracted with some research on Luna that led to other stuff. For part of it, see “Of Interest” below.

Two hours on that stuff, then out for a cigar. Then the rain started again, so in my pickup for a cigar. With my laptop. Awkward. Just playing games. Too hard to type in the pickup.

Finally got to the novel around 8:30. I managed around 1000 words in the first (and only, so far) session. Then What Everyone Else Wants took over and I’ve barely had time to breathe.

So everything else today will be in minuscule bits and pieces. One of Those Days when I want to throw up my hands, close all open documents that have to do with my novel, put in a good movie and Wait For Tomorrow.

It really is all right. The novel is moving well when I actually spend time with it. I just need to be more disciplined. Or maybe lock everyone in the house, nail 2x4s over the doors and run out to the Hovel.

I’m just a little annoyed because I thought this was going to be a really great writing day. Go figure.

Okay, at 3:20 just back from a job interview (don’t panic, I’m only the driver) and will write for awhile. Woohoo!

But I guess it’s all good. I guess.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Encouraging... Really? at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/encouraging-really/>. I feel much the same way, especially about that “being selfish” part.

Some incredible, unedited NASA footage of the secret Apollo 20 joint USA-Russia mission to the far side of Luna at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TW7PxXDHr-w>. There are notes at the beginning. After that, the interesting footage begins at about 6:15.

If you’re interested in maps of the moon, see <http://cseligman.com/text/moons/moonmap.htm>.

## **Fiction Words: 2046**

Nonfiction Words: 1140 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3186

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556

Total fiction words for the month..... 28348

Total fiction words for the year..... 120958

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7570

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 27260

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 148218

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Interruptions](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 2/14**

[February 14, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Happy belated St. Valentine's Day. I was thinking only yesterday that I needed to buy my wife a card because I was vaguely aware this day was coming up sometime or other.

Yes, I post a Daily Journal, meaning I'm pretty much always aware of the day and date, yet somehow "vaguely aware" is my standard. Sigh.

\* \* \*

I spent a couple hours just reading selected articles on various newsletters. There are some seriously funny people in this poor nation. I kind of like them, in an admittedly perverted way, because their antics never cease to amaze and entertain me. (grin)

\* \* \*

Today is one of those days. Light rain started each time I headed for my outside desk and stopped each time I returned to the house. How does it know?

It will be a chilly day here anyway, with cloud cover, a wind and temps remaining below 50°, so the girls won't want outside so much. I finally headed out to reopen the Hovel.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 4. I can already tell it's going to be a slow start today, so I'll just ease into it and not worry about it.

After breakfast, a shower, and arguing with the weather, around 9 I moved to the Hovel and opened the novel.

10, up to the house for a break, then back to the novel.

A few more breaks, a few more good sessions, and I'm back. That's more like it. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

The penultimate comment on Encouraging... Really? is worth a read at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/encouraging-really/#comments>.

A little insight on Dean's schedule at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/middle-of-the-night/>.

### **Fiction Words: 4189**

Nonfiction Words: 280 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4469

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102

Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745

Total fiction words for the month..... 32537  
Total fiction words for the year..... 125147  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7850  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 27540

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 152687

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 2/15**

[February 15, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, another slow start to the day. I slept too long. But if the writing day turns out as well as yesterday did, I'm all in.

I realized this morning I have all of my novels in BundleRabbit, but none of my short stories. Reckon I'll add some of those as time allows. They can't be included in bundles if they aren't available. Duh.

But as always, writing new stuff takes precedence. If you haven't checked out BundleRabbit yet, either as a reader or as a writer, there's a link in the "Of Interest" section.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 4 (again). Spent time with email and Facebook, spider solitaire, and then went to BundleRabbit.

In the Hovel at 8 and started cycling through the last chapter I wrote yesterday. I added a couple hundred words, then wrote a new chapter.

10 a.m., time for a break. 10:30, back to the novel.

Took a couple more short breaks with a couple good sessions in between. With a little over 3,000 words I'm headed for a longer break at 1 p.m. (breaking down some recyclables).

Got another good session for a good day. Getting to where I kind'a like these slow-start days. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nada that I could find. Except if you haven't become involved with BundleRabbit yet, Chuck Hentzleman has improved it a lot. See <https://bundlerabbit.com/>.

### **Fiction Words: 4758**

Nonfiction Words: 230 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4988

### **Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)**

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648
Day 13...	3289 words.	Total words to date.....	38937
Day 14...	2311 words.	Total words to date.....	41248
Day 15...	2262 words.	Total words to date.....	43510
Day 16...	2046 words.	Total words to date.....	45556
Day 17...	4189 words.	Total words to date.....	49745
Day 18...	4758 words.	Total words to date.....	54503

Total fiction words for the month..... 37295

Total fiction words for the year..... 129905

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8080  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 27770

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 157675

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 2/16](#)

[February 16, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Welcome to a couple of recent new subscribers. I hope you enjoy following along on this journey and that you take some nuggets from it that will help in your own writing. I won't mention you by name because this is a secret society of very strange people. (grin)

\* \* \*

That brought up a memory. While I was still in the Marine Corps and serving in C Battery of Second Light Anti-Aircraft Missile Battalion, I had a particularly good group of guys. At one point, I had cards printed up and laminated. They read, "I am a member of Gunnery Sergeant Stanbrough's platoon. Please excuse my strange behavior." (grin)

\* \* \*

Yesterday, I wrote a couple of new chapters and started a third. I stopped at a "normal" stopping point, which means the end of a scene. I did not stop at a "good" stopping point, which means a place that would naturally launch me into the story again.

Like the middle of a scene or even the middle of a sentence. I'll probably post a topic about that again here before too long.

Anyway, stopping where I did is why I'm glad I keep a running reverse outline. (Each time I finish a chapter, I make a few notes in a Notepad document concerning who was involved, sometimes what they were wearing, and what happened in that chapter.)

When I return to the novel anew, instead of having to read back over the whole thing to get back into the flow, most of the time I only have to read back over the reverse outline.

Which characters have I not mentioned for awhile? Which ongoing situations do I need to address again? Which new locations do I need to describe as characters arrive at the location toward which they were going the last time they appeared?

Those and other considerations provide my springboard back into the novel.

On my reverse outline I also keep other stuff, but maybe I'll do another topic on that soon as well.

Another relatively late rising today and another relatively slow start. I'm almost glad, given how the last couple of slow starts have ended for me.

In Dean's post today he talks about valid reasons to delay writing. That caused me to wonder about what drives me to my writing.

### **Topic: What's Your Incentive?**

I've long needed a specific incentive to do anything, to strive toward any goal, to achieve any level of success.

I love telling stories. But that doesn't provide me with the appropriate incentive to spend hours in the chair writing.

I'd also love to make a good living with sales of my fiction, but because I'm a realist, that doesn't provide even the slightest impetus. The fact is, these things take time, and frankly, I'm an old guy. I have better things to do — like write — than check sales figures several times a day.

I also love it when people say nice things about my writing.

Of my very first novel, my very first reviewer said it was “a great story” and “one of the most tightly plotted novels” he'd ever read.

Woohoo! Score! Especially given that I wrote that novel in 20 days, just writing off into the dark. No plotting, no planning. The “plot” was a Bradbury Plot, the one the characters left as they ran through the story.

But what others think or say about my writing doesn't provide either incentive or even validation because it's all up to them and their own tastes. So it's outside my control.

Different people need different incentives to write. I get that.

And the same people are affected by different incentives at different times of their life.

I can't honestly say what my primary incentive might have been had I stumbled across Heinlein's Rules and the Writing Off Into the Dark technique when I was 20. I like to think it would have remained the same.

That primary incentive is mortality.

For me, it's all a big, wonderful game. How many stories can I tell before I check out of this particularly odd little hotel? Specifically, how many novels?

Since I effectively started writing fiction in 2014, for me to spend the "40 years in the business" that Dean often touts, I'd have to live, actively, until I'm 102.

Yeah, okay. Ain't gonna happen. Family history, health issues over which I have zero control, yada yada yada plus my own impatience to see what comes after this period of craziness precludes any chance of that.

I just want to turn out as many good stories as I can.

And my secondary incentive? There's nothing better for me than to be the First Person who gets to be entertained by the stories my characters tell.

It provides a sense of wonder. And although that sense of wonder doesn't drive me to the keyboard (mortality does that), it makes me look forward to what will happen when I put my fingers on the keyboard.

Which I'm going to do right now.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 and blew off much of the morning doing inconsequential things.

To the Hovel around 8. I wrote the topic above, cross posted it to the big site for sometime in June, then opened the novel by about 9.

Well, I allowed myself to be distracted. My kitten kept teasing along the east fence (around 200 feet away). I don't want her out because of large dogs in the vicinity.

So I trekked back to the house and tried to set up a way to work there, at my outside desk in the yard.

I won't go into all the details, but it didn't work out. And after I'd tried for well over an hour to set up a feasible option, she sashayed back into the house for a nap.

So I closed the door to the house and packed all my stuff back out to the Adobe Hovel.

That was around 10:30. As of 11:30, I've written almost a thousand words on the day. Sigh. Back to it.

12, gotta run the kid (my grandson) into where he hopes to be working soon. Back in a bit.

1, back to the novel. Sort of.

Well, helping my grandson with his paperwork and then taking him back to town. For writing, a woefully inadequate day. However, the novel is progressing, so I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Protecting Choice at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/protecting-choice/>. I think I might be needing this one soon. I hope not, but I think so.

## Fiction Words: 2648

Nonfiction Words: 1070 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3718

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178

Total fiction words for the month..... 39943

Total fiction words for the year..... 132553

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9150

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 28840

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 161393

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## The Journal, Friday, 2/17

February 17, 2017

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. Long post today.

I pulled out my guitar (Martin D-50) yesterday when the kid and I got back from town around 4:15. Pulled out a pick and showed my grandson how much I've forgotten. (grin)

No "Under the Double Eagle," no "Wildwood Flower," and no "House of the Rising Sun," though I did manage to hack my way through a stiff, stuttering version of one instrumental piece called "Pipeline." (I finally remembered the name as I was writing this.)

My fingers were just utterly unfamiliar with the fretboard and strings. Well duh. I honestly don't remember the last time that poor Martin was out of its case. That's how many years ago it's been.

The strings themselves weren't dead (I was amazed) but it took several chord strokes for them to wake up and stretch. I had to retune one string or another on the guitar probably ten times over the next half-hour.

My kitten, bless her heart, lay on the back of the couch and watched and listened impassively. She didn't leave, so I take that as a positive. Impassivity is acceptance with a cat.

My grandson grinned a lot. A Lot. But the only thing he ever said was "Sounds good." That happened about every five minutes, bless his fibbing little heart.

I used to be a songwriter. I managed to remember maybe three of my own songs, lyrics and music. Of probably 50 or 60 I wrote back in the day.

But I was able to hand him rough versions of Hawkshaw Hawkins, Hank Williams (the first one), Willie Nelson, BB King, Charlie Pride, Web Pierce, Carl Smith and a few others.

The session ended, quickly, when I saw my wife pulling in and suddenly remembered I hadn't made supper yet. Oops. (grin)

I cheated. I slapped a pizza in the oven.

The experience harkened me back to a time when I and a few musically inclined USMC friends played regularly in the lounge of the Chilton in Yuma AZ for extra money.

I also remembered playing one time (ONE time) with another guitarist named Woody on a sheet of plywood laid over an 8-foot pool table in a tiny bar. That was a confusing experience. People

threw beer bottles (but always empty, so they weren't really angry) and applauded almost every song. And danced. A lot.

I also remembered traveling with my bunch from Yuma to a small town in Colorado to do a gig where all the guy wanted was Hank Williams and Jim Reeves and then whatever else we wanted to play. And he wanted covers of those. Ever try to sing both of those with one voice? Great fun, though at the time I was petrified.

Covering Hank has never been a problem. Just remember to add an N or M before the right words (for timing) in his songs. Jim Reeves, not so much. Before my natural baritone went due south, it was more Don Williams than Jim Reeves.

So the night before the gig, I lay on the floor of the hotel room with a large speaker alongside each ear. My buddy put on a Reeves cassette and turned it up just louder than my voice so I could sing along and "smooth" my voice into matching that of Mr. Reeves.

It worked. Thank goodness the owner wanted Williams in one set and Reeves in another. I sucked on a lot of limes that night.

We did one side of a Mel Tillis album that night too. I forget the name of the album, but it has "Who's Julie?" on the side we covered. And then for the fourth set we belted out a few of our own.

It was a great little bar band, and I'm glad I have these memories. Probably a few thousand people danced (and bought beer) to our presentation over the years. We made a good deal of money, too, but I really don't remember anything about that.

But the passion wasn't for the money. The passion was in writing and presenting the songs. With the covers, the passion was in arranging and presenting the songs. In my versions (as in Charlie Prides's) Hank Williams' songs have a lot of appropriate minor chords.

I didn't rediscover my passion for guitar yesterday, but there's a flicker. I hope to take it out a couple times a week. We'll see.

Well, I've rambled on more than long enough. The intention when I started was to write a lead-in to a topic on not getting in a hurry with your writing. Or something.

But as I said, enough is too much. I'll be back tomorrow or the next day with a topic. (grin)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:40. Wake-up stuff and writing the stuff above took up almost three hours. Finally to the novel around 10:30.

Around 11, rain is moving in so I'm headed for the grocery. Looks like it's gonna be a light day of writing again.

Back from the store around and stuff put away and emails caught up around 2 p.m. Frankly, I haven't written much at all today.

I'm calling it a non-writing day. Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Normally, I would list this after Dean's stuff, but it's too important. If you're one of the unfortunates who are still chasing agents and traditional publishers, take a gander at this. Seems censorship has moved from politically correct spoken speech to what you write.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/lifestyles/books/ct-publishers-hiring-book-readers-to-flag-sensitivity-20170215-story.html>. Just in case you didn't know, I personally believe this is a massive pile of fresh, steamy, foul-smelling bovine excrement.

One really good comment on Protecting Choice at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/protecting-choice/#comments>.

Check out You Can Learn Story from the HGTV Network at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/you-can-learn-story-from-the-hg-network/>. Pretty good post that covers a lot of ground. Chock full of gems.

Fiction Words: NADA

Nonfiction Words: 1160 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1160

## Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648
Day 13...	3289 words.	Total words to date.....	38937
Day 14...	2311 words.	Total words to date.....	41248
Day 15...	2262 words.	Total words to date.....	43510
Day 16...	2046 words.	Total words to date.....	45556
Day 17...	4189 words.	Total words to date.....	49745
Day 18...	4758 words.	Total words to date.....	54503

Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 39943  
Total fiction words for the year..... 132553  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10310  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 30000

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 162553

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Censorship](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Personal Revelations](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 2/18**

[February 18, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I'll be writing today, but much of it will be in the house and therefore subject to interruption. I'll be helping with things around here that I didn't get done during the week (laundry, etc.).

I originally planned to go camping in the Lower Box Gila Wilderness (north of Lordsburg, NM) this weekend. But there was a threat of rain, and storms there are as wild and rugged as the place itself. So we called it off.

And then too, my grandson landed a job (he starts on Sunday) so he couldn't have gone anyway.

But the whole thing kind of has me stuck watching the weather radar. Thus far, even the massive storms moving in from southern California are blowing east/northeast past Tucson.

Now I'm about 50 miles east of Tucson, and south. The pueblcito (where we like to camp) is around 150 miles east and slightly north of Tucson. To this point both I and the pueblcito have been dry as a bone.

I don't like regrets. I don't mind at all regretting something I've done. That's just life. But I absolutely hate regretting NOT attempting something I wanted to do. So from here on out, when I want to do something, I'm just going to do it. Rain is just water. Toss in a bar of soap, it becomes an opportunity. See what I mean?

**Topic: Being Unstuck in Time**

Dean Wesley Smith mentioned in his post yesterday that the experienced novelist is "unstuck in time" in his novel.

That is true.

He then went on to talk about cycling and how he does that specifically. I garnered some gems from that part of his post.

But he never mentioned writing what's there to write.

In at least three novels recently (and in the current one) part of my cycling included moving whole scenes or chapters from one part of the book to another.

That's because when I write, I write what's in front of me at the time. I write what's there to write.

When I reach the end of a chapter or scene, almost immediately a character and/or situation comes to mind, and I keep writing.

Sometime it's a different character in a different scene, maybe even halfway around the world or on another planet, but in the same time frame. And I write it.

Sometimes it's the same character "jumping ahead" to the next significant event in which that character is taking part. And I write it.

Sometimes it's a character who hasn't appeared for awhile who tugs on my sleeve and says, "Hey Harv, look what I did back here." And I write it.

Almost every time I sit down to write, I cycle back around a thousand words or so and read through, allowing myself to touch it here and there, as I mentioned a few days ago.

But as part of that, sometimes it suddenly becomes clear to me that scene or event belongs in a different place in the WIP. So I move it.

Then I go back to the white page. A character and/or situation comes to mind, and I write whatever there is to write.

Lather, rinse, repeat.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out early for a change at 2. However, I did little other than play games, watch the weather radar and write the stuff above. To the hovel for awhile at 6:20.

Checked Dean's site while I was thinking of it, wrote "Of Interest" below, then went up to the house to get the camera. Now to the novel at 6:50.

8:20, to the house for a break. Ah, and a few chores and a trip to the post office.

9:30, back to the novel. 10:30 to the house for a break and a quick lunch. 10:50, back to the novel.

Two good writing sessions. I also did some cycling today, and some smoothing out timelines. And of course, new writing.

Taking the rest of the day off at 11:50 to help around the house.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, some very good and enlightening comments and responses on yesterday's post. Some had to do with what I talk about in my topic above. I found a real gem there in one of Dean's responses. <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/you-can-learn-story-from-the-hg-network/#comments>.

## **Fiction Words: 2231**

Nonfiction Words: 700 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2931

## **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648
Day 13...	3289 words.	Total words to date.....	38937
Day 14...	2311 words.	Total words to date.....	41248
Day 15...	2262 words.	Total words to date.....	43510
Day 16...	2046 words.	Total words to date.....	45556
Day 17...	4189 words.	Total words to date.....	49745
Day 18...	4758 words.	Total words to date.....	54503
Day 19...	2648 words.	Total words to date.....	57178
Day 20...	2231 words.	Total words to date.....	59409

Total fiction words for the month..... 42174

Total fiction words for the year..... 134784

Total nonfiction words for the month... 11010  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 30700

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 165484

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 2/19**

[February 19, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Likely to be a limited writing day today again, kind of a semi day off. I plan to write, but I'll let other things take precedence.

What does that mean? I want to write, and I will write, but I won't worry about writing. If/when I get to it, good. No stress.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3, finally to the novel at 5:30.

I wrote off and on over about four hours. In four or five small sessions, I hit around 1200 words. Breakfast etc. in the midst of all that.

Then I took my grandson to work. Came home, then did some more running around to buy screen for the screen door, dog and cat food, etc.

Came back and worked on my 4-Runner for a little while, then watched some TV with my girl. Also made another wild-eyed, clumsy, stiff-fingered attempt at my guitars (the Martin and an f-hole tenor Britton guitar, built by my maternal uncle, Roy Britton).

Checked out a few hollow-body electrics online too. (grin) I had a beautiful Ibanez stolen out from under me when I was a kid of about 20.

Finally decided around 1:45 I should get back to the novel. Moved to the outside desk and finally, finally, it started raining. Go figure.

Moved to the Hovel. Now to the novel again around 2:15.

A good session combined with some cycling. Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nothing at Dean's today, though one person did find a gem in yesterday's post. So you might check that out.

### **Fiction Words: 2010**

Nonfiction Words: 240 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2250

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419

Total fiction words for the month..... 44184

Total fiction words for the year..... 136794

Total nonfiction words for the month... 11250

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 30940

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 167734

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 2/20](#)**

[February 20, 2017](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

The “Of Interest” section most often (like today) has a referral to Dean Wesley Smith’s site, but not always. Sometimes it has other stuff too.

A few days ago I posted a link here to an article about “sensitivity readers” now being employed by the traditional publishing houses. This morning I received three emails from subscribers to this Journal giving me that same link. (grin)

I urge you to check out “Of Interest” each day. Don’t skip it just because you think it will be only Dean’s stuff.

\* \* \*

Well, a day of writing. Or at least a partial day. And I have a feeling I’m nearing the end of this novel. It might even wrap up today.

And I also have a feeling the story hasn’t really started yet. (grin)

### **Topic: Parts of a Story**

What I mean is the first part of the story — the current story — seems to have almost reached a natural conclusion. The overall story is approaching a major transition.

Someone famous, I think it was Bradbury, once wrote that there are only two plots in science fiction: we went there, and they came here.

This is a “they came here” book.

Another truism about SF is that it isn’t “about” the science or the aliens. It’s about the human REACTIONS to the science, the aliens and the situations in which they find themselves.

In this book, the aliens have arrived. But a lot of things happened to the characters involved before the aliens arrived.

This novel will cover those things. Human things. Human reactions up to and including the arrival of the aliens. And so the first book will end with the beginning of the transition.

Then, I suspect, the next novel will begin with the middle of the transition and move forward from there. And I have zero clue how many books there might be. At least two, but maybe eight or ten. Or more.

I’m already enjoying the world of this novel. Whenever I’m away from it, I look forward to getting back to it to see what happens next.

That's the best part of writing off into the dark. I don't know what's going to happen or how it will happen or even who will make it happen until the story unfolds.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at almost 4. I hung around the house with email etc. until it was time to wake up the babies. During part of that time, I checked out a few more guitars online.

I continued in that vein even after I moved to the Hovel around 5:30. Eventually (around 7) my "I want that" bug abated and I went to the novel. Cycling.

At 7:40 I took a break to run my grandson to his job, got back around 8:20 and hauled the trash to the driveway for pickup (I passed the trash guy on his way in), then fixed and ate a quick breakfast of scrambled eggs and chili. Nom nom nom.

Back to the Hovel, this Journal around 8:30, and back to the novel at 9.

Wrote for awhile, took a couple of short breaks, and now it's 11. Headed for lunch.

12, back from lunch, back to the novel.

1:20, off to pick up my grandson. Back in a bit.  
2, back to the novel.

Better day today than I hoped to expect. (grin) Wrapping up a little after 3. Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

It seems Dean saw the Chicago Tribune link about PC readers too. And it lit his fuse. See Another Scam Firing Up at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/another-scam-firing-up/>.

## **Fiction Words: 4147**

Nonfiction Words: 600 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4747

## **Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)**

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187

Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566

Total fiction words for the month..... 48331  
Total fiction words for the year..... 140941  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11850  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 31540

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 172481

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 2/21**

[February 21, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

All the recent talk about people being “offended” and “sensitivity readers” is just annoying. But they aren’t really connected. This is two different mini-topics: perception and censorship.

### ***Perception***

People have every right to perceive anything they see or hear in any way they want. And they have a right to be “offended” if that’s how they want to spend their time. Shrug. Fine by me.

However, whether they are offended is a direct function of their own perception. Being offended is a choice. In other words, whether they’re offended and whether they choose to belabor the point (as I am doing here) is completely up to them.

So they can be offended if that’s what they choose to do, but they have ZERO right to force anyone else to care that they’re “offended.”

And I don't care. And I'm not sorry that I don't care. I simply have better ways to spend my time.

In fact, I'm about as concerned about what might offend someone else as they are about what might offend me. Like, for instance, people whose hobby is being offended.

If people say something about me personally, I don't get offended. If what they say is true (only I know, after all) I either change or I don't. If it isn't true, I consider the source and move on.

### ***Censorship***

Censorship is not all right in a land where the constitution guarantees free speech. Period.

Writers, maybe above all others, should know and practice that.

One comment on Dean's post from yesterday struck me. A first reader for a writer's book about the civil war was "offended" (there's that word again) that the soldiers used firearms. Seriously.

I actually laughed out loud.

### **Topic: White Space**

A friend recently sent me an article from Word Count: Writers Talk About Writing (<https://www.visualthesaurus.com/cm/wc/>). The title of the article, by Micheal Lydon, is "Making the White Space Talk."

(Note: You have to subscribe to Visual Thesaurus to read the full original article. Based on some of the titles and bits there, I do not personally recommend it.)

In the article, which my friend copied and pasted into an email, the author talks about what he calls "white space."

As I proceeded through the article, I realized what he's calling white space is actually paragraphing.

More specifically, he's talking about endings (and by extension, beginnings) of chapters.

Mr. Lydon notes that

"White space at the end of a chapter pauses the book's narrative flow, allowing readers a brief rest. At the same time the white space points readers to the next chapter in such a way that, once rested, they'll gladly take up their journey once again."

Truedat.

But as I pointed out to my friend, it's not only true for chapters.

The “rest” the author talks about is important at the end of every sentence. It’s why we have end punctuation (.?!:).

But more to the point, the “ending” (final sentence or two) is vastly important both to give the reader pause and to propel him to the next microscene, scene, chapter and book.

In every case, the ending of that microscene, scene, chapter or book “sells” the reader on what coming next. It makes him turn the page or buy the next book. It causes him to want to keep reading your work.

Likewise, the beginning of the next microscene, scene, chapter or book sells the reader on that microscene, scene, chapter or book.

Those endings most often are called “cliffhangers.” When written right, they’re always tension filled, though that tension takes on different forms depending on the genre.

One other related note: Hitting the Return (Enter) key also has a great deal to do with pacing. It’s difficult to maintain a reader in a breathless state if your paragraphs are hundreds of words long.

As a general rule of thumb, longer paragraphs slow readers down. Shorter paragraphs speed them up and propel them through what they’re reading.

Whether and how much paragraph length affects pacing are also factors of how one paragraph ends and the next begins too.

Readers aren’t garbage chutes. They’re human beings. As such, they’re more amenable to swallowing and digesting smaller bites than massive chunks. Just sayin’.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 4 again. If memory serves, each time I’ve done that recently, I’ve had a good writing day. I’ll be interested to see what happens in that regard today.

Currently (6 a.m.) I’m sitting outside with my coffee and my laptop, writing this stuff and finishing a good cigar.

To the Hovel about 8, and cycling on the novel around 8:15. Added a couple hundred new words, then to the house for some water.

Well, a lighter day today than I expected. And the novel didn’t end today.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

A lot of comments on Dean's post from yesterday at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/another-scam-firing-up/#comments>. One guy turned the whole argument around. My thought? Male bovine excrement. Censorship is censorship.

His post today is nostalgic. See <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/the-years-go-by/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2010**

Nonfiction Words: 830 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2840

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648
Day 13...	3289 words.	Total words to date.....	38937
Day 14...	2311 words.	Total words to date.....	41248
Day 15...	2262 words.	Total words to date.....	43510
Day 16...	2046 words.	Total words to date.....	45556
Day 17...	4189 words.	Total words to date.....	49745
Day 18...	4758 words.	Total words to date.....	54503
Day 19...	2648 words.	Total words to date.....	57178
Day 20...	2231 words.	Total words to date.....	59409
Day 21...	2010 words.	Total words to date.....	61419
Day 22...	4147 words.	Total words to date.....	65566
Day 23...	2010 words.	Total words to date.....	67576

Total fiction words for the month..... 50341

Total fiction words for the year..... 142951

Total nonfiction words for the month... 12680

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 32370

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 175321

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## The Journal, Wednesday, 2/22

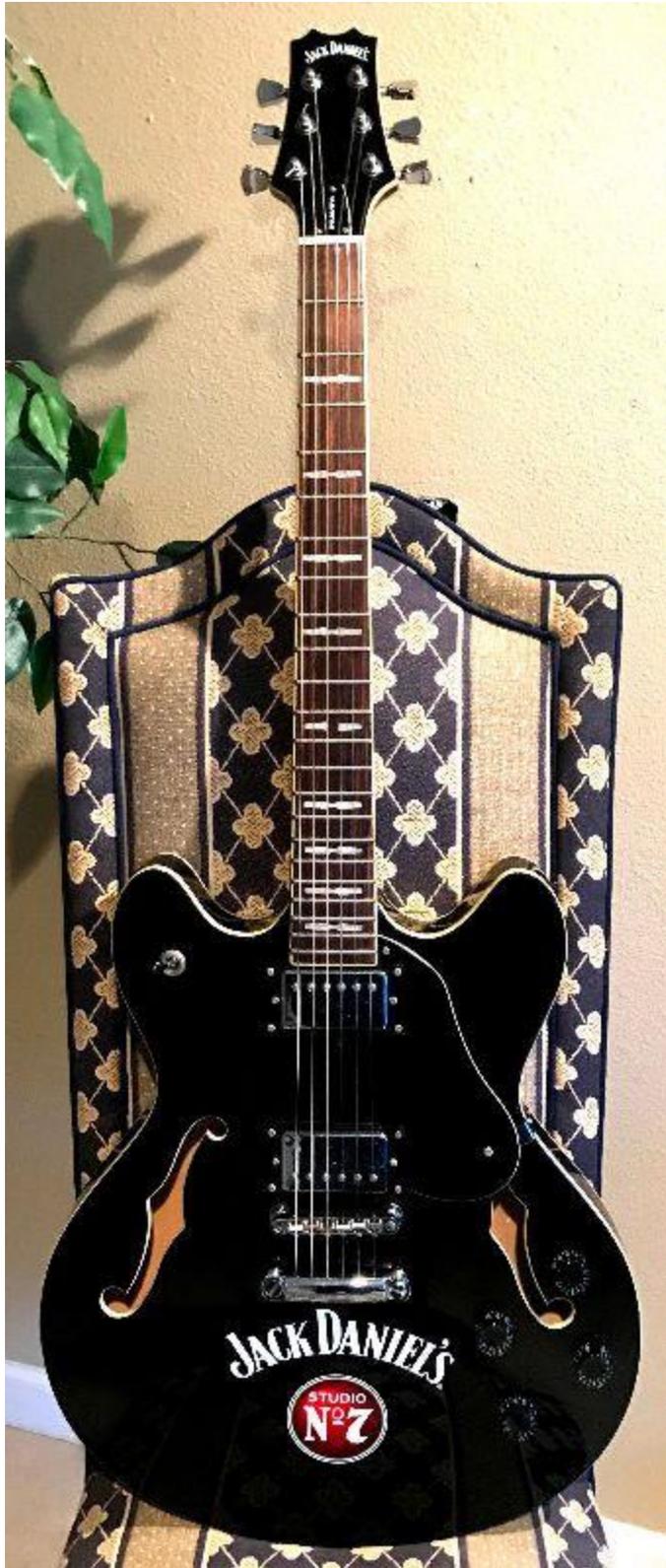
February 22, 2017

**Hey Folks,**

No topic today, so just my blathering.

Oh, I think I mentioned I bought a new guitar a couple days ago to add to my small collection. (I also have a Martin HD-28 and a custom made, arch-top f-hole tenor Britton guitar, made by my maternal uncle, Roy Britton.)

Anyway, if I didn't mention buying a new one, well, I did. It's a hollow-body electric Peavey JF-1, a Jack Daniels custom job. If it plays and sounds as good as it looks, I'm in trouble. (grin)



Oh here. That's a picture of it on the left.  
(No, the chair didn't come with it.) It should be here around the end of the month. It will enable me to reawaken my other passion.

Well, another slow start to the day. And I think my sleep time is beginning to adjust again, back in the direction of more daylight. My grandson sometimes works some evenings, and I pick him up.

Another part of this adjustment is that I've been wanting to start walking again, but I think I've been waiting for warmer early-morning temps. I can roll out at 4, drive to a good walking place (no dogs, little traffic) and be walking by 4:30.

And I'd rather walk at the beginning of the day than interrupt my writing or whatever else to change clothes and walk, then shower and change clothes again. That's a lot of wasted time.

When I walk now, it's something short, maybe a mile or two, so I don't get all sweaty. Plus a mile is only about 20 minutes, so it's nothing more than a normal break from the story.

I've always (well, since I was about ten) been intimately aware of Time. I have a hyper-developed sense of urgency. Then again, that's also part of why I'm fairly prolific as a writer.

For example, when I leave a room for whatever reason, I look around and see whether there's something I can take with me to avoid another trip (wasted time) later.

If I walk soon after I get up, I avoid wasting the time it takes to change clothes more than once and to get back into the flow of whatever I was doing before I walked. (grin)

But warmer mornings will begin out here probably in mid-March or so. I can only barely wait.

Today, and Writing

Rolled out at quarter to 4 and began easing into the day. Just one of those days when rushing is not in order.

Drove to the store about 7:30. Back, in the Hovel and to the novel at 9:30. I'm hoping this will end today.

Well, the novel didn't end today, though it might've had I had the whole day to stare at it. (grin)  
Not really a good day at all.

I wrote two new scenes and did a lot of cycling, adding this here and that there. The grandson was supposed to go in at 5 tonight, but they called him in early.

While I was in town, I also took care of some shopping, etc. and now the laundry is waiting. So I'm writing off the rest of today at 3 p.m.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

At Dean's Fantastic New Bundle... Escapist. See <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/fantastic-new-bundle-escapist/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1976**

Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2526

### **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552

Total fiction words for the month..... 52317

Total fiction words for the year..... 144927

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13230

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 32920

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 177847

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 2/23](#)**

[February 23, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A few folks mentioned the picture of my guitar came out huge in the email they received and interrupted the post.

That's just how some email programs deliver photos (instead of running the text along the side).

When that happens in the future, you can always see the "real" post at <http://harveystanbrough.com/>.

I'm taking a non-writing day today.

**Topic: A Lesson Learned**

I guess this is kind of a topic.

I spent a lot of time this morning (unnecessarily, as it turns out) going back through the whole novel. I wasn't cycling.

I *thought* I was cycling, and it *started* as cycling.

But I was also applying some skills I just learned. Remember, learning is a conscious-mind endeavor.

Anyway, I wanted to apply those skills to this WIP since it isn't finished yet. Kind of slip it in under the wire. (grin) I actually thought it was a good idea.

Uh, no.

I allowed that process to interrupt my writing process. Shouldn't have done that. In the future, I'll know.

As it was, I easily slipped into THINKING (conscious mind) about scene and chapter lengths and paragraphing and other conscious-mind things. Horrible waste of time.

But that process reacquainted me with the whole story too. So it wasn't a total loss.

Anyway, I saved the monster with a different file name so I wouldn't lose the changes just in case, then returned to the original file from yesterday.

I'm very near the end of the story. In fact, I might have typed past it a ways back. So I'm going to let things percolate for a day or two, give my subconscious a rest, and see what happens.

It's early in the day as I write this (around 12:30) so I'll probably spend a little more time with it today. I'll go over my reverse outline, try to see what I missed or where the story ended or where one ended and a new one began.

Hey, just trying to be honest here and lay it out as it's happening. Every book writes differently. And this one is writing a lot differently from any others I ever wrote. (grin)

Coincidentally, my new guitar is supposed to be here by the end of the day tomorrow. Woohoo! Of course, my fingers are so soft I won't be able to play more than an hour or two per day so that won't interfere too much with the writing.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3. Up at the house for awhile, and finally to the Hovel and the novel at 7:30.

I did a lot of what I wrote about above until about 11, then headed up to the house for lunch. Then I came back to the Hovel and wrote the stuff above.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See Dean's Time to Rest... Blast from the Past at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/time-to-rest-blast-from-the-past/>. Pretty cool.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 490 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 490

### **Writing of Will Perkins (novel, working title)**

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648
Day 13...	3289 words.	Total words to date.....	38937
Day 14...	2311 words.	Total words to date.....	41248
Day 15...	2262 words.	Total words to date.....	43510

Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552  
Day 25... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 52317  
Total fiction words for the year..... 144927  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13720  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 33410

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 178337

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 2/24](#)

[February 24, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Apparently I visited Dean's site too early yesterday. After I left he posted a new article. See "Of Interest" below. There's a lot down there today, and it's all good.

Ted White, one of the great editors of SF and Fantasy, needs help saving his house. If you can help, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/44r62-save-my-house>. And if you have a Facebook page and/or are in any writers' groups, please share. (This is also in "Of Interest" below.)

In my own writing, I continue to get the feeling I'm writing two novels at one time. Not a conscious thought, but that quiet little voice in the back of my mind. Hmm.

For now, I think there's nothing to do but keep letting the story come. Maybe this simply isn't one of my typical 35,000 to 60,000 word novels

On the other hand, I suspect eventually the "split" between the first story and the second one will become obvious to me.

**Topic: On the Importance of Writing and Practice**

My friend Mary Ann Carman shared a newsletter she receives with me this morning, and I thought it might be important to you as well.

I've made a few changes to bend it more toward writing.

When you play a game with family and friends — maybe card games or dominoes or checkers or Monopoly — do you lose sleep the night before?

Do you worry what people will think of your performance? Do you wonder how your past or your childhood years might influence your moves? Do you “replay” each turn in your mind the day after?

Probably not. Because it's just for fun.

The same applies to your writing.

No matter what happens, nothing about it can detract from who you are. Just as you might not “win” the game, your latest masterpiece might not immediately rack up huge sales.

But you'll be richer and wiser for the time spent in games thinking, calculating, and sharing with friends. And you'll be richer and wiser as you write the best you can today, then learn more and write the best you can again tomorrow.

In writing as in playing (other) games, you might even relish the refinement and development of your skills. In writing, as in playing games, you have nothing to prove.

Bottom line, you will become more for the playing, whether in games or in writing, not less. And so, the more you write (the more you play-, the more fun you have, the more you grow, and the better you get.

Just something to gnaw on for the day.

For more from this site, see <http://www.tut.com>.

\* \* \*

Of course, you can often learn excellent tidbits that you can apply to your writing from sources that are not specifically about writing. For just one example, consider how often Dean refers us to The Voice. Just sayin'.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 despite a late night (for me). Went to pick up my grandson from his job at 8, only he didn't get off until a little after 9. Oops.

I did a lot of little admin things this morning, including cross posting the note about Ted White to several places on Facebook, then eventually moved out to the Hovel around 7:30.

I did a lot of cycling for the second day in a row. (I nearly always begin by cycling back, but today, like yesterday, I did a lot of that.)

Also wrote a new scene, in between and around the times my attention was diverted by what sounded like a UPS truck. (grin)

I got some good writing done today. The novel is still moving along well, especially as distracted as I am.

Around 12:30 the UPS guy delivered my guitar, and it's a thing of beauty. I'm going to set the novel aside for the rest of the day, post this Journal and give the new axe the attention it deserves. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

First, from yesterday, Dean points to "The Rules of Being a Professional Writer" in The Strand Magazine at Writing Advice and Fun List at <https://strandmag.com/the-rules-of-being-a-professional-writer/>.

Then I recommend reading Dean's "Looking at the Writing Advice" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/looking-at-the-writing-advice/>. He posts the article above, but continue reading below that.

Finally, one of the great editors of SF and fantasy needs help saving his house. Please help if you can. See the link at "Some Help If You Can for Ted White" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-help-if-you-can-for-ted-white/> or click this link: <https://www.gofundme.com/44r62-save-my-house>.

## **Fiction Words: 2728**

Nonfiction Words: 720 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3448

## **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498

Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552  
Day 25... 2728 words. Total words to date..... 72280

Total fiction words for the month..... 55045  
Total fiction words for the year..... 147655  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14440  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 34130

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 181785

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 2/25**

[February 25, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

In my WIP, things are bogged down. When that happens, I've either written past the ending (I didn't in this case) or I took a wrong turn. Either that or there's just something I'm not seeing.

So today I'm going to backtrack in the actual novel (vs. the reverse outline) to try to find where I took an oblique.

From there I'll read over what I wrote just before that, then take off with whatever comes.

**Topic: Balancing Two (or More) Passions**

Hmm. I wonder how to balance two passions?

I love telling stories because it's entertaining to me. That's what so enjoyable about writing off into the dark.

But I also love my new guitar. And back in the day, I loved performing, playing and singing.

I'd never played a Peavey guitar until yesterday. In fact, I'd never seen one in person, to my knowledge. And this thing plays like a dream.

Put it this way: It plays so well, the action is so good, that I'm looking into lessons online. I'm copying scales and charts and pictures. I'm learning new things I was never even interested in before.

I was a pretty good rhythm guitarist for several years, but I played by ear.

But this guitar is so much fun that I want to learn a ton more about it and what I can do with it.

So just like writing.

I mentioned a day or two ago that you can often mine nuggets about writing from sites that are not about writing.

As one example, here's a quick quote from the guitar site:

[T]he most important thing is that you enjoy what you're doing and not necessarily whether you get any good. The truth is, if you do enjoy learning the guitar [or learning writing] you will definitely get better because you enjoy it and therefore learning doesn't seem like a chore.

And another quote:

[T]ry to enjoy the difficulties that learning brings as much as the fruit it produces. There are fruits in the difficulties!

See what I mean? If you're interested, the site is here: <http://www.all-free-guitar-lessons.com/>.

Of course, if you're interested in playing the guitar and you're anything less than an accomplished lead guitarist, you can also learn a great deal from this site about playing the guitar. (grin)

As a side note, no matter what you're practicing, I think it's also important to practice in private. You know, unless you're a complete moron like I am.

I spill my guts on this Journal about learning to write, but yeah, I'll be practicing guitar in private. (grin)

Hemingway once wrote something like, “It’s nobody’s business that you had to learn to write. Let them think you were born with it.”

Oh, but the question was about balancing passions. I think I’ll study the guitar charts, read, etc. early in the morning.

I’ll write later in the day, after I’m fully awake.

And I’ll practice on the guitar during the day also, when I Want To. Just like I currently practice my writing when I Want To. (grin)

For now, that’ll have to suffice for my version of balance. If you have any ideas or are yourself struggling with balancing two or more passions, please feel free to comment.

\* \* \*

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:40. Instead of spinning my wheels on Facebook etc., I spent time reading and studying the site I referenced above and then writing the stuff above this.

Around 7:30, my wife and I headed to the store. By 9:30 I was in the Hovel. I identified the wrong turn (in Chapter 22 of 31) and began cycling through that chapter.

Well, as it turns out, it wasn’t a wrong turn. The chapter just wasn’t filled out right. It was a perfect place for action, the characters had shown and told me what happened, and somehow I just failed to write it down.

So I took care of that, then moved forward through the next few chapters.

Counting this as a nonwriting day. Not enough new words to make a difference.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

A cat picture at Dean’s. That’s it. <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-friday-night-cat-picture/>

Well, if you want to see some great visual humor (Charlie Chaplin in a boxing match), check out <https://www.facebook.com/Niwomb1Official/videos/405341699665463/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 700 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 700

**Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552  
Day 25... 2728 words. Total words to date..... 72280  
Day 26... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 55045  
Total fiction words for the year..... 147655  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15140  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 34830

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 182485

Categories [Uncategorized](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 2/26**

[February 26, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I've finally seen a pattern developing.

Originally, I wanted to rise hyper-early so I could use that quiet time to write.

But most early mornings I check email first in case anyone (especially any writer) needs anything. Then I visit Facebook and scroll my notifications for items of interest. (I don't use the "newsfeed" feature.) I try to at least Like anything friends post, and comment when appropriate.

After that, depending on my mood and the time, I return to my email to click and browse a few newsletters I receive regularly.

When that's over, I visit Dean's site. Most often, that's when my "work" day really begins.

I open this rough Journal (a text document in Notepad), scroll to "Of Interest" and add whatever's appropriate, if anything. Then I most often come up here and write a bit of nonfiction for the day.

Shortly after that, I change clothes, refill my coffee, and shuffle out to the Hovel to see what's happening with my current story.

Just interesting to realize I have a routine. We all have them, but we don't always aware that we have them.

\* \* \*

With the WIP... (sigh) well, I was hoping it would end today. With today it would be 26 writing days and 31 calendar days. That's a long LONG time.

I've reached an excellent transition point.

And nothing.

My conscious mind keeps screwing with me from a "but what happens next" standpoint.

So I'm going to set the novel aside for awhile and see what happens. Kind of putting myself in time out.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 4. I went through my morning routine, and moved to the Hovel at about 7. Back to cycling and searching for something I'm missing.

Not seeing it. That's when I realized I'm thinking too much. I'm looking for things. What comes next? How? Where?

I'm taking the rest of the day off to spend with my wife. Maybe I've run my race. Who knows.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nada.

**Fiction Words: 1217**

Nonfiction Words: 350 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1567

**Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 4219 words. Total words to date..... 4219  
Day 2..... 4003 words. Total words to date..... 8222  
Day 3..... 3383 words. Total words to date..... 11605  
Day 4..... 3124 words. Total words to date..... 14729  
Day 5..... 3373 words. Total words to date..... 18102  
Day 6..... 2294 words. Total words to date..... 20396  
Day 7..... 3102 words. Total words to date..... 23498  
Day 8..... 2578 words. Total words to date..... 26076  
Day 9..... 2111 words. Total words to date..... 28187  
Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552  
Day 25... 2728 words. Total words to date..... 72280  
Day 26... 1217 words. Total words to date..... 73497350

Total fiction words for the month..... 56262

Total fiction words for the year..... 148872

Total nonfiction words for the month... 15490

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 35180

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 184052

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## The Journal, Monday, 2/27

February 27, 2017

**Hey Folks,**

More than likely this will be a nonwriting day. Trying to stay true to my word and just stay away from the novel today.

It isn't as easy as it sounds. But I think I can do it. It's really weird though, taking a day to just do nothing.

I've been spending some quality time with my Toyota 4-Runner (finally located a back window glass), chasing down an errant package online, etc.

Anyway, I thought I ought to at least put up a good topic for you.

**Topic: Write. What. You. Mean.**

For many years I've kept a running list of awkward expressions, misplaced modifiers, and other syntactical anomalies that run the risk of distracting a reader. And by "distracting the reader" I mean jerking the reader out of the story.

Most often, this is a result of inserting unintentional humor into a serious scene. If the scene is also meant to invoke feelings of sadness or despair or tension, the inadvertent insertion has an even stronger effect.

One of my favorite authors once wrote that a character "kicked her horse up a hill."

Of course, she meant to write that the character "spurred" her horse up the hill. But she caught that before it was published.

That instance was truly unique, too. These anomalies more often have to do with eyes than with any other human attribute.

I've seen eyes popping out of heads, flying around the room, lighting on lapels, and wandering dreamily along a garden path, among many other actions that eyes generally won't take on their own.

Now just for the record, I don't go looking for these things unless I'm being paid to copyedit a work. Otherwise I'm just another reader, reading (or trying to) for pleasure.

But when the reader is jerked out of the story by some inane word or phrase, that's strictly the responsibility of the writer.

I made the latest addition to my list this morning. And I took it from a passage the author used in a pull-quote on a website to advertise the book. Seriously.

Now I count this author as a friend, so I won't mention the author's name or website or gender or the name of the book. Here's the sentence:

The baron shifted in his seat and raked his eyes across everyone at the table.

My first reaction was a grin. The second was a snarky, "Wow, dude, that must'a hurt."

Tension gone.

Seriously, can you imagine what the poor baron must have gone through in "raking his eyes" across those folks?

And the folks themselves must have been thoroughly grossed out, as evidenced by the very next sentence in the pull quote:

Several members began to protest....

Two more snarky thoughts came to mind: "Y'think?" and "Yes, I imagine they would."

I actually laughed out loud. And for me, just like that, the passage the author used to entice me to buy the book had the exact opposite effect. The book was a definite no-buy.

Now understand, this doozy occurred in a serious, tension-filled passage in a serious, tension-filled book.

Of course, I know the author meant the baron raked his "gaze" across those at the table. Or that he "glared" at them. Or something.

Something that didn't involve trying to make me (the reader) grin and be snarky.

When I mentioned this sort of thing during a presentation at a writers' conference, a writer in the audience said, "But the reader will know what I mean."

Yes. The reader will know what you mean. The reader will figure it out. And it takes only a second or two for the reader to go through that process.

But figuring out what you mean is not the reader's job. The reader's job is to relax and be entertained.

And that second or two might well be all it takes for him or her to put down your book and find something enjoyable to read.

The bigger problem with this sort of thing is that if a writer uses it once, s/he'll use it throughout the book. And knowing it will be there (it was in the pull quote) keeps me and untold others from buying the book in the first place.

Think about that.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 4. I have to take the grandson in to work around 7:30, then go get him around 1 unless they keep him longer.

No writing, other than the above. I also cross-posted the topic to the big blog. It will go live there in November.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Nothing today. Dean announced the March online workshops if you're interested.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 780 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 780

## **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187
Day 10...	2561 words.	Total words to date.....	30748
Day 11...	4073 words.	Total words to date.....	34821
Day 12...	1721 words.	Total words to date.....	35648
Day 13...	3289 words.	Total words to date.....	38937
Day 14...	2311 words.	Total words to date.....	41248
Day 15...	2262 words.	Total words to date.....	43510
Day 16...	2046 words.	Total words to date.....	45556
Day 17...	4189 words.	Total words to date.....	49745
Day 18...	4758 words.	Total words to date.....	54503
Day 19...	2648 words.	Total words to date.....	57178
Day 20...	2231 words.	Total words to date.....	59409

Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552  
Day 25... 2728 words. Total words to date..... 72280  
Day 26... 1217 words. Total words to date..... 73497  
Day 27... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 56262  
Total fiction words for the year..... 148872  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 35960

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 184832

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 2/28](#)

[February 28, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I finished the novel.

A very strange process on this one that I hope I will never repeat. I think taking the day off yesterday helped a lot.

I almost took today off too. I was thinking about writing a short story today, but then a transition for the current story came to mind. Kind of a missing link. (grin)

I sat down, applied the transition, then just kept typing. And as has always happened before, the story ended where it was supposed to.

Once I started typing, I hit my stride at just over 1000 words per hour.

\* \* \*

To follow up on yesterday's "Write What You Mean" here's something similar for you.

**Topic: Human Parts Do Not Have Human Traits**

This topic doesn't favor any particular body part, really. And most of these aren't as humorous as "her eyes drifted around the room and eventually lit in the corner on a barrel of nails." But some of them are pretty good.

Basically, any time any body part is the subject of a sentence, you probably need to recast the sentence.

At least in the example that got me started yesterday (The baron ... raked his eyes across everyone at the table) the human, the baron, was actually performing the action.

Had the writer written, "The baron's eyes raked across everyone at the table" it would have been doubly awkward.

'Cause eyes can't do that. The baron wouldn't do it, but his eyes can't do it.

Only in certain, very specific circumstances can eyes do anything on their own.

If eyes ever legitimately "shoot across the room," their owner better have been slapped in the back of the head with great force a split second earlier. Just sayin'.

So don't write stuff like

Close to the window, his ears heard an eerie sound.

Her nose (or her palms or her forehead) pressed up against the glass.

Her hands (or hips or butt or forearm) leaned on the rail of the ship.

His hand crept along the back of the seat and eventually made it to her shoulder.

As her left hand held the forestock firmly, her right hand worked the lever on the 30-30.

As my hands ran past my ears, I felt something in my ear lobes.

Tossing my hand across the couch's back with studied casualness, I attempted to initiate the usual subtle encircling movement but to no avail.

Chloe's head went up and down.

Bill's face broke into a grin that wouldn't stop.

His eyes roamed across the room, stopping at a table with no empty chairs.

His face turned deadly silent.

His long muscular legs effortlessly loped after the bus.

Her eyes slowly climbed the tree.

Her legs raced frantically down the street.

“A place called Valentino’s,” he said as his eyes touched hers.

And as a bonus, here’s one of my favorite oddities, although this doesn’t fit the “human parts don’t have human traits” category. This is from an email I received a few years ago: “I hate to miss your class, but I’m leaving town unexpectedly tomorrow.”

You get the idea.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out late at 4:30 after a pretty rough night. But it’s a new day. (grin)

I messed around up at the house until around 9:30, then headed out to the Hovel. I had an idea for a transition. Maybe this will be it.

10 a.m., to the novel.

Writing almost steadily, with a couple of short breaks, I finished the novel at 1:17. Woohoo! On to the next story!

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Dean mentions the beginning of the new season of The Voice. All I’ve seen on the show personally is a reiteration of what I already know.

## **Fiction Words: 2994**

Nonfiction Words: 630 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3624

## **Writing of Will Perkins** (novel, working title)

Day 1.....	4219 words.	Total words to date.....	4219
Day 2.....	4003 words.	Total words to date.....	8222
Day 3.....	3383 words.	Total words to date.....	11605
Day 4.....	3124 words.	Total words to date.....	14729
Day 5.....	3373 words.	Total words to date.....	18102
Day 6.....	2294 words.	Total words to date.....	20396
Day 7.....	3102 words.	Total words to date.....	23498
Day 8.....	2578 words.	Total words to date.....	26076
Day 9.....	2111 words.	Total words to date.....	28187

Day 10... 2561 words. Total words to date..... 30748  
Day 11... 4073 words. Total words to date..... 34821  
Day 12... 1721 words. Total words to date..... 35648  
Day 13... 3289 words. Total words to date..... 38937  
Day 14... 2311 words. Total words to date..... 41248  
Day 15... 2262 words. Total words to date..... 43510  
Day 16... 2046 words. Total words to date..... 45556  
Day 17... 4189 words. Total words to date..... 49745  
Day 18... 4758 words. Total words to date..... 54503  
Day 19... 2648 words. Total words to date..... 57178  
Day 20... 2231 words. Total words to date..... 59409  
Day 21... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 61419  
Day 22... 4147 words. Total words to date..... 65566  
Day 23... 2010 words. Total words to date..... 67576  
Day 24... 1976 words. Total words to date..... 69552  
Day 25... 2728 words. Total words to date..... 72280  
Day 26... 1217 words. Total words to date..... 73497  
Day 27... 2994 words. Total words to date..... 76491 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 59256  
Total fiction words for the year..... 151866  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16900  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 36590

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 188456

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 3/1](#)

[March 1, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I promised myself yesterday I was going to take the day off to read some pulp fiction today. So that's what I'm going to do.

I'm even posting this way early so I'm not tempted. (grin)

I have several PF novels in the genre that most interests me and a few in my second choice. So today will be a day filled with reading.

I don't read all the time, at least not fiction. I regularly read newsletters and Popular Science, Archaeology, and Smithsonian Magazine to broaden my non-engineer experience.

But I don't read fiction regularly, despite how much I enjoy it and despite the advice that writers must read in the genres they enjoy writing.

With that disclaimer out of the way, all this talk about reading leads me to this:

### **Topic: Reader Chunkin', Revisited**

One reason I don't read much fiction is because there's so little good fiction to read.

By that, I mean I sit down to read, am jerked out of the experience by some inanity, and go find something else to do. Usually that something else is writing.

The last couple of days, I posted about some bad writing habits that can distract the reader.

Here's a case in point:

I absolutely love Stephen King's work, and I have since his Richard Bachman days.

But a few months ago, I bought his novel *Under the Dome* and eagerly anticipated reading it.

When I started, it was, per usual, pure excellence. I was thoroughly grounded in the work, deeply involved and invested with the characters and the situations.

Then for some reason he started using **Bold** and sometimes ***Bold Italics*** to emphasize certain words.

It jerked me straight out of the book.

But the story was really good, so I went back to it, certain I could just ignore the nonsense.

Nope. After two or three more occurrences, even knowing in advance they'd be there and that I intended to ignore them, I couldn't. It was like trying to read "through" a comma or a period. Can't be done.

Again, understand, this wasn't me looking for something "wrong" to pull me out of the story. I was just enjoying the story when I was unceremoniously chunked out of it by the writing.

And that wasn't some unknown writer I was trying for the first time. It was Stephen King, a writer whose previous works I'd absolutely loved.

I closed *Under the Dome*, thinking maybe I'd get back to it in a day or two.

That's been a few months ago, and the book (and I'm sure, a wonderful story) is still sitting on a shelf in my office.

A thought occurs... if I had that book in PDF form, I probably would take the time to copy/paste it into a Word document, then do a global search and replace for bold and bold/italic text and remove the formatting. It would be worth it to me so I could read it.

Just sayin'.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4:20. Read some newsletters, email, Facebook. Learned I'd garnered at least one new reader. Yay.

No writing today, beyond the stuff above this. Just reading.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See the "Top 5 Things Rodeo Taught me About Writing" at <http://writersinthestormblog.com/2017/03/top-10-things-rodeo-taught-me-about-writing/>. I post this only because sometimes hearing the same thing in different ways drives a point home.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 500 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 500

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 151866  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 500  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 37090

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 188956

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 3/2](#)**

[March 2, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I almost started this with “Not much here today,” but I happened on a topic so....

Still reading today. No writing, though I was kind of jonesing to write earlier this morning. That’s okay. The feeling will just be stronger tomorrow.

I spent most of the day reading several of the Nick Carter crime/detective/mystery pulp novels of Frederic van Rensselaer Dey.

It’s obvious the guy was paid by the word (hence, a lot of unnecessary words) but otherwise it’s really some good stuff. The pacing almost takes my breath away, even with the extra verbiage.

Very spare and sometimes fragmented descriptions, but overall they’re effective.

### **Topic: A Matter of Attitude**

In two days (on Saturday), a writers’ group in Tucson will host the first ever self-publishing (indie-publishing) expo. (See the website at [http://tucsonselfpublishingexpo.com/.](http://tucsonselfpublishingexpo.com/))

The faculty includes Mark Coker, the founder of Smashwords; Robin Cutler, the Director of Ingram Spark, Ingram Content Group; and David VanDyke, a Hugo Award finalist and bestselling author.

Among the faculty, they will deliver two keynote addresses and present four workshops on the business of writing. There will also be numerous vendors in attendance.

I won’t be attending as I have other more pressing things to do.

But I was talking with a few regional writer friends about it this morning.

I explained to one of them that I have a rather odd attitude toward the business end of writing, at least beyond following Heinlein’s Rules (write, don’t rewrite, finish, publish, repeat).

I don’t worry much about promotion and I don’t worry At All about sales. So I don’t worry much about the business end of writing beyond setting up my “estate” so my copyright will pass to a descendent before it expires.

Why?

Because at my age and in my state of health, I simply don’t feel the need.

I mean seriously, barring a lightning strike in the form of some Hollywood producer optioning one of my books (or the Wes Crowley series, hint, hint) for film, I’ve already settled, frankly, on not caring whether I ever make any “real” money on the investment that is my writing.

On the other hand, I'm confident enough in my abilities to believe strongly that my grandchildren probably will make a LOT of money from what I'm doing now. In that way, my writing is my legacy.

What really matters to me in writing is the fun of being entertained by my characters, the fun of designing the best covers and sales blurbs I can, and getting it all "out there" so people can buy it.

I do continue to improve my skills as a writer and storyteller, partly because I enjoy learning and partly because I want to tell stories the best way I know how. And yes, partly to ensure the grandchildren make that money. (grin)

So for me, not worrying about the business end of things (i.e., not being tied to the result) is a very freeing attitude to have.

Because I don't worry about how many sales I get each day or week or month or quarter, I can write whatever I want to write. So my attitude gives me Freedom.

And because I want my grandchildren to reap the benefits of all this, my attitude also provides me with a strong Catalyst.

To keep writing. To keep telling stories and putting them out there as long as I can.

Now I ask you, short of stumbling across Heinlein's Rules when I was 20, what could be better than that?

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4:40 and started reading almost immediately. More of Dey's stuff, which I started yesterday.

Later in the day I also researched some other pulp authors and ordered several more pulp books that I'd like to read and then study. Mostly for my Kindle, but a few in paper.

That's been most of the day to this point (2 p.m.).

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you're interested, you can download a copy of Dey's essay "How I Wrote A Thousand 'Nick Carter' Novels" at <http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/How-I-Wrote-A-Thousand.pdf>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 670 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 670

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 151866  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1170  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 37760

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 189626

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 3/3](#)

[March 3, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Getting a slow start on March, but that's all right. I'm enjoying my reading.

Today I have a full day. If a story idea hits and the mood to write strikes, I'll start something. If not, I'll continue reading.

Tomorrow (Saturday) will almost certainly be a reading day. I'd like to attend the self-publishing expo in Tucson, but other non-writing things take priority.

My grandson goes to work at 10 tomorrow and works until 2 unless they keep him longer. I drop him off and pick him up.

While he's working, I and my wife will head to Sierra Vista to grocery shop and check out a few shops over there. She'll drive. I'll read. (grin)

I'm still reading pulp novels and enjoying them thoroughly. And learning a ton of stuff.

And as for the expo, I'm hoping a few writer friends here who plan to attend will take copious notes and share them.

If they pass along something of interest, who knows. Maybe it'll turn up as a topic in this venue.

I was going to do a topic on Pacing today, but I got involved in the reading and ran out of time.

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out just before 4. Read like a fiend pretty much all day.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Just in case I didn't mention this here earlier, or in case I did and you missed it, check out this article on the most prolific writer on Earth (according to Guinness), José Carlos Ryoki de Alpoim Inoue, at <https://formulaforsuccess.wordpress.com/2007/08/26/brazilnovelist/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 260 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 260

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the year..... 151866

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1430

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 38020

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 189886

Categories [Daily Journal](#)Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 3/4](#)

[March 4, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. I almost forgot to even post a Journal entry today.

When I know I'm going to be busy later in the day, I usually post early rather than late.

So hardly anything here today. I did some reading. I'm enjoying this reading down-time a great deal, but I'll be back up and running soon. If I'm not writing fiction by tomorrow, I will be by Monday.

My back taught me a new lesson while we were in SV. (grin) I could practically see it wagging its arthritic finger at me. Pretty sure my camping and hiking days are behind me now.

So as it turns out, I was very glad I didn't go to the Expo today. Better to get all limpy/wimpy around someone who knows you thoroughly and loves you in spite of all that. (grin)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out around 4:40 and went about my usual routine. Plus reading.

Went to drop the grandson at work around 9:40, then to Sierra Vista, then back here around 2. I put things away while my wife went to pick up my grandson around 2:40.

Around 4:30, the day is calming down and I realized I hadn't posted the Journal yet today. Oops.

Anyway, sorry for the very sparse post.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

In More Interesting Conversations at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/more-interesting-conversations/> Dean explains why his recent posts have been so vague.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 220 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 220

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 151866  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 165  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 38240

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 190106

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 3/5**

[March 5, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

NOTE: I just popped back in at 6:20 to add this and the next two paragraphs to today's Journal.

If you want to learn a TON about writing, please consider buying THE BLACK LIZARD BIG BOOK OF PULPS. You can find it at Amazon, in paper or Kindle, at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0307280489/>.

This is nothing short of incredible, even if all you read are the foreword and the three introductions. But there are also at least a few dozen excellent stories. I'll list this notice for a few days to make sure everyone has a chance to see it.

I've spent the last few days reading the works of some very good, and very prolific, writers. (For the record, those didn't include any from The Black Lizard Big Book of Pulps.)

That isn't to say I thoroughly enjoyed everything I read. But after most of it, all I could do was shake my head and say "Wow." And that's the good kind of "wow."

Then it dawned on me — for a guy whose intention is to write at least one novel per month and is shooting for fifteen novels on the year, spotting the month of March four days is probably plenty. (grin)

At the moment, I don't have a clue as to what the next book will be. I don't have a character in mind, or a setting or nary even a bit of dialogue.

I know only that I'd like it to be something that reads fast. I want to practice Pacing, so I want the next novel to be a page turner. I want it to be a story in which the reader can barely catch his breath enough to get from one paragraph to the next.

If I get started today (March 5) I'll have 27 days, inclusive, until the end of the month. If I don't get started until tomorrow (Monday, March 6), I'll have 26 days.

I'd like very much to write two such novels beginning today or tomorrow and ending before the sun goes down on March 31.

To do that, I have to figure word counts again, just for a guideline. I'm thinking of two novels, each 35,000 to 40,000 words.

So that's 70,000 to 80,000 words in 26 or 27 days. Been there, done that. So that part isn't spooky.

If I go with the larger word count and the fewer number of days, that says I have to write a little less than 3100 words per day.

There is only one other "rule" I'm slapping on this challenge: The two novels can feature the same (or similar) main character(s), whatever, but the second can NOT be a continuation of the first.

I don't want even the appearance of this being just one long story that I conveniently chopped in half to make two novels.

But that probably won't be a problem. I have a feeling these two novels probably will even be in different genres.

Oh, and this is a personal challenge, not a be-all end-all on which the future of the world hinges. If I pull it off, great. If not, so what? I won't put pressure on myself that it "has" to happen.

This really won't be all that difficult. All I have to do is come up with two ideas that will make novels, and then trust my subconscious so I can write off into the dark.

Of course I'll also keep this Journal going, and I expect this challenge to feed me more than one topic. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. My first thought was that this was closer to my regular time. But I'm gonna try not to worry too much about it.

Turns out an idea hit me at around 10 a.m. I sat down and wrote an opening, then kept writing. This was interspersed with answering emails, checking Facebook, eating lunch, etc.

At the end of a curtailed day (2 p.m.) I had over 3400 words. So a good first day on my new challenge.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nada.

#### **Fiction Words: 3442**

Nonfiction Words: 540 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3982

#### **Writing of Novel One** (tentative, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442

Total fiction words for the month..... 3442

Total fiction words for the year..... 151866

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2190

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 38780

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 194088

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 3/6](#)

[March 6, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Okay, venting alert. But this also morphs into a kind of topic.

Down in the “Of Interest” section, you’ll find that Dean and Kris are bringing Pulphouse magazine back.

Stage One of my automatic response was good for them. I was glad to hear it. Still am, actually. An additional publication = another stream of revenue for them.

And during Stage Two, which I admit followed closely on the heels of Stage One (because yes, I’m just that self-centered and hungry as a writer) I was Hyper-Glad.

In fact, I was nearing the point of Eerily Giddy.

Until he mentioned (twice) that he wasn’t taking submissions. And then he insisted “Don’t even ask.”

Oh. Okey doke.

Seriously,

- when I read a blog pretty much religiously, and
- the primary focus of that blog is the craft of writing, and
- that blog’s primary audience is writers who are deadly serious about that craft, and
- the publisher of that blog suddenly announces the revival of a magazine that showcases short fiction, um
- I hope and expect to be able to submit stories to that magazine.

I mean, otherwise, why announce it?

Well, business. Okay, business. They’ll even be doing a Kickstarter drive. They want subscribers. I get that.

I also get that having writers all over the world virtually clasp hands with you and jump up and down with joy to help celebrate your accomplishments is a Good Thing.

But back to reality for a moment. The very first rule of business I learned about writing WAY back in the day is that writers should support venues where they intend to submit their work.

I'm not saying we should subscribe only to venues that actually publish our work, but we should support venues to which we plan to submit our work.

If you intend to submit work to Asimov's or SF&F or Hitchcock's or any other venue, yes, you really should subscribe and then read each issue cover to cover.

But subscribing to a magazine that gives you zero chance of publication?

As Dean often says, "Uh, no."

Just sayin'.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4, after waking at 2:30 and fully expecting to get up. But the little girl was awake too. I stayed in bed for "a few more minutes" to put her back to sleep and... well, the rest is history.

After I climbed up out of the groggy reawakening, I visited Dean's site, posted in "Of Interest" and wrote the rant above.

I gotta get back to my novel so I feel good again for awhile. But I won't do that 'til around 10:20 or so after I get back from taking the grandson to work. In the meantime, I watered the few trees and bushes and set the sprinkler on the front yard.

Got back and decided to make myself some breakfast before I go write. Got that done and to the Hovel (and the novel) around 11.

Well, not nearly as good a day as I'd hoped. Went to pick up Bryan, then had to run by the store. Got back and had a chance to watch the USMC Silent Drill Team and, well, some things just take priority. (grin)

So I kind of ran out of time on the day.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Dean's back with some exciting (for him) news: "Pulphouse Fiction Magazine Is Coming Back!" See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/pulphouse-fiction-magazine-is-coming-back/>.

And repeated from yesterday, if you want to learn a TON about writing, please consider buying THE BLACK LIZARD BIG BOOK OF PULPS. You can find it at Amazon, in paper or Kindle, at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0307280489/>.

**Fiction Words: 2089**

Nonfiction Words: 600 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2689

**Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442

Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531

Total fiction words for the month..... 5531

Total fiction words for the year..... 157397

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2790

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 39380

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 196777

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 3/7](#)

[March 7, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, my grandson is off today unless he gets called in. So he's up at the house working his way through his GED book.

I, on the other hand, am out in the Hovel where I shall endeavor to persevere in the insane challenge I set for myself a few days ago. (grin)

A few thoughts on getting up early...

It isn't really necessary to my writing, as I long since gave up on writing as soon as I get up. But it gives me time to wake up, play with Facebook etc. in a quiet house.

Then when everyone else goes to work, I do too, except my work is play.

Really, I think I'm clinging to the early wake-up time so when the warmer mornings start to hit I can get out for a walk.

This back thing I have affects my sciatic nerve. Strongly.

About the best thing you can do for sciatica is walk.

Only the back thing makes walking on any kind of slope (every very light grades, up or down) difficult.

So if I walk enough, it will alleviate the sciatica.

But if I walk too much, it aggravates the arthritis. See how that works? (grin)

So I guess we'll see.

### **Topic: Reading, Studying, Subscribing**

One person commented in an email that I should be happy for Dean and Kris regarding the resurgence of Pulphouse.

Of course, I am happy for them. I said so in this Journal (<http://harveystanbrough.com/daily-journal/the-journal-monday-36/>) yesterday and in the first comment on Dean's post.

The person also said I should subscribe to Pulphouse and read the works of those who are selected to write for the magazine even if they don't open the magazine up for submissions.

Uh, no, for reasons stated previously.

Finally, the person said I can learn a great deal from studying those writings.

Okay, possibly.

Remember, the works that will be showcased in Pulphouse (like the works that are showcased in any publication) are still only there because one reader (the editor, the selector) decided the story is good. Meaning it's ostensibly well written and to that selector's taste.

I'm certainly not saying the stories won't be good. But certainly not all of the stories selected by that one selector will be the same stories I or You or Anyone Else would have selected.

Given the chance, Dean would tell you the same thing.

As for learning to write by reading, I fully agree. That's one reason I touted The Black Lizard Big Book of Pulps. (The link is in "Of Interest" again today, for the final time.)

But there are so many excellent works out there already that I'll never have time to read and study all of them.

So again, IF the magazine were open to submissions and IF I wanted to consider submitting my own work to it, I would subscribe and read/study the stories within it. Albeit more to get a sense of what the editor wants to see than for any other reason.

Yes, Dean is an award-winning writer. Yes, Kris has won more awards than anyone else in history for both writing and editing. And yes, I admire the snot out of both of them for their skill.

If I didn't, I wouldn't have invested a few thousand dollars in their workshops and lectures over the past few years. And it was money well spent in almost every case.

But each of them (selectors) still have opinions and preferences concerning what they like and what they don't like. Just like the editors of every other magazine out there.

So back to the question of submissions.

Would I like them to like my work? Shrug. Sure.

If they didn't, would the world end? Nope. I'd read over the story, slip it into another electronic or paper envelope, and ship it to the next venue (Heinlein's Rule #5: Keep the story on the market until it sells).

After all, any editor who slips it into the rejection pile is still only one reader.

But if my work is automatically rejected by default because a magazine doesn't accept submissions, should I still subscribe?

Sorry. That's just crazy talk. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. Did all the usual early morning ritual things, then headed out to the Hovel around 8:15.

I wrote a little on the novel, then checked email (Author Earnings Report) and Dean's site, then came here and wrote everything above.

9:45, back to the novel.

11, up to the house for a brief break and some tea.

11:20, back to the novel.

A few more shots at the novel, a lot of cycling to add necessary detail (maybe more on the reason for this tomorrow), and a few breaks.

I didn't get a good word count again today, but the novel's moving right along.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Check out Dean's post on Strengths (scroll down past the opening short paragraph). This one might well be worth the time and money: <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/march-online-workshops-starting/>.

The latest Author Earnings Report is out, on "The Top 15 Ebook Stores in 5 Countries" at <http://authorearnings.com/report/february-2017/>.

And repeated from two days ago (for the final time), if you want to learn a TON about writing, please consider buying THE BLACK LIZARD BIG BOOK OF PULPS. You can find it at Amazon, in paper or Kindle, at <https://www.amazon.com/dp/0307280489/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3018**

Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3898

### **Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442

Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531

Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549 words

Total fiction words for the month..... 8549

Total fiction words for the year..... 160415

Total nonfiction words for the month... 3670

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 40260

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 200675

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 3/8](#)**

[March 8, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Not much of a journal up here today. Everything's in the "Today and Writing" and "Of Interest" sections.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a 4. Didn't get out to the Hovel until a little after 8. But at least I'm awake, showered, fed etc. and expecting a good day on the novel.

To the novel around 8:20. Cycling 'til around 9:30, a break, then writing/cycling 'til around 10:20, break to get some more tea.

Even when I'm writing straight through, I'm cycling as I go, probably about every 300-500 words or so. This is a very detailed, very convoluted story. One more testament to "every novel writes differently."

10:50, back to the novel. 11:30, up to the house for a break, a few chores, set out water on the yard.

1 p.m., various crises averted and back to the novel for awhile.

Well, I wrote for about fifteen minutes. Then I checked my email, in which a guy forwarded me an email titled "I'm a useless old white guy."

Of course, that fired me up (grin) so I wrote "Who Am I? Is That the Question?" and sent it back to him.

So a 420 or so word essay that I'm not counting because, you know. I also posted it as a Note on Facebook 'cause I'm nothing if not an open book.

2 p.m., off for a break. Looks like I won't make my word count goal again today, but that's all right. (grin)

2:40, back to the novel. Gonna get off here in about an hour to put a lasagna in the oven.

3:40, went to the house, put in the lasagna, and back to the novel at 3:48.

Well, I'm short again, but with everything that went on here today, I'm happy with it.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's, in case you're interested in the upcoming Strengths workshops, check out Why Is The Strengths Workshop Hard? at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/why-is-the-strengths-workshop-hard/>.

If you're borderline, I also encourage you to check on the few comments at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/march-online-workshops-starting/#comments>.

**Fiction Words: 2882**

Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3212

**Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442  
Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531  
Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549  
Day 4..... 2882 words. Total words to date..... 11431

Total fiction words for the month..... 11431  
Total fiction words for the year..... 163297  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4000  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 40590

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 203887

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 3/9](#)

[March 9, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I should have mostly a full day of writing today. Still having a little trouble actually writing the whole time I'm in the chair. (grin) Just gotta keep working on it.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 and made it out to the Hovel by 7:30. Jumped right back into an unfinished scene from yesterday.

Also wrote a reverse outline for what I've done so far.

Wow. Cycling, and by 10 I had only around 1000 words. Then I took what was supposed to be a short break. But I ended up starting some laundry, then started watering the yard. Finally back to the novel at 11:15.

I can still have this one finished by mid-month if I hit 4,000 words per day for the next 6 days.

Off for a break at 12:45.

Back to the novel at 1:15. By 2 p.m., I had over 3300 words on the day. Amazing how much a goal and some advance knowledge of the numbers I'll need helps. (grin) Off for a break.

2:30, back to the novel.

Good day today. Gotta run my grandson to work in a bit, so done for today.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See “I Have A Publishing Belief System” at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/i-have-a-publishing-belief-system/>.

Also some revealing comments on Dean’s previous post at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/why-is-the-strengths-workshop-hard/#comments>.

Finally, if you’re interested in writing SF, check out <http://diyzone.tips/rhesus-rh-negative-blood-alien.html>.

## Fiction Words: 5117

Nonfiction Words: 230 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5347

## Writing of Novel One (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442  
Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531  
Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549  
Day 4..... 2882 words. Total words to date..... 11431  
Day 5..... 5117 words. Total words to date..... 16548

Total fiction words for the month..... 16548  
Total fiction words for the year..... 168414  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4230  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 40820

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 209234

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## The Journal, Friday, 3/10

[March 10, 2017](#)

Hey Folks,

Well, like the man said, Another day, another two dolla’s an’ fo’ty cent.

I’ve learned a great deal about the craft of writing over the past couple of years.

In that time, I stopped teaching seminars in order to focus more tightly on my own writing.

Also in that time, I've written 22 novels, 2 novellas, and over 160 short stories.

I'm currently working on my 23rd novel, and before this month is out, I hope to have finished my 24th.

Now, I'm thinking about firing up a brand new combination of at least one interactive seminar and at least one two-day workshop.

### ***Some Thoughts***

When I say "seminar" I mean an interactive lecture, a time during which I teach various aspects of the craft of writing and build on questions and comments from those in attendance.

Probably the seminar will be a one-day shot in person. Probably one in Phoenix and one in Tucson (metro areas). Maybe one or two in rural Cochise County (southeast Arizona).

When I say "workshop," I mean a mixture of instruction (from me) and writing (from attendees).

Almost certainly the workshop will be in person at first. Attendees invariably get more out of the immersion among writers that happens in live workshops.

I'm thinking one two-day workshop in Phoenix and one two-day workshop in Tucson. And maybe one two-day workshop in Cochise County. And probably an online workshop afterward.

I'll plan both the seminar and the workshop well in advance so I can get maximum exposure for both. In all likelihood, these will not be repeated.

### ***What I Know Right Now***

These will be on Craft (so not business, not mechanics).

They will suit everyone from beginning to advanced writers.

They will cross genre lines.

They will suit writers of novels, novellas and short fiction.

I haven't set attendance fees yet, but as always, I will keep fees as low as possible to help offset attendees' costs.

If you're in the region, these will definitely be worth your time to drive in, by which I mean you will learn a great deal.

If you're not in the region, these might well be worth the time and expense to drive or fly in.

I will emphasize Heinlein's Rules, excepting Rule 3. (Your writing process is your business.) I won't emphasize my own writing process, though I will mention it and then respond to questions if there are any.

I'll announce complete details here and over in the big blog later.

I invite and welcome comments and questions.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out late at almost 4:30 after a pretty exhausting day yesterday. I capped that off by going to pick up my grandson around 8:30 last night.

I managed to wake up, get all the animals settled in, put together a third cup of coffee and head for the Hovel around 7:30. I stopped at a good place (jagged edge) yesterday. So it should be fairly easy to get back into the novel this morning.

Turns out I still had some admin stuff to do this morning. So after I got to the Hovel, I wrote everything above.

8:45, finally to the novel. Cycling in the first session. Got about 500 words. At 9:50, a break.

10:05, breakfast and iced tea in hand, back to the novel. Took a short break around 11:20, that turned into a longer break.

12:15, back to the novel after rearranging my office a bit to keep the dog out of the cat bowl. Sigh. Both girls have to take medicine, and with him eating their food I don't know what they're getting or what he's getting. If he keeps it up, he's gonna wind up in a chihuahua burrito.

Took the grandson to work at 3:30, then back here to finish up. A little short today, but no biggie.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Well, it's here. See "Strengths Workshop Starting Up!" at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/strengths-workshop-starting-up/>. Yes, I'm signed up. I suspect this will be the most valuable workshop I've ever taken.

If you already know you're interested, you can find the details on the Regular Craft workshop at <http://wmg-publishing-workshops-and-lectures.teachable.com/p/strength-workshop-regular-craft>. (The link Dean included in the post is flawed.)

## **Fiction Words: 3985**

Nonfiction Words: 710 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4695

## **Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442

Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531

Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549

Day 4..... 2882 words. Total words to date..... 11431

Day 5..... 5117 words. Total words to date..... 16548

Day 6..... 3985 words. Total words to date..... 20,533

Total fiction words for the month..... 20533

Total fiction words for the year..... 172399

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4940

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 41530

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 213929

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Announcements](#), [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Seminars](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Workshops](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 3/11**

[March 11, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Wow, announcement remorse, eh?

Yesterday I announced I plan to do a seminar and a workshop in the Phoenix and Tucson metro areas and in Cochise County Arizona.

I believe I was thinking out loud. When I read the announcement myself in the post, I finally got a clue.

If I do that, it will be in the future. Far enough in the future so I can set up a large venue and Fill It. Like a year from now.

Barring that, it isn't really worth the time it would take me to write, compile and plan such an undertaking.

So all of that's on hold for now.

In my spare time, I probably will develop the skeleton of the seminar and workshop for fun.

I probably will even flesh those out. At a minimum, I'll end up with a nonfiction book or two out of it.

In the meantime, IF it still feels like a good idea, I'll work behind the scenes with local and regional contacts to set date(s), explore venues, etc.

If/when all of that comes to pass, I'll announce it here and in the big blog.

And my apology. That's what I should have done in the first place.

I really want to get back into teaching what I know and helping writers who value my input.

But I don't want to secure a venue that holds up to 500 people and then have maybe 8 show up. (grin)

In the meantime, I have another, less-aggressive and more-personal idea in mind. More on that when I finalize it.

\* \* \*

Today is the last day of my promo. On Facebook, I offered one free ebook of the reader's choice, no strings attached, during Read an Ebook Week (March 5 – 11).

Zero takers. Zero.

When something's free, of course, that indicates to the reader it's worth nothing. I guess. Now I'm thinking of increasing the prices on all my novels to trad pub prices. Maybe even a little higher than trad pub prices. (grin)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3, albeit after a rough night. Oh well. That's life, amiright? (Yeah, that really ought'a be one word for some characters.)

Got out to the Hovel around 7, remembered some admin stuff (the promo I mentioned above) and updated my note on Facebook. We'll see.

7:30, to the novel. Just cycling, easy like, adding descriptions here and there. I have to run the kid in to work around 9:30 this morning, so I'm not in a rush to get into anything new.

11, Still just cycling. I feel good about this novel and certain I'll finish it by the 15th. Today I'm just playing, reading it, allowing myself to touch it as my subconscious mind adds what I omitted earlier.

Light day today. Just cycling, I added over 1400 words. It's Saturday, so I'm gonna spend some time with the babies' mama.

Tomorrow I'll finish cycling at least, then play the rest of the day by ear, either off or writing new chapters.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

"More Information and Some Questions on Strengths" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/more-information-and-some-questions-on-strengths/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1434**

Nonfiction Words: 520 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1954

### **Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442  
Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531  
Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549  
Day 4..... 2882 words. Total words to date..... 11431  
Day 5..... 5117 words. Total words to date..... 16548  
Day 6..... 3985 words. Total words to date..... 20533  
Day 7..... 1434 words. Total words to date..... 21967

Total fiction words for the month..... 21967  
Total fiction words for the year..... 173833  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5460  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 42050

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 215883

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 3/12](#)**

[March 12, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I talk a lot in this Journal about Dean Wesley Smith and his lectures and workshops.

One reason for that is that he (along with his wife, Kristine Kathryn Rusch) is a long-term fiction writer who has made his living with his writing for about four decades.

Lest you think they write only SF, they don't. Both of them write across all genres.

And unlike most writers in their position, they (and especially Dean) share what they know. I'm not aware of any other successful long-term fiction writers who do that. Not by half.

Yesterday, in an exchange with him, I learned a great deal more about who Dean is as a person. The "type" of person he is. And I was impressed pretty much beyond words. That is not a usual situation for me.

I won't elaborate because it was a personal exchange, but let me say this unequivocally:

Dean's lectures and workshops are WELL worth the money and time you spend on them. He honestly wants to help, and he will do all he can in that endeavor.

If you're serious about the craft of writing, his workshops truly are an investment in your future.

Especially if you prefer doing business with people who always give their best and are honest to a fault.

If you want to advance in the craft or business of writing, consider investing in some of his training.

You can find his site at <http://deanwesleymith.com>.

While you're there, I encourage you to click his Online Workshops tab and sign up for a workshop that specifically addresses a weakness in your own writing. Seriously.

The regular 6-week workshops are \$300 and worth every penny. That's \$50 a week for professional instruction.

Many of them now are "classic" workshops (so 1/2 price at only \$150), meaning you don't get personal feedback but you can return to them at any time in the future.

I also recommend you visit Kristine Kathryn Rusch's site at <http://kriswrites.com>. Hover your mouse over the Business Resources tab and check out the stuff below it. Amazing.

Especially Business Musings and the Discoverability Series. But they're all informative, depending on what you need.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2 this morning! Woohoo! As usual, I'll use the early hours to wake up and for admin stuff.

At 6 (first light) I headed for the Hovel. A little bit of admin stuff, then to the novel by 6:30.

I cycled through more of the novel until around 8:30. Then to the grocery with my wife.

At 10 back to the novel.

Well, this will be a full day, but a very fragmented one.

I cycled from 6:30 to 8:30, then worked on the novel only sporadically from 10 until 3. Took a few short breaks and a few longer ones.

One of the longer ones was to acquaint my grandson with the working end of a shovel. He wants to plant tomatoes. He didn't think about the prep. Now he knows.

And while Grandma was supervising (I was writing), she flirted with heat exhaustion. That was the other long break.

Got her a wet cloth and some water while I was mixing up a batch of Gatorade. Dumped the trash (she had added to it in a most unladylike fashion) and back to the novel.

This novel probably will end tomorrow. I didn't expect it to end this soon. I was hoping for 35,000 to 40,000 words for both novels this month, but I think this first one's going to come in at around 26,000 to 30,000.

That's fine. In my own Fiction Lengths chart, a short novel runs from 25,000 to 40,000 words.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, "Strength: Regular Business Now Available." See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/strength-regular-business-now-available/>.

## **Fiction Words: 2610**

Nonfiction Words: 590 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3200

## **Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442  
Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531  
Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549  
Day 4..... 2882 words. Total words to date..... 11431  
Day 5..... 5117 words. Total words to date..... 16548  
Day 6..... 3985 words. Total words to date..... 20533

Day 7..... 1434 words. Total words to date..... 21967  
Day 8..... 2610 words. Total words to date..... 24577

Total fiction words for the month..... 24577  
Total fiction words for the year..... 176443  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6050  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 42640

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 219083

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 3/13**

[March 13, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, both yesterday and this morning I thought I'd finish this short novel today. Ain't gonna happen. It'll wrap tomorrow, though, no problem.

This is kind of a "pulp detective" novel. A lot of tension, a lot of detail. So a lot of cycling. Thank goodness for computers, eh?

The old pulp guys wrote on typewriters and they were paid by the word. So they learned their craft.

They didn't have cycling, and they didn't do "drafts."

They wrote straight through, shipped it off, and got a check. Otherwise they couldn't make a living. And some of them (on typewriters!) made a very good living at 1 cent per word.

Anyway, I wanted to practice a couple of techniques, and this story lent itself perfectly to those techniques.

I'm very happy with this one, both as a writer and a reader, both from a learning standpoint and from a productivity standpoint.

Can't ask for much more than that.

But I'll be happier when this one is finished so I can start the next one.

When I started this challenge, I hoped to wrap this one by the 15th (so 11 writing days since I started on the 5th) so I'd have two calendar weeks to get the next one finished.

Now I'm annoyed this one took 10 days (counting tomorrow). And that was with several slack days of writing. Go figure.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 this morning. Spent the first few hours doing the usual. Unfortunately, I was also dragged into some family drama. Ptah.

NOT unfortunately, at least it was several hundred miles away so I don't have to deal with it minute by minute. You know.

Finally to the novel at about 8. Cycling first, then new stuff.

By 11 I'd had two good "new" sessions and a couple of breaks. All told just over 2300 words on the day.

Now (a little after 11) Heading for town to help my grandson open a bank account, then to drop off his direct deposit form, then (I hope) back here to finish the novel.

Finally got back around 2. Fixed a couple sandwiches for lunch, then back out here to work. Kind of a messed up day.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

For a nice article on conflict and being sure the focus is on how the conflict affects the main character, see <http://thefederalist.com/2017/03/13/marvel-villains-need-learn-logans-wolverine/>.

Especially see "What 'Logan' Can Teach the Marvel Universe" and below that, "A Human Narrative We Can All Relate To." Excellent stuff.

## **Fiction Words: 2766**

Nonfiction Words: 420 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3186

## **Writing of Novel One** (tentative title, natch)

Day 1.....	3442 words.	Total words to date.....	3442
Day 2.....	2089 words.	Total words to date.....	5531
Day 3.....	3018 words.	Total words to date.....	8549
Day 4.....	2882 words.	Total words to date.....	11431
Day 5.....	5117 words.	Total words to date.....	16548
Day 6.....	3985 words.	Total words to date.....	20533
Day 7.....	1434 words.	Total words to date.....	21967

Day 8..... 2610 words. Total words to date..... 24577  
Day 9..... 2766 words. Total words to date..... 27343

Total fiction words for the month..... 27343  
Total fiction words for the year..... 179209  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6470  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 43060

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 222269

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 3/14**

[March 14, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I apologize for the extremely short post today. Finished the novel with a LOT of cycling, a shuffling of chapters, a short story derivation and one hell of an ending. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. To the Hovel around 9. Mostly cycling and shuffling today, along with two good sessions.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, "The Magic Bakery and a Disappearing Bundle" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-and-a-disappearing-bundle/>.

If you're interested in copyright, but you're not ready yet to invest in The Copyright Handbook, you can get a lot of information at <https://www.copyright.gov/title17/>.

Fiction Words: 2909  
Nonfiction Words: 100 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 3009

### **Writing of Without A Clue (short novel)**

Day 1..... 3442 words. Total words to date..... 3442  
Day 2..... 2089 words. Total words to date..... 5531

Day 3..... 3018 words. Total words to date..... 8549  
Day 4..... 2882 words. Total words to date..... 11431  
Day 5..... 5117 words. Total words to date..... 16548  
Day 6..... 3985 words. Total words to date..... 20533  
Day 7..... 1434 words. Total words to date..... 21967  
Day 8..... 2610 words. Total words to date..... 24577  
Day 9..... 2766 words. Total words to date..... 27343  
Day 10... 2909 words. Total words to date..... 30252 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 30252  
Total fiction words for the year..... 182118  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6570  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 43160

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 225278

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 3/15](#)**

[March 15, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Get a free ebook containing five mystery stories from Dean Wesley Smith at <http://dl.bookfunnel.com/316tz5t3km>. Then go to his website and sign up for his newsletter (right sidebar).

It's supposed to be a freebie for signing up. (grin) But I doubt he'd mind me sharing this link.

Well, I'd like to start a new novel today. We'll see.

I'll ease my way into it, though. Partly because at the moment I have no clue what the story will be about—nothing about the characters, situation, etc.—and partly because I have a lot of non-writing things to catch up on. Chores and so forth.

I'm also preparing a few Topics for you guys for coming days. And then I also really need to get some covers done and get some of the stories I've finished published to D2D and Amazon and available to BundleRabbit.

So I have a sneaking suspicion I'll do "life" stuff this morning and start the new novel this afternoon. If then. Again, we'll see.

**Topic: Rambling, With Gems (I Hope)**

When I finished the first half of the challenge yesterday with one and one-half days more than half of the month left, I was almost giddy with excitement.

Not because I finished, but because finishing meant I'd get to launch into a new story. So the excitement of a new project.

I've worked for a long time at getting to the point where I was glad to finish not for the sake of finishing but for the sake of starting the next story.

I've been there for the past several novels, but now that feeling is firmly entrenched. In fact, it's so firmly entrenched that I have bothered (yet) designing covers for my previous two or three novels and publishing them. And it's actually wonderful.

The writing, the being entertained by my characters, is more important than anything else. When you get there (if you haven't) it's a very comforting feeling.

But yeah, I still need to get them out there. Maybe they'll entertain others too. They can't do that from inside my computer.

As an added bonus, finishing the first part of this challenge yesterday means I have a lot more time to write the next one and still successfully complete the challenge.

Whereas I gave myself only 10 days to write the first novel — I started it on the 5th and hoped to finish by mid-month — I have up to 17 days to finish the second one.

So the question now becomes How to proceed?

It would be almost easy to continue in a new story with a few of the main characters from Without A Clue, but I don't want to do that.

And already two of the minor players in Without A Clue are tugging on my sleeve for their own spinoff. But I don't want to do that either.

I mean, I want to do both of those, but not right now. Not as part of this challenge. Too easy. I'd feel like I was cheating.

I want this next story to be separate of the first. Even in a different genre. Knowing me, it'll probably be psychological and/or sociological SF. Or it might be western.

Go figure. The two worst-selling genres. (grin)

Or it might be something similar in genre to what I just wrote, but with wholly new characters and situations.

I'm not wanting to write a completely different character/situation/genre story just to make it more interesting or (to me) more difficult and therefore intriguing.

I'm doing it because even as I'm turning out the next work, I want to practice a new technique. Or rather, practice an old technique in which I don't feel particularly proficient at the moment.

Or maybe practice an old technique in which I feel proficient, but practice it in a different genre.

Many techniques cross genre lines, but there are still genre differences in how they're presented.

Because along with the sheer joy of writing (and being entertained by) a new story, isn't learning and improving part of the joy too?

Next month I plan to do the same thing. Write two novels, each around 35,000 to 50,000 words, but in different genres.

If I get into writing a series in one genre (say, detective mystery), with the same major "team" characters but different situations, I might even try three novels per month. (grin)

\* \* \*

You all know how gung-ho I am about Dean Wesley Smith's workshops and lectures.

But — with one reservation — I can not in good conscience recommend the Regular (Basic) Craft Strengths Workshop.

If you have maybe a handful of short stories out and maybe a couple of novels, this workshop might be of some use to you. In fact, in that case, I'm certain it would be of use to you.

But you probably would benefit a great deal more from spending your money and time on some of the other workshops and lectures Dean offers on his website. And I do strongly recommend many of those.

In fact, in upcoming topics, I'll discuss those I recommend and why. Stay tuned.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. Not really a lot to put into this section today.

As I write this, it's almost 1:30.

Over the past several hours, I've written three or four topics for this Journal, done four loads of laundry, and watched and listened to every video of the Regular Craft Strengths workshop.

Then I wrote the stuff above this.

I was also a bit stymied (did that to myself). I had excerpted part of the novel I just finished to use as a short story.

But as I looked it over, I decided not to use it in that way. To turn it into a good short story I would have had to add too much that I didn't want to add.

So today will be a nonwriting day.

I did pick up some more knowledge today re writing, mostly from reading for pleasure. I'll be doing some topics on some of what I've learned recently in upcoming editions of this Journal too.

Now I'm going to post this (it's almost 2) then design covers for two or three novels and get them out there.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Dean's "Curriculum for a Career," in which he explains more about his Strengths workshop, is at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/curriculum-for-a-career/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 990 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 990

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 30252

Total fiction words for the year..... 182118

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7560

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 44150

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 226268

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Learning](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 3/16](#)**

[March 16, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Today will be a writing day. Not sure what yet, but a writing day. And then I'll run the grandchild to work around 3:30.

Every now and then, someone emails to ask what I think of one or another of DWS' online workshops. As in, would I recommend it.

First, I pretty generally ALWAYS recommend learning from someone who's been-there-done-that.

Especially if they've done it for a long time. Successfully. Because Duh.

Of course, I can't guarantee any workshop will be right for you at your current level and with your current attitude. (I don't even know what those things are for most of you.)

For that reason, when I'm asked privately to recommend (or not) a workshop or lecture, I'm usually pretty vague.

So with that disclaimer in mind, here are the workshops I've taken or would like to take.

Any workshops that don't appear on this list simply don't appeal to me personally. That doesn't mean they wouldn't be of value to you.

### **Topic: Recommended DWS Online Workshops**

You can find full descriptions of all of these at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/online-workshops/>.

The stars (indicated by asterisks) refer to the workshops' personal value to me. As they say in the advertising world, your results may vary. (grin)

#### ***First, the only free six-week workshop***

\*\*\*\*\*Originality — I haven't been through all of this one yet, but what I've already seen is filled with craft tips and tricks that reach across genres. Well worth the price (Did I say it's free?) and more than worth the time to watch and listen. It will also give you an excellent introduction to Dean and how he conducts workshops. The first video is here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIMM9n5veWw>. Write me for the rest of the URLs.

#### ***Second, the Classic Workshops***

These used to be full-priced six-week workshops. Now they cost only \$150, and you still get everything. You can still do the assignments for yourself as exercises. Plus you can go through them at your own pace and return to the videos whenever you like for the rest of your life.

\*\*\*\*\*Productivity — If you feel you just don't have time to write (but you want to), I recommend this. I gleaned several other valuable but off-topic gems from this one, but it's nothing short of amazing for helping you find more time. And set priorities. If you need this (I did at the time) it is well worth the money. I paid full price (\$300) for this one and haven't regretted it for a moment. You can get it for \$150.

\*\*\*\*\*Science Fiction — This workshop is chock full of craft tips and tricks, and not only on SF. Unless you think you already know everything there is to know about the craft of writing (and if you do, you're wrong), this would be an excellent investment. I also paid full price for this one and have no regrets. Again, you can get it for \$150.

\*\*\*\*Writing in Series — Another excellent workshop, especially at the reduced price of \$150. I'm not effusing when I say this is excellent. Treat yourself.

\*\*\*Genre Structure — This one isn't so much about the actual structure of genres as how to classify your story after you've written it. He does get into the various touchstones that are important to readers in each genre though. Worthwhile at the reduced rate.

Making A Living With Your Writing — I haven't taken this one, and I won't. But if you're below the age of around 40 and in good health, I recommend it based on the value I've found in his other workshops. This one is also only \$150.

### ***Third, the higher priced (\$300) regular workshops***

In these you have the opportunity to do the assignments, send them to Dean and get feedback. Most often, I found the feedback lacking, but the assignments are still very valuable as exercises.

\*\*\*\*\*Idea to Story — Absolutely invaluable. Amazing information on what an idea actually is, the difference between short and longer fiction, where to get ideas, how to write openings (and their value) and a great deal more. Naturally, this spans all genres.

\*\*\*\*\*Teams in Fiction — Excellent. He begins with a concept invented by Lester Dent (of the Master Plot Formula) and builds on it using works of other authors, including many popular television series. If you don't understand how to build teams in fiction and the importance of doing so, you need this. He also delves into the importance of teams in various genres.

\*\*\*\*Depth in Writing (AKA Writing with Depth) — I found the analogy he uses in this less than really helpful but I know it appealed to others in my class. The gems he shares here though, especially on how to get depth in openings and pull the reader into the story, makes this a valuable workshop.

The Business of Writing — I haven't taken this one and I won't because of my personal situation. But again, if you expect to be around for a career and you'd really like to turn a good profit from your writing, I recommend you take a hard look at this one.

### ***Finally, there are still a few I'd like to take (so I recommend) but haven't yet:***

Writing Mysteries — I've written a few mysteries, including my most recent effort. But I'd still like to take this workshop. I don't "know" the genre yet.

Pacing Your Story — I think I'm pretty good at this, but I'm also aware there are techniques I don't know, and therefore don't know to practice.

Adding Suspense to Your Writing — Maybe. I'm pretty good at this one. Still, it's on the edge of my radar.

How to Write Thrillers — I won't take this one, but I keep wanting to. Dean actually told me in a private correspondence that I probably wouldn't get much from it that I don't already know. Still....

Cliffhangers — Ditto what I wrote for the last three entries.

And last but not least, both Dean and Chris write amazing characters that drag the reader into the story. If yours don't, consider taking their Character workshops.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4 again. I don't think it's becoming a habit, but maybe.

Over my first mugga coffee, I finally answered a long email from an old friend. Even got a topic out of it. You'll see it in a few days. I also already wrote the topic and posted it over at the main site. It'll pop up there around the end of November.

In fact, I might've gotten two or three topics out of it. We'll see.

Over my second mugga I ate breakfast, then headed out to the Hovel at around 9.

I cast about for awhile for something to do. Around 10 I opened my first reader's notes on a novel I wrote awhile back called *The Claim*. I haven't published it yet.

Today, for some reason, the "fix" for what he found in those notes came to me. I opened the document, added a Prologue, then added a few paragraphs to the Epilogue, and it's finished. That took 795 words and about 40 minutes.

Then I decided there's no time like the present to publish it. I put it up to Amazon, D2D and BundleRabbit. I'm a little nervous about not shipping it to Smashwords, but as with all things, we'll see. (grin)

11:20 with all of that done, I'm taking a break.

11:30, back to the Hovel and looking for something to play with.

12, a line popped into my head. "The stubby, orange brush squeezing in on both side of the path stunk like roses dipped in sulfur." I wrote and opening, then out to 1416 words. Then it stopped running, so I'll set it aside. Sometime later I'll probably jump off that sentence again and see where it goes.

1:40, a break.

2:05, back to the Hovel.

Around 2:20 I hit on another line: “It was just before 2 a.m. when John McReedy and I turned into the alley between Madison and Perth.” I think this one’s gonna run all right, so we’ll see.

Shutting down to file this at 3:15. Have to take the grandson to work in a bit.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See “The Normal Nature of Being Behind in This New World” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-normal-nature-of-being-behind-in-this-new-world/>.

Oh and just for fun, check out Half the Fun of Being a Parent Is Trolling Your Children (<http://thefederalist.com/2017/03/16/half-fun-parent-trolling-children/>).

**Fiction Words: 3187** (793, The Claim) (1416, The March)

Nonfiction Words: 1410 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4597

### **Writing of Novel Two**

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439

Total fiction words for the year..... 185305

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8970

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 45560

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 230865

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 3/17**

[March 17, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

This morning, after spending about ten minutes with email and Facebook, I dived right into Smashwords. Time for some admin work and hard choices.

That led to the topic below. I'll be back tomorrow with another set of recommendations re DWS' lectures (as opposed to his workshops).

### **Topic: Why I'm No Longer Using Smashwords for My Novels and Short Stories**

This is kind of a personal author earnings report. I'll still use Smashwords for my nonfiction. Some. But only in the Smashwords store.

Oddly enough, my nonfiction sells far better than my fiction.

I find that truly weird. Think about it. People are willing to buy advice on writing from me without verifying for themselves whether I know the first thing about actually doing it. No wonder there are so many scammers out there. Check your sources, folks.

Anyway, there's an old saying that goes something like this: Change occurs when fear of the status quo becomes greater than the fear of change.

Here's the rundown on the three main distributors:

*First, Smashwords (<https://www.smashwords.com/>). Not recommended.*

Smashwords distributes to a boatload of venues. Fifteen venues, to be exact. Sixteen if you include the Smashwords store itself. That's what always attracted me to it.

Those venues include Apple, Barnes & Noble, Kobo, Inktera (formerly Page Foundry), Baker & Taylor Blio, Txtr, Library Direct, Baker-Taylor Axis360, OverDrive, Scribd, cloudLibrary, Gardners Extended Retail, Yuzu, Tolino, Odilo, and Gardners Library.

All those venues is one wonderful feature of Smashwords.

But I'm an old sales guy. There's a difference between a feature and a benefit.

That feature doesn't become a benefit unless people are actually buying my books through those venues.

Also, the clunky interface at Smashwords takes a lot of time (comparatively, to me) and that's always been annoying.

So I decided to do a kind of "return on investment" study this morning (with the investment being the time it takes to use the Smashwords interface) for 2011 – 2017. (Because it's early in 2017, this is almost exactly six years.)

To date, all of my sales — that's ALL of my sales — through Smashwords have come either through the Smashwords store or via Apple, B&N, Kobo and Scribd, with the exception of Oyster, whom Smashwords dropped in late 2014.

So most of my non-Amazon sales have come through the major players (Apple, B&N, Kobo and Scribd). Keep that in mind. And we'll move on to

***Pronoun (<https://pronoun.com>). Not recommended.***

Pronoun distributes to Amazon, Apple, B&N, and Kobo, plus GooglePlay. So all of the major players except Scribd.

I still haven't dealt directly with Pronoun. I have tried. What appeals to me about them is that they distribute to Amazon.

But frankly, for me, the benefit of allowing them to distribute my work to Amazon (so I won't have to) and the "appeal" of GooglePlay hasn't yet outweighed the PITA of dealing with Amazon on my own.

Nor does it outweigh the annoyance of putting up with Pronoun's condescending interface and the effort I would have to expend to learn that interface thoroughly. I mean, even Smashwords doesn't get condescending except around NaNoWriMo, and I kind'a understand that.

And that leads us to

***Draft2Digital (<http://draft2digital.com>). Very highly recommended.***

D2D distributes to Apple, B&N, and Kobo, plus PageFoundry (Inkterra), Tolino, Scribd and 24Symbols. So all the major players except Amazon. (Again, I distribute to Amazon myself.)

With their easy-to-use interface, I can publish any work there in two or three minutes.

This vs. ten to fifteen minutes per book at Smashwords, including time to add an ISBN (required for inclusion in the premium catalogue, which means distribution) and make selections on the Channel Manager.

D2D even generates an interactive TOC (table of contents), no matter how the chapters or sections are titled and with minimal formatting on my part.

Unless all your chapters are in Arabic numerals only (1, 2, 3, etc., no "Chapter" no "One, Two, etc., no prologue or epilogue), Smashwords requires you to send them a Word file with an interactive TOC already formatted. Another hour or two of the day gone.

D2D also takes ZERO fees from the net royalty. Whatever the venue pays goes directly into my bank account. (Smashwords takes a percentage.)

And at D2D, my books are distributed to all the same major players.

Yeah, that's a really difficult decision to make.

If I continue to use Smashwords at all, it will be only for my major works (novels, collections, nonfiction) and I'll offer them only through the Smashwords store.

That means I won't have to jump through several hoops (and spend more time) to get them listed in the "premium" catalogue so they'll be distributed to outside retailers. Nor will I have to mess with the hyper-clunky Channel Manager.

Ahh, I feel better already. Any questions about this topic, feel free to email me.

Just in case Mark Coker (founder and CEO of Smashwords) sees this, seriously, upgrade your site, Mark. Players gotta compete, and extra venues that don't sell my books just don't matter to me.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Got right to work on the admin stuff above, and then wrote everything above this.

Now, a little after 7, a break for breakfast.

7:40, to the Hovel, did a little more admin.

Ah some family stuff came up. I have to visit with my grandson for awhile this morning. I'll write today if I can.

No fiction on the day. Hey, days happen. Maybe tomorrow. See you then.

### **Of Interest**

See "Freedom in This New Publishing World" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/freedom-in-this-new-publishing-world/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 850 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 850

### **Writing of Novel Two**

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439  
Total fiction words for the year..... 185305  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9820  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 46410

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 231715

Categories [Daily Journal](#)Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Mark Coker](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Publishing](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 3/18](#)

[March 18, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

My youngest son came in last night about 6 p.m. to stay for a few days. Writing takes a back seat. I'll get to it when I do.

\* \* \*

Well, I'm putting off the Dean's Lectures topic for one more day. I'll post it here tomorrow.

For today, a continuation of yesterday's topic, in which I did a comparison of the three major distributors of ebooks. In that one, mostly I was just saying the easier route to distribute to the major booksellers was the route I was taking (D2D).

I also said getting my books to the several smaller booksellers in Smashwords' distribution wasn't as important to me as avoiding Smashwords' annoying, clunky interface.

Today I'll explain the terms "distributor" and "vendor" and give you some additional (and maybe surprising) information.

### **Topic: Distributors vs. Vendors (Booksellers) and Royalty Rates**

First this morning, a correction. (Thanks, Mary Ann.) ALL distributors, including D2D, charge a fee for distributing your book. If you read the sentence on their site that says they take 10%, keep reading into the next sentence. It's actually 15% where it matters.

Also some additional information on yesterday's topic.

How much each vendor pays in royalties varies not only from vendor to vendor but from country to country.

For just one example, if you receive a 70% royalty from Amazon for sales in the US and Canada, you will receive 41% of your book's list price if it's sold by Amazon in the UK, Ireland, Australia, or New Zealand. And so on with the other vendors.

I strongly recommend you visit [http://support.pronoun.com/knowledge\\_base/topics/what-are-pronouns-royalty-rates](http://support.pronoun.com/knowledge_base/topics/what-are-pronouns-royalty-rates) for information. Even if you don't use Pronoun for distribution. (I don't.)

While I'm on the topic of URLs, I also recommend you visit your Smashwords dashboard, then click the Channel Manager and read the text there regarding royalties.

ALSO don't get too confused over this stuff.

A Distributor and a Vendor (bookseller or store) are two different things. So you can't compare Pronoun or D2D (both distributors) with Amazon or Apple (both vendors).

Smashwords is unique in that it is both a distributor and a vendor.

So you can compare Smashwords as a distributor with D2D and Pronoun (what % it takes for distributing your book to other vendors). You can also compare it as a store with Amazon, Apple, B&N et al (what % it takes for selling your book directly to the reader).

Every time you sell a book, the vendor (store) takes a cut. Then the distributor takes a cut.

If you distribute direct to Amazon yourself, obviously there is no distributor cut and you get the full net royalty. Just as is the case if you distribute your book directly to any other vendor.

This is also true with print books. The primary distributor of print books is Ingram.

CreateSpace is essentially a printer, but they're also a distributor (even to Ingram, who further distributes) and a direct-sales vendor, meaning they have their own on-line store from which readers may purchase your books directly.

One more note on CreateSpace: If you aren't checking the box for Extended Distribution (and pricing your book so you earn at least \$2 on each sale — I know, low, isn't it? Something slightly north of 10%) your print book will be distributed in a LOT fewer places.

FYI, the hyper-low royalty rate on print books is the main reason I've gone back to distributing my books as ebooks only. I only create print books so readers can compare the exorbitant price of a print book with the much more attractive ebook price. Same exact content for a lot less money.

But for me personally, the learning curve to format interiors and covers for my books for print distribution isn't worth earning around \$2 per book. I'd rather push readers to buy ebooks.

Distributors exist in part because we (writers) don't want the additional hassle of distributing our own books to all the different vendors. In part they also exist because some vendors won't accept books directly from the writer.

Okay, now I'm done. (grin) You guys can visit those sites that are applicable to you and check the FAQs and other resources there yourselves. I just wanted to get you started.

**Today, and (Not) Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30, coffee, email, etc. and writing all of the above. If I get time today I'll write.

Well, visited away the morning with my son, and I have to pick up my grandson soon from work, so probably won't get any writing done today.

It's weird. I'm jonesing to just sit down and write, yet it's also all right (within myself) that I'm taking the time and not writing.

Another lesson, I suppose.

When I do get back to the novel, I'll read over the opening and the little more I wrote, then see what happens. It'll either run or it won't.

As for the challenge, there's always next month. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Not a lot at Dean's place today, but you can find "Information Overload" with several small topics beneath it at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/information-overload-2/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 860 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 740

## **Writing of Novel Two**

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439  
Total fiction words for the year..... 185305  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10680  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 47270

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 232575

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 3/19**

[March 19, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Probably this will be another non-writing day. We'll see.

Yep, nonwriting day.

### **Topic: Dean's Lectures**

Okay, first, you can see all of Dean's lectures (with complete descriptions) at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/lecture-series/>.

On the surface, lectures are more attractive because they cost less. Of course, you get a great deal more bang for your buck (in most cases) from the online workshops.

So bearing that in mind, here are the lectures I recommend. If I don't list a price beside them, they're \$50. Those with (KKR) are presented by Kristine Kathryn Rusch:

\*\*\*\*\*Heinlein's Rules — 15 vids, \$75 — Yes, even if you've downloaded my free annotated take on Heinlein's Rules, I still recommend this. Worth every penny. For my money, actually, it's worth as much as his classic workshops.

\*\*\*\*\*Master Plot Formula: How and Why It Works Today — This isn't so you'll plot a work before you write. This is to imbed the plot points in your subconscious so you "plot" while you're writing. Excellent.

\*\*\*\*\*How to Think Like a Science Fiction Writer (KKR) — This is absolutely excellent. A lot about focus, on or off Earth. If I remember correctly, this is where she first mentions her "five senses exercise."

\*\*\*\*\*How to Write a Page Turning Novel or Story: Basics and Tricks — Some great tips in this one.

\*\*\*\*\*Endings: How to Write Them and Understand What Makes a Good Ending — This greatly enhanced my understanding.

\*\*\*\*\*Paying the Price: A Working Writer's Mindset — Again, invaluable. And he isn't talking about the price you pay in money. A lot here about setting priorities.

\*\*\*\*\*Short Stories to Novels — Not to sound like a broken record, but another excellent lecture. A lot of "how-to" and a lot of "should or should not."

\*\*\*\*\*Your Writing as an Investment — Almost every writer I know desperately needs this. I know I did.

### ***Buy Dean's Book Instead***

The Stages of a Fiction Writer: How to Know Where You Are In Learning and How To Move Upward

Writing into the Dark: The Tricks and Methods of Writing Without an Outline

### ***What Might Be Good***

How to Research for Fiction Writers (KKR) — 14 vids, \$75 — I haven't taken this one, but I'm betting it's well worth the money. Kris speaks quietly, so turn up the volume.

How to Write a Short Story: The Basics (KKR) — If you don't write shorts but want to, I can't think of a better place to learn. Seriously.

*If you design or want to design your own book covers*, the publisher Allyson Longueira also offers lectures on basic cover design.

And thus ends my recommendations re Dean's stuff.

Any questions or if you want elaboration on anything above, email me.

### **Today, and (Not) Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. Nothing to report today, except a trip to retrieve my boys (son and grandson) from about an hour away. Blowout on my Tacoma, which they used to go over Middlemarch Pass, and the spare was low. Spare inflated, installed, back home. A minor adventure, and all is well.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Some great comments and resources at Dean's "Freedom in This New Publishing World." See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/freedom-in-this-new-publishing-world/>.

Then see his "Back to Writing" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/back-to-writing-2/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 530

### **Writing of Novel Two**

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439  
Total fiction words for the year..... 185305  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11210  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 47800

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 233105

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 3/20**

[March 20, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

In keeping with my usual bent toward recommending excellent resources, I've found a new interior layout and cover design print source.

Both the price and quality are excellent. That's a hard combo to beat.

A couple days ago, someone on DWS's site recommended Cover to Upload as a good place to have covers designed. Dean agreed.

This morning I checked out the site personally and have already emailed them with a few questions about my own work. As I learn more, I'll keep you posted.

I had settled with the thought that I would publish my work only as ebooks from now on. This discovery turns that decision on its head.

I encourage you to check out Cover to Upload. The URL is <http://covertoupload.com>. Or you can always find it on my site in the left sidebar under Writers' Resources.

\* \* \*

Probably another nonwriting day today. Weshul see.

Actually, I had some free time to write this afternoon, but I decided to devote the time to reading instead. Well, and to writing this, as it turns out.

I have a sneaking suspicion that partly this extended delay is my way to sabotage or disrupt my own challenge, thereby making it more difficult.

Seems like in my life I've always performed better when I had an adversary. And enjoyed it more.

Or maybe I'm trying to set it aside completely and set myself up for another challenge. I honestly don't know. After all, in the second novel, I've written only a long opening. And I can keep Heinlein's Rule 2 (You must finish what you write) later. (grin)

Anyway, it'll be what it's gonna be. No worries.

## **Topic: A Ruminaton on Writing, Myself, and Other Writers**

I recently bought The Bachman Books by Stephen King (part of what I'm reading both for pleasure and to Learn).

It arrived today, and I was a little disappointed.

When I bought The Bachman Books I was expecting all of them. I'm intrigued by Early Stephen King. But I'll find all of them eventually.

Along with two other novels, The Bachman Books include The Running Man. Something he wrote in his introduction to The Bachman Books spurred this topic.

According to King's overall introduction, he wrote The Running Man in 72 hours "and it was published with very few changes."

And "[a]ccording to King's 2002 memoir On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft, he wrote The Running Man within a single week" (Wikipedia).

Either way, helluva job.

So I did the math.

With The Running Man coming home at just over 69,700 words, he would have to write 968 words per hour straight through for 72 hours. That's 23,234 words per day. Or roughly 2000 words per hour for 12 hours for three days.

To write it in a 7-day week, he would still have to write just under 10,000 (9957) words per day. That sounds more realistic to me.

But it doesn't matter. The point is, when he was in the chair, he was W-R-I-T-I-N-G.

My silly little challenge of writing two novels in a month kind'a pales in comparison, doesn't it? (grin) And people call me prolific. Tsk tsk.

Of course, Bachman (King) was young. He was a freshman in college and, according to him, The Running Man was "a book written by a young man who was angry, energetic, and infatuated with the art and the craft of writing."

Well, two out of three aren't bad. I'm not young, but I'm infatuated with the art and craft of writing.

And I'm angry, in a way. Mostly at myself.

I want desperately to increase my productivity. By which I mean my time in the chair. And my production while in the chair (actually writing).

And of course, that's entirely up to me, even with life rolls, etc. Factors external to ourselves influence us only as much as we allow them to. Priorities, folks. Priorities.

I'm also a little frustrated at, if not angry with, writers who Don't want that for themselves. How can any writer not want to be more prolific?

For the record, I'm not including those for whom the primary purpose of writing is to put on public display how much they "suffer for their art" or some such nonsense.

I don't do suffering. There's enough of that around without looking for it. If writing were some kind of laborious agony, I'd drop it and find something fun to do.

I literally would give anything to have hit upon Heinlein's Rules and Writing Into the Dark when I was 20, or 30, or 40, or 50. Yes, anything.

But of course, as we are reminded every day, It Is What It Is. So only one question remains:

Do I want it badly enough to actually do it?

Gawd I hope so.

Stay tuned.

### **Today, and (Not) Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 again, and did next to nothing all day but relax, chat with my son and grandson, etc. Nothing bad. It was fun. And fun is the key.

Back (writing) tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you want to learn to format your own book interiors for CreateSpace, check <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7FzvtxK686c>. (I haven't checked this out yet, and after what I passed along at the beginning of this Journal entry, I probably won't.)

At Dean's, he announces the Strength Regular Sales Workshop at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/strength-regular-sales-workshop-now-available/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 850 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 850

### **Writing of Novel Two**

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439  
Total fiction words for the year..... 185305  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12060  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 48650

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 233955

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [Stephen King](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 3/21**

[March 21, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Long post today. Get a beverage and gird your loins and stuff.

Several major gems in Dean's post today (see "Of Interest" below).

For me, chief among them was the reminder that you can't change the past and you can't foresee what might happen in the future.

So right there: don't worry about it, and don't worry about it. Don't look back, move forward.

Also some excellent advice on structuring a goal and on structuring your goal-setting.

And a big reminder for me that revisiting earlier topics in light of new circumstances and with new eyes sometimes adds value for writers who follow his posts. And maybe my posts.

\* \* \*

### ***Update on Covers to Upload***

Because I create my own ebook covers and because I like the print covers to mimic them, I sent Kat, the lady who runs Covers to Upload, a list of requirements yesterday.

Those requirements were fairly stringent as I want the interiors of my paper books to look a certain way and be uniform. So margins, gutters, font face and size, etc.

I also sent along the first book I'd like her to put into paper for me. I'll report back here with a detailed accounting of how that goes.

As I wrote in an email to a writer friend this morning, I like to support folks who 1) Do Excellent Work 2) At A Great Price. They're few and far between.

Consider, I'd already decided (about 13 novels, 4 short story collections, and 2 nonfiction books ago) to publish only to ebooks.

Covers to Upload's beautiful covers and apparent attention to detail combined with her very reasonable prices changed my mind.

Don't get me wrong. A hundred bucks is a lot of money to me. But not when I think of it as an investment in my business (writing) against a lifetime plus seventy-five years of sales.

By the way, of those 13 novels, two are as yet unpublished even as ebooks. One is still untitled. (grin) Guess I need to catch up.

But first, back to more writing on the current novel and my challenge. Barring unforeseen circumstances, that will happen for at least a few hours today.

### **Topic: Characters**

In a correspondence, a friend recently gave me the idea for this topic.

Some writers (and probably all of them/us at first) believe they have to "build" or "create" characters. Some folks even go so far as to create a "character sketch" to one degree or another.

The character sketch might be so detailed as to include the character's educational background, childhood experiences, and anything else. It's the story of the characters.

Most often, writers who do this begin with a stick figure and then flesh it out. Those writers "assign" various physical, mental and emotional traits and "knows" the character(s) thoroughly before they begin writing the story.

Most often, these are the same writers who plot every step of a novel before they ever begin writing.

Of course, there are "hybrid" writers who create and use character sketches but also write without an outline when the time comes.

If either of these is how you write, that's perfectly fine. Seriously, whatever works for you.

What follows is only one take — in particular, my take — on the character-creation part of the writing process.

The way I see it, regardless of all the various ways there are to create a story, all writers fall into one of two overall categories:

***The Almighty Writer On High*** — This writer is the god of his fictional world. He dictates (again, to one degree or another) who the characters Are (education, life experiences, etc.), what the characters say and do. In short, this writer is in complete control of his characters.

(This writer also most often dictates plot points, twists and turns, and most often knows what will happen “next” in the story, often all the way to the end, but this topic is about characters.)

***The Recorder*** — This writer has ceded control of the story to the characters.

So yes, he is also in charge at first. After all, how can you “cede” control if it isn’t yours to cede?

But this writer’s control ends where the characters’ control begins. Basically, when the writer puts his fingers on the keyboard.

This writer realizes this is not “his” story but the characters’ story. So he chooses to let the characters tell it.

As a result, the characters go where they want, say and do what they want, and pretty much dare the recorder (the writer) to keep up.

After all, he isn’t part of the characters’ world or their story. He simply happened upon some interesting people, thought Their story would be interesting, and asked permission to come along for awhile so he could record it.

Fortunately, the characters thought that would be fine.

What ensues from that moment forward is the characters’ story without so much as a single heavy fingerprint of the human “writer” on it.

Again, whether you choose to be the Almighty Writer on High or The Recorder is strictly up to you. Either way is fine with me. Whatever works.

But just in case you’ve been the former and are interested in trying on a new role as the latter, here’s one way (my way) to get there.

Back when I first decided to become the interested but non-controlling Recorder, I envisioned myself on a battlefield of sorts, one with trenches.

The trenches are the story, and that’s where the characters are: down in the story.

When I first started writing, I set myself up in a tower, far distant from the battlefield, and observed the action through a powerful telescope.

I watched what happened, could see what was coming, and anticipated what would happen if this character moved here and that character moved there, and they did and said this or that or the other.

And I directed them.

Now get this — because I'm only human, I was unable to think any thoughts that were different than the thoughts any reader might think if he were standing in the tower with me. So the stories "I" told were not only distant, but boring and predictable.

Later, I thought if I got closer to the battlefield I could see the action in greater detail. But I was still directing the characters and events. The stories improved — they weren't as distant and were more detailed — but yeah, they were still ridiculously predictable.

Finally, a couple years ago, for some reason I thought what great fun it might be to get closer still.

I sat down on the edge of a trench and dangled my legs over. Only now I was too close.

I could no longer see an overview. Oh oh.

I could no longer tell what might happen next. And next. And next.

I began to hyperventilate.

The only way to enjoy the tight proximity to the characters AND find out what happened next and next and next was to be in the story itself.

So when a character raced by I yelled, "Hey!"

He stopped and looked back. His brow wrinkled. "Say, you're not from around here, are you?"

I shook my head. "Nope. But you guys are really interesting to me. I wanna come along."

He frowned. "But you're not part of our group."

"Yeah, I know. But I wanna be."

He looked at me for a moment. "Hey, aren't you that guy used to sit up in the tower over there and tell us what to do?"

"Uh, yeah. But see, I—"

He turned away. "Sorry. You can't. We don't care for control freaks."

"But I don't wanna control anything anymore! I just wanna be in the story!"

He turned around again, eyed me. Finally he said, "Well, you can't be in the story. It's out story, got it? You're living your own story out there."

“Tell you what, though, you can come along if you want. You can be our recorder. Just keep up. Take notes on what we say and do. That’s as close as we can let you get.

“You’ll be in the thick of it, only you can’t participate. A’right?”

“Deal!” I said. Then I released my grip on all things Writerly and dropped off into the story.

From then on, I’ve only been out of the trenches between stories.

Now I learn who my characters are as they reveal themselves through their actions and words while running through the story. I describe events as they happen. Sometimes I see things coming, but most of the time I’m as surprised as the characters are.

And that tells me the readers will be surprised too.

Oh, and the plot? For that I harken back to Mr. Bradbury: “Plot is only the footprints the characters leave behind as they run through the story.”

### **Today, and (Not, Again) Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30, outside by 4. To the Hovel around 6.

As I was reading over what I’d already written on Novel Two, another topic occurred to me, so I diverted my attention to write that. You’ll see it in a day or two.

I continued reading over what I’d already written on the novel, allowing myself to touch it along the way.

When I got to the blank space, nothing came. Maybe this one’s dead for the time being.

I feel all right either way. Even if I don’t achieve my most recent goal of writing two novels this month, I’m still current with my older challenge of writing at least one novel per calendar month.

7:30, to the house for a break.

Back to the Hovel around 8:30, but nothing coming today. While at the house I found out my son’s leaving today so I’ll take one more day to visit.

I did some admin stuff, formatting and designing a cover for Without A Clue. Then I published it to Amazon and D2D.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Dean put up a truly great post. See “Being Behind And Setting Goals” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/being-behind-and-setting-goals/>.

Regardless of your political leanings, there’s a pretty good article on writing myths at <http://thefederalist.com/2017/03/21/5-writing-myths-neil-gorsuchs-lively-court-opinions-bust-bits/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1680 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1680

### **Writing of Novel Two** (probably DOA)

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439  
Total fiction words for the year..... 185305  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13740  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 503300

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 235635

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Covers to Upload](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 3/22**

[March 22, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

First, thanks to all my long-time subscribers for hanging in there through the sparse posts as well as the longer ones. I appreciate you and your interest in these silly goings-on. Very much.

Most often, when a post is longer (like today) it contains a topic that I hope you will find useful at least a friendly reminder. That’s kind’a my way of giving back. So thank you.

Also, I’ve recently added a new feature in the right sidebar of the website. Just below the clock you’ll see the Tag Cloud. If you click the Topic tag, all of the posts that contain a topic will pop up.

Should you decide to unsubscribe, you can still visit the site occasionally and use this feature. I hope it will be helpful.

\* \* \*

My son left this morning, headed for Indiana via a visit with his siblings in New Mexico. I sort of hoped to write later in the day, but I didn't.

Before he left, I uploaded six 10-story collections and a novel to BundleRabbit.com. Curators can't find them and include them in bundles if they aren't there. Duh.

If you weren't aware of this excellent marketing tool, check it out at [BundleRabbit.com](http://BundleRabbit.com).

Later in the day, I decided to take an admin day. I was in an admin kind of mood, and I don't like being behind on getting my stuff out there.

So I created yet another cover, this one for the novel The 13-Month Turn (formerly Will Perkins). Then I published it to Amazon and D2D.

Following that, I added four new novels to [HarveyStanbrough.com/novels-novellas/](http://HarveyStanbrough.com/novels-novellas/). I hope you'll swing by and take a look.

Then I moved over to StoneThread Publishing and did the same thing. Only over there I also created a book page for each novel. Each book page includes a larger photo of the cover, the blurb and search terms for the book, plus the universal buy link provided by D2D.

All of that took awhile. (grin) As I write this (almost 3 p.m.) I still have to upload The 13-Month Turn to BundleRabbit, but that takes only about 10 minutes.

Then I'm done for the day. Just in time to make supper for a hungry wife and a voracious grandson. (grin)

So at the moment I'm taking a break by updating and posting this Journal.

### **Topic: On Pacing and Paragraphing**

If you tend naturally to write in paragraphs that are longer than about 4 or 5 lines (lines, not sentences), this topic might interest you a lot.

A few days ago I was reading one of my magic realism stories to my grandson. "The Storyteller" by Gervasio Arrancado.

I wrote this thing several years ago, and it was painfully obvious that I knew n-o-t-h-i-n-g about pacing. Or paragraphing, for that matter.

As I read it aloud to him, I got bored. Massively bored. I know it's a good story, yet I found myself wondering what reader could possibly enjoy wading through this thing.

My pacing sucked. My paragraphing sucked worse. The two go hand in hand.

Now, I thought I knew paragraphing. And I *did* know what I'd learned in every English, English Comp and English Lit class I'd ever taken.

But no, I didn't know paragraphing. And I had not the slightest clue about pacing.

***The bare bones of pacing is this:***

Especially when action is occurring, hit the Return (Enter) key more often.

Shorter paragraphs (smaller blocks of text) are easier and quicker to read and understand. So are shorter sentences and sentence fragments.

And all of those move the action along.

Shorter sentences and sentence fragments also convey a sense of drama and emphasis. If they aren't overused, that's a powerful tool.

Especially if they're used in their own paragraph.

In an action scene, those shorter paragraphs force the reader's eyeballs to catapult across the white space from one paragraph to the next in an attempt to keep up.

So even as the action is racing, the reader is racing right along with it.

But maybe the character moves into a new setting, one where he's going to be for awhile and where action is not immediate.

For example, maybe he's lying in wait for a victim or a perpetrator. Maybe he's sitting with a colleague in a coffee shop discussing an interesting turn of events. Maybe he's visiting family in Hoboken (or wherever).

That goes to pacing too.

In those circumstances, while he's "resting" from the action, you can intentionally slow the reader with more detailed description and longer paragraphs.

So what about description? How much description of the setting is necessary?

Ask your character. He's the one who's actually in the story.

Consider, what does the character notice if he's panicked and busting through a door to escape a fire?

What does he see, hear, smell, taste, touch when he's immediately involved in a fist fight or a shootout as he enters a room (saloon, library, grocery store, airport, etc.)?

Maybe it's all a blur. Or maybe one aspect or two of the setting stands out for him. Ask him. And then listen.

Now, what does he notice (again, see, hear, smell, taste, touch) when he is admitted to the home of a victim's relatives to inform them he's found the body of their son?

What does he notice in the hospital waiting room as he awaits word about his colleague?

What does he notice when he joins the rest of his extended family for Thanksgiving dinner?

I ask "what does the character notice" because if you want to ground the reader in the scene (and you do) ALL description of setting MUST come through the character's senses of the setting as expressed in the character's opinions of that setting.

Think about it. He probably won't notice a lot about the setting (but maybe some) as he's busting through a door to escape a fire or suddenly being involved in a firefight.

He might notice a great deal more about a setting in which he's relaxed or in which he's spending some time as he awaits the next action scene.

If he's lying in wait to spring an ambush, he might notice a lot more AND notice it more specifically, or more clearly. All his senses will be heightened.

When we're bored or otherwise unoccupied, we tend to pay more attention to sights, sounds, smells, etc. When we're filled with adrenaline but not in the midst (yet) of action, our senses are hyper-sensitive.

It's the same for your characters. Describe the setting accordingly.

Pace the scene accordingly.

### **Today, and (Still Not) Writing**

I hope none of you are annoyed that I've missed a few days' writing. I'm not, really. And how much I write doesn't affect your bottom line, so.... However, tomorrow, I will write. Probably all day.

Rolled out at 2:20. Spent a very brief time with email and Facebook, then started uploading things to BundleRabbit.com.

Then I moved over here to write this, then checked Dean's site.

Around 8:30 my son headed east, my wife went to her job and my grandson went for a walk. I'm basically gonna screw around for a little while. Fill the hummer feeders, cross post the topic to the big blog, etc.

I did a tiny bit of cycling in The 13-Month Turn (remember Will Perkins?), then formatted it, created a cover and published it. Then I did all the stuff up in the intro to today's Journal

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

“A Few More Strength Workshop Questions Answered” at Dean’s place.

<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-few-more-strength-workshop-questions-answered/>

Also (and this is really weird in a timing kind of way) Dean talks about BundleRabbit with “Some Bundle Fun” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-bundle-fun/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 1150 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1150

## **Writing of Novel Two** (probably DOA)

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978

Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33439

Total fiction words for the year..... 185305

Total nonfiction words for the month... 15030

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 51620

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 236925

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [BundleRabbit](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Ground the Reader](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Scene](#), [Setting](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 3/23**

[March 23, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Gonna take a day off as far as writing a topic today. You deserve a rest from these huge posts. (grin)

But down in the “Of Interest” section is a link to an article about the American public and reading. Good article.

Of course, I'd be happy to answer any questions or entertain any comments you might have regarding any of the recent topics or the article.

Put them in a comment on the site or just email me. Either way is fine.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. Routine stuff until around 8:30, when I moved out to the Hovel.

I messed around in the Hovel for another half-hour or so, then cast around for another idea for a story.

Then I revisited the extended opening I wrote a few days ago. Heinlein's Rule 2 was bugging me. (You must finish what you write.)

So I cycled through it and when I came out the other side, I decided to continue with it.

10:30, with another 1400 words on The Pyramid Killer (formerly Novel 2), taking a break. Cold wet storm clouds moving in. Well, that turned into a whole thing. My son left some clothing here in the dryer, so I folded clothes, then let him know.

11:20, back to the novel.

12:30, a break. My breaks keep turning into other stuff. This time I ate lunch and put on a load of laundry.

1:30, back to the novel.

3 p.m., calling it a day. Laundry to tend. Good day though, and I'm SO glad this little novel is gonna work out.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "Why It's A Problem That Reading Is At 30-Year Lows, And How 'Digital Temperance' Can Help" at <http://thefederalist.com/2017/03/23/problem-reading-30-year-lows-digital-temperance-can-help/>

And at Dean's place, timely as usual, he talks about reading. Go figure.

### **Fiction Words: 3630**

Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3930

**Writing of The Pyramid Killer** (Not DOA after all!)

Day 1..... 978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608

Total fiction words for the month..... 37069  
Total fiction words for the year..... 188935  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15330  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 51920

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 240855

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Reading](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 3/24**

[March 24, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Dean's post today is excellent and again timely for me since I'm currently endeavoring to write a novel in 9 days (8 left, counting today).

Actually it'll be 10 days if it goes to the 31st. I did write the opening several days ago. Anyway, a great post about the old pulp writers.

In today's post, Dean even talks about one guy who wrote 7,000 words per day, every day, for ten years. Do the math. Woof! See why I feel like a slacker?

He also talks about something far more important, and it keyed this very important topic: the essence of Story.

**Topic: Just Tell A Story**

So many of us have forgotten that our primary purpose is to entertain, first ourselves and then other readers. Entertainment really is the sole purpose of writing fiction.

We get wrapped around words. Yet in and of themselves, they just don't matter. Words really are only tools, like nails to a carpenter. (If the carpenter drops a nail, does he stop the project? Uh, no.)

We get wrapped around sentence structure, or about whether a group of words constitutes a complete sentence. (Never mind that most of the world, in either narration or dialogue, doesn't speak in complete sentences.)

We get wrapped around characterization and scene and setting. We get wrapped around "plot" and "theme" and all manner of other things.

Those things DO matter, but the story will provide all of them if we just trust it.

Should we learn those things? Absolutely.

But once we learn about words, sentence structure, characterization, plot and all the rest, it becomes part of our subconscious.

Learning is conscious-mind stuff. It's what we do in classrooms, physical or virtual. Learning is why I visit Dean Wesley Smith's site every day. Learning is why I read fiction by other writers, and if it blows me away, I read it again and study it.

And learning is why I practice, practice, practice. And by practice, I mean I write.

Writing is an endeavor of the subconscious. It isn't learning. It's practicing what we've learned. It's playtime. Fun time.

And as we write (as we practice), what we've learned about words, sentences, plot etc. dribbles forth without effort or thought through our fingers onto the page or screen.

Consider, do you stop and think about whether to put a period at the end of a sentence? No. If you're writing by hand, do you stop and think about whether to dot an i or cross a t? Of course not.

Because you learned all of that long ago. It's natural to you, and you trust it.

At your current level of skill, the words, plot, characterization etc. are natural to you as well. You just have to learn to trust it.

I don't hover over one story in an attempt to make it "perfect." Like artists in all other art forms, I practice. I write a story, publish it, and move on to the next one.

Some will say when I cycle back over the last 500 to 1000 words and allow myself to touch it, that's hovering. It isn't. Cycling is all done with the subconscious mind. The conscious, "thinking" mind has no place in the practice of writing.

When we sit down to write, maybe we decide we'll practice a particular technique in the current story. Maybe we'll decide to practice setting.

But once we start writing, we should no longer be thinking (conscious mind stuff) about any of that.

When we sit down to write, we should Just Tell A Story.

If we trust ourselves to just tell a story, everything else comes along of its own accord.

Now, twenty-some novels and over 160 short stories later, I'm finally fully understanding the purpose: Entertainment. I'm writing solely to entertain, first myself and then others.

And that understanding is incredibly freeing. That's what it's all about.

Back in the day, writers "had no training that stories had to be perfect. [The stories] had to be nothing more than good stories readers would enjoy." (from DWS' post)

There you go.

Just. Tell. A. Story.

Tell it as if you're chatting with a friend over a cup of coffee. Or as if you're leaning to one side on a bar stool, an old-fashioned glass of Who Hit John in your grasp. Just tell a story.

If you don't already fully realize this, when you do "get" it you'll be amazed at how much fun writing will be.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out way late at 4:30. Checked email, Dean's stuff, etc.

By 5 I was outside, awaiting the sunrise and following my son's journey back to Indiana on Facebook.

I wrote everything above this, and finally got to the Hovel around 8:30. Today I'm trying to track more closely my time actually spent writing.

Messed around for awhile with a game, then read over the last chapter. I started a new chapter around 9 a.m. But about 500 words in I stopped writing and checked email, etc. for about a half-hour. Ugh.

10 back to the novel. Finally on track. A thousand words this session, and a break at 10:45.

12, back to the novel. Another thousand words by 12:50. Another brief break.

1 p.m., back to the novel. Only another 600 words or so by 1:40, but I need a break.

2:30, back to the novel.

3:30, I'm calling it for the day. Have to head for the PO before they close.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, see "Some Pulp Writers" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-pulp-writers/>. (I even shared this one to Facebook.)

**Fiction Words: 3764**

Nonfiction Words: 950 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4714

**Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978

Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608

Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372

Total fiction words for the month..... 40833

Total fiction words for the year..... 192699

Total nonfiction words for the month... 16280

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 52870

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 245569

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 3/25](#)

[March 25, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a lot in this post today, so you get a brief reprieve. (grin)

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 after waking at 1, 2, 2:30 and 3. I mostly did nothing for the first hour, then kind of put myself on hold, hovering, waiting for DWS' new post.

Finally to the Hovel around 6:40. Around 7:15 I started reading over the story again. It's only around 8000 words, and I like it. Of course, I allowed my subconscious to touch it here and there. Added only around 250 words.

8:10, a break.

8:30, back to the novel.

9:30, another few hundred words and a break.

9:50, back to the novel. Another few hundred words and a necessary break for a trip to the PO, then to stomp out a couple family forest fires.

12, back to the novel. I had hoped for 4000 words today, but I'll be happy if I can just pull down 3000 given that it's Saturday.

Hmm. Time got away from me. Around 1 I went up to the house to move the sprinkler. Then back to the novel.

At 2:30, with around 3500 words on the day, a break to walk around a bit.

3:15, I hit a good stopping place with a jagged edge. So I'm calling it for today. A great day for a Saturday.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Check out J.R. Murdock's site. He's a prolific writer who literally carves out an hour or so a day to write: <https://jrmurdock.com/>. And he recently had a novel in the Extreme SF Bundle from BundleRabbit with DWS and Kris Rusch.

"Reporting Words and Steps" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/reporting-words-and-steps/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3826**

Nonfiction Words: 280 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4106

### **Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978

Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608

Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372

Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198

Total fiction words for the month..... 44659

Total fiction words for the year..... 196525

Total nonfiction words for the month... 16560

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 53150

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 249675

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [JR Murdock](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 3/26**

[March 26, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Good ol' Verizon woke me up at 1:03 a.m. with a text message. When the tone went off, naturally I thought there was some sort of family emergency.

Uh, no.

Verizon wanted to inform me that I had “only” 25% of my data left with 2 days remaining in a 30-day cycle.

Seriously. How do they *not* know 25% data should last 7.5 days in a 30 day cycle?

Yeah, I know it was just some stupid glitch in their automated system. But things like that tend to annoy me.

I'm one of those who, once I'm awake, can't go back to sleep. And I don't do naps. At least it ought'a be a good writing day. Then again, I'm groggy at best and it's Sunday, so I guess we'll see.

\* \* \*

I'm actually gonna go to the novel on my business computer at one of the outside desks up at the house this morning. Even I am not stupid enough to put off writing just because I don't want to trudge out to the Hovel yet. (grin)

### **Topic: Why I Set Goals**

Everybody's heard me say before that I let a piece of writing be however long it's going to be. That it's all up to the characters. That I trust them to lead me through to the end.

All of that's true. Regardless of particular goals.

So then how can I set a goal of finishing a novel by a particular date?

Well, attaining a goal is not all a function of the conscious mind. It takes teamwork.

And goal attainment is yet another way to illustrate the roles of the conscious mind (The Learning and Acquisitions Department) and the subconscious mind (The Creative Department).

I consciously set the goal. I consciously decided early in the month that I wanted to write two novels this month.

Then The Creative Department (subconscious) kicked in and finished the first on the 14th in ten writing days. Was it coincidence that it was finished before half the month was gone?

That's up to you to decide. Personally, I don't believe in coincidence.

Then I took a day off, then started the second novel on the 16th. Then I took another six days off. Days when I could have been writing. The days off were necessary and not completely within my control, but the numbers are the same.

I resumed writing (after thinking the thing was dead) on the 23rd with nine writing days left, from the 23rd to the 31st, inclusive.

In other words, when I resumed on the 23rd, I set another goal, consciously, to finish this novel in nine days. Ten days total, including the dangling day back on the 16th when I wrote little more than the opening.

Again, coincidence? The first novel took ten days. Was I forcing myself to write this one in ten days too? Shrug. Beats me.

Maybe my subconscious is setting me up to write three of these in a month, up to ten days each. I don't know.

Regardless, it is what it is.

My goal is to be finished with this novel no later than close of business (so around 5 p.m.) on March 31st.

Now, does that mean I'll consciously limit the novel to that amount of time? Will I "cut off" a novel that wants to keep running?

Nope, on both counts.

I won't consciously limit it. I believe in allowing a story to be whatever length it's going to be. And a finished novel is a finished novel, whether or not it's finished "on time."

But neither will I have to make a conscious decision to cut it off and rush an ending. As long as I write off into the dark and trust my subconscious, I won't have the opportunity.

Once I set a goal consciously, The Creative Department kicks in and takes over. It's as if the characters in the story got a memo that says they have no more than nine days to finish telling the story.

And off they go.

So there. How's that for putting it all out there? I have not the foggiest clue how this thing will end up or even, at the moment, where it will go next.

I'm literally just writing the next sentence. Then the next. Then the next. Whatever occurs to me.

I don't slow down to wonder whether or how it fits. I just write what I'm given to write.

And somehow I know when the dust settles, it will all be where it's supposed to be and the story will be finished. And the date will be March 31st or earlier. (grin)

What a cool feeling!

\* \* \*

Another thought on the topic — if I didn't have this goal to finish this novel by the end of the month, I'd take the day off today to read and do nothing. But then, that's why I set goals. (grin) To push me a little when maybe I'd rather be doing something else.

Now, I have every faith in my subconscious to attain this goal. And faith matters, but as my grandma used to say, "Praying isn't enough. You have to put feet in your prayers." (grin)

Consciously deciding to take a day off would rob the subconscious (and the characters) of one of the nine days I promised them.

They might turn out 4,000 or 5,000 words today. They might turn out only a few hundred. But I'll give them every opportunity to do what they do best.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 1 a.m. Did the usual routine screwing around for the first couple of hours.

3 a.m., I moved to the novel. I cycled through the last chapter I wrote yesterday and added around 300 words. That in about 45 minutes. Groggy start. Time for a break.

Well, that break lasted over an hour and a half. Probably not a good idea writing on this computer. Wrong space, wrong keyboard, wrong mentality. And my brain isn't working right. That loss of an hour or two of sleep made a big difference.

I wrote a little around 6, then looked up some medicine online and did some other things.

Finally around 8:30, I moved out to the Hovel and wrote more of the above.

8:50, to the novel again. Prior to now I've added only a little over 600 words total to the novel. I'd like to see this thing grow by another 4000 words or more, but we'll see. I'll let the characters add what they want to add.

10, over the past hour and ten minutes, I've been on and off the novel probably four times. I've added only another 400 words or so in that time.

So this is one of those bits-and-pieces days. I'll stop the play-by-play now and just give you the total when the smoke clears.

Well, just over 2500 words today, but my brain's fried. So I'll fall back on that old, "Well, at least it's 2500 more than yesterday."

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's place, a second post from yesterday that I missed. See "Chet Cunningham" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/chet-cunningham/>.

Today's post is only a placeholder post on the Strengths Workshop.

## Fiction Words: 2521

Nonfiction Words: 1200 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3721

## Writing of The Pyramid Killer

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719

Total fiction words for the month..... 47180  
Total fiction words for the year..... 199046  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 17760  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 54350

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 253396

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 3/27](#)

[March 27, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

Dean has begun a series of posts on copyright. I'm not personally wild about the analogy he uses, but there should be a ton of good information there over the next several days.

\* \* \*

I said I would update you regarding my experience with Cover to Upload.

Kathy did an excellent job, put up with my requirements and changes, was very quick to respond, and even uploaded the thing to CreateSpace for me.

Oh, she also sent files (two choices of a cover and the interior) for me to proof and then made a few changes for me before she uploaded it.

I can't recommend her strongly enough. Please let her know I sent you if you go.

She even said she could do a book a week for me if I wanted her to. Seriously, you can't beat this with a stick. <https://covertupload.com/>

\* \* \*

For those of you keeping up with the sparse saga of my grandson, first, thanks for your kind comments. Bryan's going for an interview with Job Corps in mid-April. Together, he and I have explored a lot of options. We believe this is his best chance at a good life.

### **Topic: Different Characters, Different Worlds**

The family unit is the first social group to which we are subjected. For that reason, the opening of this topic might seem a bit personal. But bear with it.

When I was a child of around 10, I suddenly became aware that I didn't know my parents.

I knew of them, of course, in their role as my parents, and from my unique perspective.

But I didn't know them as individual human beings. The same goes in the other direction.

They knew me as their child and in the context of the family dynamic, but again, from their different perspectives (stepmother's and father's).

Later I realized that my perspective and opinion of my parents was substantially different even from the perspectives and opinions of my siblings. Even though my siblings' "level" in the family was comparable to my own.

I also realized that my opinions of different settings and events and even my memories of those settings and events differed significantly from the opinions and memories of my siblings and my parents.

Have you ever noticed that when you "remember" a specific setting or event and mention it to family or friends, often their remembrance differs from yours?

Have you ever noticed that you have a distinct opinion of a given setting? And that perhaps the opinions of others of that same setting differs from yours?

Those opinions are tainted not only with the immediate perception and personal preference of the character, but also with the character's "baggage." By which I mean, memories of earlier experiences, traumas and elations.

For example, say you walk into a library. Maybe to you, the atmosphere is "stuffy," filled as it is with the smell of dust-covered volumes and the sound of people moving quietly among the stacks.

Maybe to the person accompanying you, the atmosphere is "pleasant." Maybe to another it's "loud" or "disquieting" or some other descriptor.

This is the main reason, when I'm talking with a memoir writer, that I say memoir is much more closely related to fiction than to nonfiction.

Memoir is a set of memories, from a unique perspective, of settings and events that have already happened.

Fiction is a set of memories, again from a unique perspective, of settings and events that have not yet happened.

But more to the point, those early realizations were also my early training to be a writer.

Those early realizations are why it was easy for me to accept the notion (from DWS) that if I wanted to ground the reader in my story, all setting description had to be sifted through the POV character's physical senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell) and through his or her opinion of that setting.

We all (characters in life) have our own opinion of every setting we enter.

Being alone in an elevator provides a sense of claustrophobia or a chance for calm reflection. Being with a group in an elevator provides a feeling of unease or a fear of germs or a sense of unity and companionship.

When the elevator arrives and the doors sluice open, any given sight is pleasant or troubling or exciting or something in between. A body on the floor in the hallway horrifies one, awes another.

The lighting in any setting is bright or dim or absent, the sounds loud or quiet, the underlying psychic sense eerie or comforting.

One character is disgusted by all the dust illuminated in a beam of light coming through a window. Another is pleased at the warmth and hominess of it. Yet another is excited at all the worlds floating before him.

A room in which the ambient temperature is 55° is cold to one, chilly to another, and comfortable to a third.

The smell of tobacco smoke is an aroma or a stench. The smoke floating in the air is grey to one, silver to another, ugly to one, wispy and beautiful to another.

Every flavor is sweet or bitter, sharp or bland, acidic or alkaline. Every texture is smooth or rough, rippled or bumpy or wavy.

When an automobile backfires on the street it's annoying to one, comforting to another, and a rifle shot to a third.

The sound of a jake brake in use on a big rig coming into town is annoying to one, comforting to another, and an act of defiance to a third.

Think back about your own life, your own opinions of settings. Consider your friends' or partner's opinions of the same settings and how they differ.

Now the trick — in your writing, realize that *your* opinion of a given setting doesn't matter. But do insist that the POV character's opinion makes it into the story.

And the story will come alive.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4:15 this morning after a good night's rest.

Finally to the Hovel around 7 or a little later. I wrote the stuff above this.

9, a brief break up to the house. Well, the brief break turned longer. My cover and interior-layout person at Cover to Upload did an excellent job and sent me proofs. I looked them over, got a few requirements back to her, and now back to the novel.

9:50, finally to the novel. Wow! That was interesting. I opened the novel to find all of yesterday's words missing.

Back to the house to retrieve my "conflicted copy" from the recycle bin on the other computer. That was the correct one. Transferred it to my flash drive, then back to the Hovel, downloaded it. Whew!

I feel just a little bit like the universe is screwing with me today. (grin)

I've rattled on far too long here. The rest of the day I'll write with breaks about every hour. Then I'll report the total here at the end. Thanks for staying tuned.

10, NOW finally to the novel.

Well, shutting down with a pretty good day at just over 4,000 words. Not as good as it sounds though. Not sure what kind of time I'll have to write tomorrow. I have a doc appointment in Tucson, so I hope I'll get some time to write.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's, "The Magic Bakery: Copyright in the Modern World of Fiction Publishing"  
<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-copyright-in-the-modern-world-of-fiction-publishing/>.

An excellent service provider: Cover to Upload. See <http://covertoupload.com>

## Fiction Words: 4109

Nonfiction Words: 1240 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5349

## Writing of The Pyramid Killer

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828

Total fiction words for the month..... 51289  
Total fiction words for the year..... 203155  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 19000  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 55590

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 258745

Categories [Daily Journal](#)Tags [Copyright](#), [Cover Design](#), [Covers to Upload](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Print Publishing](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 3/28](#)

[March 28, 2017](#)

## Hey Folks,

Well, this probably is going to be a nonwriting day. I'm going to treat it that way, just in case.

Ever notice how much that guy Justin Case has to do with life in general? (grin)

I have a doc appointment (routine) on the far side of Tucson at 8:45 this morning. Justin Case of traffice, etc. we'll leave here around 7.

I would think we should be back by 1 or so, but you just never know. So I'm gonna post this edition of the Journal early. You know, Justin Case.

If I happen to get back early enough to get some writing done, I'll revise this Journal before it goes out via email at 7.

So those of you who get it via RSS, just be aware it might change.

I haven't really been trying for a "streak" with this blog. Just chatting with my friends for an hour or so per day.

But it seems to have developed into a streak, in that it's difficult to think of missing a day posting. (Streaks have power; they don't want you to break them.)

So I guess it's a streak. I'll figure out how long later.

Nah, I have time. Lemme look.

Okay, November 25, 2015 through today, I posted something to this Journal every day. (A few of those days I was camping and without Internet, but for those I pre-posted things.)

So today is Day 490. You know, Justin Case you were wondering.

\* \* \*

Stayed up and watched Gene Kelly and Frank Sinatra in *Anchor's Aweigh* last night. Such a great film.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4.

My proof was ready from CreateSpace for *Body Language*, a book I originally published as an ebook way back in January, 2016.

*Body Language* was my 12th novel (of 25). So I still have a bunch to get into paper.

I could just say 13, but by the time *The Pyramid Killer* (my current WIP) is in paper, I'll have probably another 25 written and waiting in the wings. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Not a lot at Dean's or elsewhere today that I could find.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 370

### **Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 51289  
Total fiction words for the year..... 203155  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 19370  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 55960

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 259115

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 3/29**

[March 29, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, yesterday the doc appointment took only all morning vs. all day. It went well. We got home around 2.

I did get back to the novel around 3. I cycled back through what I wrote a couple days ago then started a new scene. I added only around 200 words. Just wasn't into it.

\* \* \*

Something fun for you. Know why I write fiction? 'Cause reality is entirely too weird. See <http://thefederalist.com/2017/03/28/oregon-seeks-regulate-dangerous-preventable-cow-farts/>. If they'd saved this story for April 1, nobody would have believed it. I don't want to believe it anyway.

\* \* \*

Sometime in the past I mentioned Joanna Penn of The Creative Penn. I focused on a post from her blog in “Of Interest” below.

Also there’s a free education in her podcasts and podcast transcripts. Check it out at <http://www.thecreativepenn.com/podcasts/>. As always, use what works for you, makes sense to you, and discard the rest.

Of the 314 listed podcasts, I copied the URL for 14 transcripts and 17 podcasts into a Notepad document for future reference. Later, as I read (or listen) through them, I’ll glean what’s useful and toss what isn’t. Mining gems.

In case you didn’t know, you can save a URL without clicking on the link. Just right click. Then from the dropdown menu, click Copy Link Location. Then paste that into the document of your choice.

\* \* \*

Today is my grandson’s 22nd birthday. As a special gift, he and I and my buddy Dan are going camping this weekend. We’re leaving Friday morning, so that cuts one more day off the novel. Sigh. But it’ll be worth it.

So I’ll either finish it today or tomorrow or I’ll finish it after I get back.

If I finish it on time, I will have written two novels in a month, one in 10 days and one in 7 or 8. (The bad side of that is it means I had 13 or 14 nonwriting days this month.)

If I finish it after I get back, I fail in my challenge to write two novels in a month (shrug). But I’ll still have two new novels and there are other months. (grin)

Either way, from this experience I’ve learned a couple of major things: One, that even with bad days, I write an average of 3500 words per day. Two, that writing two (or even three) novels in a month isn’t all that difficult.

When I try it again, I’ll do a bit of planning and deck-clearing first, though. Duh. (grin)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4. Almost immediately I set about exploring the stuff from The Creative Penn (see above).

Finally out to the Hovel around 7:30. To the novel shortly thereafter.

An unremarkable day. I took a break about every hour, and a short walk (a mile) at around 11:30.

Well, I have a real shot of finishing this novel tomorrow, depending on how long it wants to run. A little over 5000 words today.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At The Creative Penn, Can Changing Your Book Covers Really Help You Sell More Books?  
<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/2017/03/23/change-book-cover-sell-books/>.

Also, browse the topics on her Podcasts page at <http://www.thecreativepenn.com/podcasts/>.

## Fiction Words: 5401

Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 530

## Writing of The Pyramid Killer

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... 5401 words. Total words to date..... 24229

Total fiction words for the month..... 56690  
Total fiction words for the year..... 208556  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 19900  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 56490

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 265046

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Creative Penn](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 3/30](#)

[March 30, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

Well, planning, right? I have today left to finish the novel if I'm gonna finish it this month.

I was even thinking if I felt like the end was really close, I could take my computer with me. That way I'd have whatever's left of tomorrow too after we travel to the campsite. You know, Justin Case.

But planning is important. And priorities.

Priorities are important.

Today I have to head to the grocery for a few provisions for the trip.

Today I have to pack my stuff, help Bryan pack his, and put together the extras (cots, sleeping bags, etc.).

Priorities. This trip is more important than one more time in the bush. Um, I mean camping.

So I'll miss the challenge I set for myself this month.

I don't want to risk hurrying the story along. I don't want it to risk being something the characters don't want it to be just to hit some silly artificial deadline I set for myself.

So I'll finish it after I get back.

For the rest of the day, I'm not even gonna look at it or think about it. I'll put up a few placeholder posts for tomorrow, Saturday and Sunday.

I'll probably come up with a few topics so they're worth your while to read.

And then I'll go enjoy watching my grandson's eyes grow wide every time he looks in a different direction where we're going. No computer. No story (at least on the screen).

And that's good.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out around 3, did all the routine stuff by around 5:30 and jumped into the novel for some cycling. I moved around in the novel, specifically back to three places to plant clues the characters found later. (grin)

But no real writing to speak of.

Then I went to the store, then packed, then set the water on the yard (we don't have a "lawn," we have a yard) and came here to write most of the stuff above.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

The Magic Bakery: Chapter One (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-one/>) Great post. In this one even the analogy works for me.

To anyone out there who spent time (or who had loved ones who spent time) on the ground in Vietnam, Cambodia or Laos, today is the first-ever official Vietnam Veterans Day. See

<https://townhall.com/notebook/erikahaas/2017/03/29/today-marks-the-first-ever-national-vietnam-war-veterans-day-n2305939>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 350 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 350

### Writing of The Pyramid Killer

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... 5401 words. Total words to date..... 24229  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 56690  
Total fiction words for the year..... 208556  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 20250  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 56840

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 265396

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Priorities](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## The Journal, Friday, 3/31

[March 31, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. One day left in March. Just today. It went by so fast!

By the time you read this, my buddy, my grandson and I will be doing little or nothing in one of the more beautiful spots on Earth, about 500 feet above the Gila River about 20 miles north/northeast of Lordsburg NM.

Back on Monday, April 3.

### Topic: Indy Publishing Company/Imprint

For this topic, just in case anyone needs it, I'm basically expanding on an answer I wrote in response to an email inquiry awhile back.

You can find this stuff and a lot more in my **Quick Guide to Self-Publishing & FAQs** and **The Essentials of Digital Publishing**.

You can get both of those free by visiting <http://harveystanbrough.com/downloads/>, scrolling down and clicking on the links.

For now, here's my response to "Can I Set Up My Own Publishing Company? What About Imprints?"

Yes, you can set up your own publishing company (or imprint).

For whatever name you have in mind, I suggest first you do a search on Google to see whether it's already taken.

For example, if you own chickens and decide to use Bantam Books as your imprint, that would be a legal no-no because it's already taken.

And no, your publisher name doesn't vanish when you distribute through Smashwords or anyone else.

The front matter for my short stories on Smashwords reads like this:

Title of Short Story  
Author Name

the Smashwords Edition of  
a FrostProof808 publication  
an imprint of StoneThread Publishing

For D2D and Amazon, it reads the same, but with "the Smashwords Edition of" removed.

Just so you know, the name of my publishing company is StoneThread Publishing.

One imprint of StoneThread Publishing is FrostProof808, under which I publish most of my short fiction. So if this were for a novel, the front matter would read like this:

Title of Novel or Short Story  
Author Name

the Smashwords Edition of  
a StoneThread Publishing novel

and again, "the Smashwords Edition of" would be removed before I submitted the document to D2D or anywhere other than Smashwords.

And yes, you can have more than one imprint.

For most of my short fiction, I use “a FrostProof808 publication.” For my more colorful, spicy short fiction, I use “a Blue TidBits publication” (um, and a pen name). For my nonfiction books on writing, I use “a Stippled Page publication” and so on.

But all of these fall under the umbrella of StoneThread Publishing.

To aid you with legal indemnity, I also recommend you set up an LLC, but that is not strictly a requirement. Both StoneThread Publishing and HarveyStanbrough.com are LLCs.

Hope this helps some of you. Of course, I welcome questions and comments.

### **Today, and Writing**

I'll resume this segment when I get back.

### **Of Interest**

Be sure to check Dean's site.

You might also want to scroll back through a few posts here and check some of the other sites I've mentioned recently. I'm not sure why they make it difficult (or impossible) to subscribe.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 500 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 500

### **Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... 5401 words. Total words to date..... 24229  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 56690  
Total fiction words for the year..... 208556  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 20750  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 57340

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 265896

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## The Journal, Friday, 4/1

[April 1, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

Well, I'm giving it up. I always said if writing weren't fun, I'd find something else to do.

Turns out Dan and I and the grandson have decided to head east from here. We'll build a tin-roof, two-and-a-half story super bungalow on the Texas plains and take over Hub and Garth McCann's lives.

And the boy. You know. Whatever his name was.

Of course, we'll need a lion, but I'm sure that can be arranged.

Yeah, I'm joking, and not very well. You knew that.

But seriously, I'm enjoying my time teetering on a flat above the Gila River so much, I've decided to give up writing.

Why write life when I can Live life? Why report the sillinesses of my characters in their stories when I can live those sillinesses myself?

What would it actually be like to rob a bank? I mean, I have my gun with me, and a bandanna.

For that matter, there are plenty of horses available for the stealing, and trains come through here regularly. Surely one of them carries the army payroll or something.

So why not become a train robber?

Can you think of a better way to spend April Fool's Day?

No topic today. Writing that stuff up there taxed my widdle bwain.

No doubt Dan and Bryan and I spent the last evening star gazing and slathering philosophy far and wide.

Back on Monday, April 3.

### Today, and Writing

I'll resume this segment when I get back.

### Of Interest

Be sure to check Dean's site.

You might also want to scroll back through a few posts here and check some of the other sites I've mentioned recently. I'm not sure why they make it difficult (or impossible) to subscribe.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 300

### **Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... 5401 words. Total words to date..... 24229  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 56690  
Total fiction words for the year..... 208556  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 300  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 57640

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 266196

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 4/2**

[April 2, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I'm just gonna kind'a fudge this one for now. Almost completely a placeholder post.

I'm sure while we were in the Lower Gila Box Wilderness north of Lordsburg, we slathered philosophy, talked various and sundry topics to death, and took a veritable plethora of photographs.

Oh, by the way, "plethora" and "myriad" are not interchangeable. We might have taken "a plethora" of photos, or we might have taken "myriad photos" (but not "a myriad of" photos).

More and more often I'm seeing "myriad" with "a" in front of it, and it's really annoying. It's like when a weather forecaster says it "likely" will rain. (He means "probably")

So anyway, there's that.

We should be getting home today, unless a plane fell on the truck or something, in which case this will be my last post. (grin)

But if it isn't, well, then maybe I'll add something to it after I get back. Or maybe I won't. Maybe I'll get all lazy and just wait 'til tomorrow to resume my antics.

So for now I'm gonna let it go as-is.

Back on Monday, April 3.

### **Today, and Writing**

I'll resume this segment when I get back.

### **Of Interest**

Be sure to check Dean's site.

You might also want to scroll back through a few posts here and check some of the other sites I've mentioned recently. I'm not sure why they make it difficult (or impossible) to subscribe.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 240 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 240

### **Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1.....	0978 words.	Total words to date.....	978
Day 2.....	3630 words.	Total words to date.....	4608
Day 3.....	3764 words.	Total words to date.....	8372
Day 4.....	3826 words.	Total words to date.....	12198
Day 5.....	2521 words.	Total words to date.....	14719
Day 6.....	4109 words.	Total words to date.....	18828
Day 7.....	5401 words.	Total words to date.....	24229
Day 8.....	XXXX words.	Total words to date.....	XXXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 56690

Total fiction words for the year..... 208556

Total nonfiction words for the month... 540

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 57880

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 266436

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

# The Journal, Monday, 4/3

April 3, 2017

## **Hey Folks,**

Huh. Guess we made it back. Otherwise I wouldn't be writing this.

I played catch up with some email and FB stuff last night, but was too tired to tackle photos from the trip. I'll do that this morning, then ease my way back into writing The Pyramid Killer.

Of course, I'll begin by cycling back through. Probably I'll read the first few paragraphs of every chapter to reacquaint myself with the story.

Even when I left off on Thursday, I felt like it was only maybe 5 or 6 thousand words from the ending.

But the ending wasn't quite it sight yet. Which is why I left it alone. I never want to risk forcing an ending. So as always, we'll see.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. Spent the first almost 5 hours with routine stuff plus checking pictures from the trip.

Finally to the Hovel at 8:40 and wrote some of the stuff above. To the novel at 8:50.

Not a bad day today for just getting back into it. The end is probably still a couple days away.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Great post in the Smashwords blog, "Fahrenheit 451 Meets April Fool" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/03/fahrenheit-451-meets-april-fools.html>.

At Dean's place, I hope you read the comments on "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Two" (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-two/comment-page-1/>).

Dean's also resumed reporting on his day and fired up a new challenge in "Starting Up... Here We Go..." at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/starting-up-here-we-go/>.

## **Fiction Words: 2995**

Nonfiction Words: 250 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3245

## Writing of The Pyramid Killer

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... 5401 words. Total words to date..... 24229  
Day 8..... 2995 words. Total words to date..... 27224

Total fiction words for the month..... 2995  
Total fiction words for the year..... 211551  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 790  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 58130

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 269681

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 4/4](#)

[April 4, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Probably not a lot to report today. Just writing.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. I'd really rather get up around 3. Only I think my body's adjusting to the coming earlier sunrises.

Spent the first few hours working on a website for a friend and resizing covers for another. The website took awhile as it's still in the old Thesis theme.

Thesis was state-of-the-art a few years ago, and mostly code. I've forgotten a lot of that, so a ten-minute job took close to two hours. Ugh.

Finally to the Hovel around 7:30, then back to the house to check on Dean's stuff, then back out here around 7:50. At 8, after a sputtering start, finally to the novel.

Finished cycling in the first hour (about 300 words), then went to the grocery. That plus lunch took until almost noon. So back to the novel at noon.

By 3 p.m. (including breaks) I had a little over 2500 words and the climax and end were in sight. I hate when that happens. When I know how, where and when it's gonna end, it becomes like pulling teeth with pliers to get there.

Partly that's because I'm bored and I want to finish the thing, and partly it's because I slow down to make sure the ending isn't "thin," lacking in depth of sensory detail. The final climax is no place to lose your reader. Ugh.

Then you get into the flow of it and it rushes out. GAWD I love being a writer! (grin)

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Three" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-three/>. OMG, look at the section on "Some Horror Stories..." and the case studies.

Scroll down farther for his daily reports "Second Story Finished" and "Third Story Finsihed...."

## **Fiction Words: 4194**

Nonfiction Words: 290 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4484

## **Writing of The Pyramid Killer**

Day 1..... 0978 words. Total words to date..... 978  
Day 2..... 3630 words. Total words to date..... 4608  
Day 3..... 3764 words. Total words to date..... 8372  
Day 4..... 3826 words. Total words to date..... 12198  
Day 5..... 2521 words. Total words to date..... 14719  
Day 6..... 4109 words. Total words to date..... 18828  
Day 7..... 5401 words. Total words to date..... 24229  
Day 8..... 2995 words. Total words to date..... 27224  
Day 9..... 4194 words. Total words to date..... 31418 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 7189  
Total fiction words for the year..... 215745  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1080  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 58420

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 274165

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 4/5](#)**

[April 5, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

This morning I approved and responded to a comment on my latest ProWriters post over on the big blog.

After I did that, I read over the post. It was a topic from the Journal a couple of years ago. And I noticed that I had quoted some stats:

“Through yesterday, May 9, 2015 (as I write this) 128 days have passed since January 1. During that 128 days, I’ve written 284,100 publishable words of fiction. My daily average thus far this year is 2219.5312 words per day.”

That was two years ago. And that’s why I keep this Daily Journal.

Back to the present.

Through yesterday, April 4, 2017, there have been 94 days in this calendar year. In those 94 days, I’ve written 215,745 publishable words of fiction. My daily average thus far this year (including nonwriting days) is 2295.1595 words per day.”

Wow. On one hand, I need to pick up the pace, eh? By which I mean, 1-Spend more time in the writing chair, and 2-When I’m in that chair, spend more time actually writing.

On the other, is that consistency, or what? (grin)

But today I’ll be copyediting a work for another writer. More on that below. If an idea latches onto me and drags me to the Hovel, I’ll write too. Otherwise this will be a nonwriting day.

**Topic: Scene and Chapter Breaks and Hooks**

I love this topic, and it’s timely because it’s what I’ve been practicing in my last few WsIP. (grin)

I have a copyediting job that I put on the back burner because I was so close to finishing the novel. I’ll begin that copyedit today.

To see what I mean by “copyedit,” please visit <http://harveystanbrough.com/copyediting/>.

The writer also requested I check to see whether the scene and chapter breaks “make sense.” I’ll check, but I have no doubt they will. Then again, that led me to this topic for the day.

First, let me define “break” so we’re all on the same page.

In my books, chapter breaks consist either of white space followed by a new chapter head, or a series of five spaced asterisks (in anything I send to Smashwords) followed by white space.

As for scene breaks, in my books, those consist of a series of three spaced asterisks followed by white space. Just my way of doing it.

Some writers use only white space, and that's fine. But all writers that I've encountered thus far use something to clearly mark breaks.

Because the writer asked, I'll check to be sure those breaks make sense. But I'll go a step further and check to see whether they hook together from scene to scene and chapter to chapter.

That's actually a three-step process.

1. I'll check to see whether there's a tension-building cliffhanger (physical or emotional) in the few paragraphs before the break.

Yes? Check.

No? I'll add a comment out to the side, with or without a specific recommendation.

2. I'll check to see whether there's a good hook immediately after the break. A good opening sentence or paragraph.

For examples of great opening hooks, see my free book (a \$6 value) *Writing Great Beginnings* on the Free Stuff page of my website at <http://harveystanbrough.com/downloads/>.

3. As long as I'm looking for a hook, I'll also check to see whether the writer grounds (or re-grounds) the reader in the opening of the new scene or chapter.

For that, I'll check the first few paragraphs of the new scene or chapter. That's where you ground the reader, even amidst ongoing action.

So grounding. Yes? Check.

No? Again, I'll add a comment out to the side, with or without a specific recommendation.

Okay, so while I'm on the topic, how do you ground or re-ground the reader in a new scene or chapter?

The only way is to allow the reader to sense (see, hear, smell, taste, touch) the setting through the POV character's senses.

And remember to include the character's opinions of the setting when appropriate. (When the opinion matters to the scene or illustrates the character of the character.)

One good example that I often use is a room in which the aroma of pipe tobacco lingers. Pretty much any character will notice it (smell).

But for one character it's an aroma, and for another it's a stench. For another the air is stuffy. For another it's wonderful.

For another (or any of the above) perhaps it invokes a memory of the character's father's study.

For another (or any of the above) maybe it invokes the taste of cinnamon on toast because the scent of pipe tobacco is tied to that flavor for the character.

You get the idea. A good rule of thumb is to write NOTHING that doesn't come through the POV character's senses and opinion. And yes, that will flavor the character's dialogue as well.

Most importantly, it will pull the reader into the setting and into the POV character's head.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. Spent the first two hours with the usual stuff. Then around 6:30 I made a quick trip to the store.

Back at the house, I made and ate breakfast and did a chore or two. Oh, and wrote the stuff above. And just like that, over 4 hours of the day were gone.

Then I added another book to the Free Stuff page on my website (see above), then cross-posted the topic above to the big blog for posting sometime in December.

Around 9 I finally went face down in the copyedit.

Around 1:30 or so I realized I wasn't going to write today. Edits pick up speed as you go through them. Perhaps I'll begin writing again tomorrow or the next day.

For now, I'll go ahead and post this.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Check the comments for The Magic Bakery: Chapter Three (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-three/#comments>) for yet another horror story re contracts.

I enjoyed "Fourth Story Finished Sort of..." (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/fourth-story-finished-sort-of/>) because I'm glad to know it isn't only me. (grin) Very interesting.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1000 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1000

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 7189  
Total fiction words for the year..... 215745  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2080  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 59420

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 275165

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cliffhangers](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Hooks](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Openings](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Scene](#), [Writing Setting](#),  
[Writing with Depth](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 4/6**

[April 6, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. This afternoon around 3 p.m. it will have been only two days since I finished The Pyramid Killer. And already I'm jonesing to get back to writing another story.

As I told my wife this morning, I went to the Hovel for a few minutes yesterday, on a task not related to writing.

I didn't even open my writing 'puter while I was out there. But I did run a hand over it. Longingly.

Maybe, as psychiatrists say, I have a "problem." (grin)

Well, definitely I have a problem.

The problem is, I need to write.

But I also have an edit to finish. And it's prepaid. So there's that.

I'll work on the edit this morning (it's already 6:30) and see how it goes. If it's going well enough, maybe I'll steal the afternoon to write a story. Or start a story. Something.

Seriously, I need a fix.

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out at 3 this morning. Yay! Something just feels right about getting up at 3 a.m.

Spent a couple hours with email and Facebook and searching for a couple of fonts that turned out to be free but Mac-only. Oh well.

Also I came here and wrote this stuff. Now to the edit.

By 11:30 I was halfway through the edit, a cozy mystery. I thought about heading out to the Hovel to start a new story.

Then again, at my current rate of progress, if I stick with it I should be able to finish tomorrow. Also, I'm not really a fan of switching gears.

So I think I'm gonna push on through. Once this is finished I'll feel good because another writer will have learned a lot of stuff and I can get back to writing full time.

I do need to start and finish a novel this month at least if I want to remain current with my annual goal of writing at least one novel per month. And I do.

But even if I don't start writing again until Saturday, that leaves me plenty of time.

Okay, so I'll go post this, and then get back to the edit. So another nonwriting day.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's place, an interesting post in "Long But Good Day and Fifth Story"  
<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/long-but-good-day-and-fifth-story/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 390 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 390

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 7189

Total fiction words for the year..... 215745

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2470

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 59810

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 275555

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 4/7**

[April 7, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I've learned a great deal about writing over the past three years. It's also been a long time since I last taught a seminar. That was in September, 2014.

A month after that, I taught an actual writing workshop based on Writing Into the Dark.

But then, other than bits and blurbs in emails or the occasional edit or brief presentation, I stopped teaching. I devoted myself to my own writing.

Now, nearing 30 novels and around 170 short stories later, I'm almost ready to teach again.

Why? Because I'm settled in my writing.

From this point forward, I'll keep learning and improving, but not by the leaps and bounds I've known over the past few years.

And I want to pass along what I've learned now that I've made it my own, put my own stamp on it.

As I first mentioned here awhile back, I'm developing a way to do that.

It might well develop into an online thing, but first I'll deliver it as a combination seminar and workshop.

Probably this will happen sometime between October of this year and April of 2018, inclusive. (It's slightly cooler here in the desert during those months.)

The seminar portion will consist of a one- or two-day intensive. And I do mean intensive.

The workshop portion will be more leisurely. It will consist of a critique, by me via email, of at least two assignments. (This is a small part of what I've been practicing in my most recent edit.)

When I have the final structure of the intensive laid out, of course I'll announce it here and in the big blog.

For now, I just wanted you to know where I am in the thought process.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 3. Spent the first couple hour with email, FB, newsletters and at Dean's place.

Then I wrote the stuff above and a lot more as I brainstormed the seminar/workshop. Basically, as has become my habit, I've frittered away much of the morning.

Now, about 4 hours after I first got up, to the edit. Later today, back to writing. (Yay!) You know, probably.

Well, I finished the edit about an hour ago (about 10:30) and got it sent off.

Instead of writing more fiction today, though, I think I'll spend the balance of the day putting together a cover for The Pyramid Killer, proofing it, and getting it published.

Kind of resting. Editing is work, and it drains me.

Proofing my own stories (I read them aloud) and creating covers and publishing them is fun, though not as much fun as writing.

I'm also gonna check out a new source for cover art. Even though I'm using Cover to Upload (<http://covertoupload.com>) for interior layout and paper covers now, I still like designing my own ebook covers.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's today, he announces a new coast workshop: The Great Bundle Workshop. See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-great-bundle-workshop-brand-new-coast-workshop/>.

I hung around awhile, hoping for another chapter in his Magic Bakery book, but no dice yet. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 520 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 520

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 7189  
Total fiction words for the year..... 215745  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2990  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 60330

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 276075

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 4/8**

[April 8, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Yesterday turned out to be productive, albeit not with actual writing.

I did create a cover and a promo doc and get the new book up in all major e-venues.

But this morning, something was bugging me about that cover. It just didn't pop off the page.

So I revised it. Now it reflects "noir" better and it pops off the page.

### **Topic: Thoughts on Novel Two-Fers**

So I'm thinking I want to put the last two novels (both pulp fiction detective noir mysteries) in a "boxed set" in ebook.

But I'm also thinking of doing the same thing, sort of, in print.

But why only two? I mean, I can easily turn out two of these masterpieces per month (grin), so why not wait until I have three or more to put in a boxed set?

Well, does anyone out there remember the old pulp novel two-fers?

You buy one physical book, but it has two front covers, one on each side, and the covers are upside down from each other.

You open one cover to read one novel, then flip the book over and open the other cover to read the other novel. (grin)

It was charming, to say the least. And the idea of it is intriguing to me.

I've already been in touch with Kat at Cover to Upload to see whether she has any ideas and whether the project interests her.

I really doubt I'll be able to replicate the old pulp two-fer construction. But I'm looking for a way to do something that's at least similar.

Oh, and let's toss in another challenge while we're at it. I'm kind of a stickler for having my ebook and print book covers look the same.

Of course, you can't flip an ebook over, so....

Hmm. Maybe a new cover with both the other covers on it, only sideways with the top of the original covers at the spine.

I don't know.

I'll keep you posted.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4 after a rough night with my stomach. Ugh.

After briefly playing with email and FB, I updated pages on my website and my publisher website to reflect the new book. If you wanna read about it, here's the 411:

<http://stonethreadpublishing.com/the-pyramid-killer/>.

Around 7 my wife and I went for a short walk (about a mile). Then back to breakfast and writing.

Good short walk, then a trip to Sierra Vista (about 45 miles) for two new tires for my Tacoma.

Lunch in Sierra Vista and ate too much (burgers and fries, and if you know me, nomnomnom).

Out to the Hovel around 2:20 to see if it'll still have me. (grin)

Around 3 I started a new novel. Woohoo! As my buddy Dan says, I am in hebben. Like the previous two, this one features Detective Lou Galecki. He's a Polack, but he has a Brooklyn accent and an Italian partner, so it's all right.

A great hour. I'll hope to write more on this one tomorrow.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, "Two More Stories in Two Days" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/two-more-stories-in-two-days/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1381**

Nonfiction Words: 490 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1871

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 8750  
Total fiction words for the year..... 217126  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3480  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 60820

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 277946

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Publishing](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 4/9**

[April 9, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I hope you check out my site from time to time, especially the left sidebar under Writers' Resources.

This morning I needed a refresher (and ready reference) for the police 10-codes. So I found a reference and added a link under "A-Police 10-Codes."

Anyway, check that sidebar now and then. There's a lot of good stuff there.

\* \* \*

Well, as it turned out I took most of the day off. During that time I went to the store. Then when I got back I took the driver's side seat out of my Tacoma, turned it upside down in the bed so I could get at the seat adjustment mechanism, and fixed it so it will work, then reinstalled it.

I also got a haircut (lost about five pounds).

Then, just as I was about to go back to my novel, I got my fanny handed to me by an editing client. This writer thought I "changed [his or her] work" by adding a few "He said" (6 of them) and "She said" (8 of them) to the front of dialogue in places where I couldn't tell which character was speaking.

Before I could do that, of course, during the edit I had to read back and forth and figure out who was speaking. Those little tag lines are gold to most readers, but apparently not to this particular writer.

Okay, shrug, so now I know. If I work with this person again, I won't bother to figure out who's speaking and add "He said" or "She said." I'll just add a comment like "Who's saying this?" and let the writer go back and figure out who's speaking.

Live and learn, eh?

\* \* \*

The bigger workshop/seminar I'm hoping to put together will happen or not.

In the meantime, I'm developing a one-day intensive on "Adding Depth to Your Writing." This stuff is invaluable.

Subtopics will include Depth/Setting, Openings (how to pull the reader into the story), and Grounding the Reader (how to keep him in the story). I'll also talk about Character Description. Not creating them, but allowing your reader to know them.

I might also talk about Cliffhangers (to establish physical or emotional tension and force the reader to turn the page) and Hooks (keep the reader reading after he turns the page).

I'm not taking signups yet, but letting you guys know first. When I come up with a date and place, I'll let you know.

### **Topic: Patience Is a Virtue**

Awhile back I mentioned it's good to practice something new, some new technique you've learned, in each new story.

Over the past several novels, I've become very good at grounding the reader. I accomplish that primarily by providing intimate details regarding the setting and the people in it.

But as you know if you're following this Journal, I do a lot of cycling.

Sometimes I cycle back to insert something the characters spring on me later in the story.

For example, say Aunt Marge suddenly pulls a .32 caliber revolver out of her house dress and shoots an intruder in Chapter 26.

If that happens, I cycle back to when she first put on the house dress, say back in Chapter 18, and allow her to take the revolver from her night stand and slip it into the pocket of her house dress.

This accomplishes two things:

One, it negates the "miracle" of the revolver suddenly appearing just when it's needed.

Two, it makes the reader feel the writer is a genius. After all, how did the writer know, way back in Chapter 18, that our dear Aunt Marge would need that revolver in Chapter 26?

Cycling will remain an invaluable aid for precisely those two reasons.

However, most of the time when I've cycled back in my last several novels, I did so because I got in too big a hurry. I rushed the characters through the scenes, especially action scenes, and thereby missed much that they were trying to add.

Like how the setting looked, smelled, tasted, felt and sounded. And the POV character's opinion of all that.

So most of the time, I was cycling back to slow myself down and let the characters add what was necessary to both ground the reader in the scene and to give the story depth.

So in this novel, the "new" technique I'm practicing is adding that depth and grounding the reader as I go.

I'll still cycle back at the beginning of every session. But I expect I'll be adding fewer words to older scenes and writing a lot more words in new scenes.

In other words, I'm taking my time. I'm still hitting around a thousand words an hour, but they're more substantive words. Words that aren't rushed and don't skimp on necessary details.

In still other words, I'm practicing patience as I write. I understand it's a virtue. I just wish it would hurry up and get here. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 3, made coffee and jumped into email and Facebook. I did a little more editing and offered some instruction, then headed to the Hovel at around 6:30.

A good first session, a combination of cycling and writing new stuff. Then a walk at around 7:30.

8:15, back to the hovel for another session, then I wrote the topic above.

9:20, to the house to let them know I'm still alive.

Lousy day for writing. I never got back to the novel after 9:20. Too much other stuff happening, but I plan to hit the ground running in the morning.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's place, a pretty good post on his short story challenge and some other stuff. See "Story Number Eight..." <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-number-eight/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1864**

Nonfiction Words: 960 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2824

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381

Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245

Total fiction words for the month..... 104340

Total fiction words for the year..... 218990

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4440

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 61780

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 280770

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 4/10**

[April 10, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I meant to say thank you yesterday to those of you who emailed me privately with ideas for publishing a paper edition of two novels in one book like they did with some of the old pulp novels. I appreciate all the input.

Still not sure it's worth all the effort just to produce a novelty that only I would appreciate. (grin)  
But if I take that path, I'll keep you posted.

\* \* \*

Okay, today I'm gonna try something new. I'm mentioning it here just in case it might apply to you as well.

Some of you will remember that awhile back (probably a year ago) I didn't have Internet on my writing computer.

Then I moved to the Hovel. My WiFi doesn't reach out there. (My cable-guy son told me buying a booster would actually weaken the signal.)

I reasoned that I needed at least the ability to get on the Internet in case I had to research something quickly (like yesterday, police 10-codes).

So I use my smart phone hot spot. I have to carry my phone out there anyway in case of emergencies.

The problem is, it's all too easy to jump from quick online research to email, Facebook etc. You know, "as long as I'm online anyway."

But sometimes email is upsetting. Sometimes Facebook is engaging. And I'm not writing.

So I'll make notes on this Journal in the morning before I head for the Hovel. After that, I'll be online only when I come up to the house for a break.

Then at the end of the writing day, I'll save everything to my flash drive and hand-carry it to the house and the Internet.

This is a test so I'll try it all week. If it works out and I can make it a habit, good. If not, well, I haven't lost anything.

\* \* \*

I'm hoping today is a good writing day.

Yesterday was crap, frankly, and I'm still a little emotionally hung over from that. And the day before was very short.

What I probably ought'a do is get the lawnmower out (yep, already) and get it ready for mowing. And maybe I'll do that too, but I'll try to write a bit.

Tomorrow I have to take my grandson in for a Job Corps interview, and there's no telling how long that will take. Either way, that's gonna be another crap day.

So I need a good day today to lead me into another good day on Wednesday.

\* \* \*

Some of the better responses I've received on this Journal have been for those in which I talked about the coyotes and owls and hawks and protecting my little girl from them.

I haven't mentioned them in a good while. Mostly, that's because they've all but disappeared.

I haven't seen or heard a song dog in at least a few months. Or an owl or a hawk, at least not in hunting mode.

Anyway, I'm starting to tire of writing this silliness every day, the streak (503 days) notwithstanding.

I'm not shutting it down at this moment. Just saying that time might not be far off.

From my perspective, the Journal has served its dual purpose.

For me personally, it was a public display meant to spur me to write. It's served that purpose well.

Now I'm writing pretty much every day for the sheer joy of it. Half the time I'm so excited about writing the next story that I forget to publish the one I recently wrote.

For other writers, my intention with the Journal was also twofold. I wanted to illustrate what a person can do if he or she "wants to be" a writer. I did that by posting my own naked numbers.

I also wanted to publish helpful topics and resources. By my approximation, I've published dozens of both. Of course, whether they're helpful is up to the individual writer.

So we'll see. I might shut it down soon. I might keep it going through December 31 to get another book out of it.

Just don't be surprised if one day I wander off the deep end and don't resurface. (grin)

\* \* \*

I hope to announce in a few days when I'll teach the Depth intensive. I'll announce the date and time here first, then over on the other blog.

If I have enough responses to make teaching it worth my time, I'll announce the venue a few days later.

If I don't, maybe I'll work toward turning it into an online thing.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3. From then until around 6 I was checking out different sites online (see "Of Interest").

After that, routine stuff and breakfast. No walk this morning. Finally to the Hovel around 7:40.

I messed around with the story for about an hour. Despite my "hoping for a good day" I can't muster up the strength to really care either way. No big deal. Just one of those days.

On top of everything else this week, my brain tried to tell me "whodunit" and how this one's going to end. And I'm barely 4,000 words in.

That's not good. I got so bored I almost threw in the towel to start something new in a day or two.

So I dragged the lawn mower up to the house, cleaned the spark plug, checked the oil, etc.

It fired right up. So since I already had the mower up there, I mowed what needed to be mowed in the yard so far. That took about an hour.

Then I sat awhile, just not feeling like doing much of anything. Put out a fresh jar of sun tea, checked a few things online.

Finally back to the Hovel and a great cigar a little after 12. I wrote more of this stuff, then turned to the novel around 12:20.

I decided to forget all that stuff my brain was telling me and just write the next sentence. Let the characters lead me through.

If what my brain thought was gonna happen comes true, I'll be amazed. And bored. I hope the characters will surprise me as they usually do.

Well, I pulled off a little over 2000 words on the day. Not a good day by a long shot, but I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Not sure why I haven't mentioned The Passive Voice before, but this is a great website. Check it out at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/>. If you look in the right sidebar at Post Categories, you'll find a wealth of information, from posts on particular topics to posts from particular professional writers to Writing Advice. Strongly recommended.

If you don't know how to use Find & Replace or the Paragraph Formatting Tool or some of Microsoft Word's other excellent features, check out the free instruction at <http://harveystanbrough.com/microsoft-word-for-writers/>.

At Dean's place, in case you're interested, "Questions About The Great Bundle Workshop" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/questions-about-the-great-bundle-workshop/>.

**Fiction Words: 2136**

Nonfiction Words: 1170 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3306

**Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381

Total fiction words for the month..... 12570  
Total fiction words for the year..... 221126  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5610  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 62950

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 284076

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 4/11**

[April 11, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I'm posting this edition of the Journal very early and strictly as a placeholder.

I have to be in Tucson at 8 and I have not the foggiest idea what will happen or how long it will take. Or what will happen otherwise, for that matter.

If I get back in time to post a more thorough entry, I'll do so and trash this one.

If not, well, the streak continues.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 again, did all the routine stuff. Probably this will be a nonwriting day.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Check Dean's site if I don't get back.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: XXXX (Journal)  
So total words for the day: XXXX

Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12570  
Total fiction words for the year..... 221126  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5610  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 62950

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 284076

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 4/12](#)

[April 12, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, something's 'off' in my world today. Not sure what, and therefore not sure how to fix it. I'm annoyed. I'll leave it at that.

I'm also not sure what will happen around here today. So I'm calling this a nonwriting day. (Turned out to be a writing day after all.)

I won't write, at least not fiction, unless a lot of stuff in my mind settles out.

Maybe I'll start a new website where I can vent. I'm not writing under any of my personas anymore, so maybe I'll use one of them for that.

Probably I'll spend the balance of the day uploading selected short stories to BundleRabbit. I've been meaning to do that for awhile anyway.

### **Topic: Streams of Income**

If you're a writer, and if you're intelligent enough to have embraced indie publishing, you want as many streams of income as possible off everything you write.

If you aren't a writer, you can stop reading now.

If you are a writer, but you're still pursuing an agent and/or a traditional publisher so THEY can make all the money off various streams of income, please stop reading now.

Anyone else, keep reading. For the rest of you, for at least a limited time, I'm offering to answer any questions any of you have regarding getting revenue from your stories, short or long.

The only prerequisites are that you've read this topic in its entirety, and that you have downloaded and read the free resources I offer over at <http://HarveyStanbrough.com/downloads>.

Those include The Essentials of Digital Publishing, Quick Guide to Self-Publishing & FAQs, and Heinlein's Business Habits For Writers (Heinlein's Rules), Annotated

I also recommend you read and study the posts under the MS Word for Writers tab on the website. Especially if you're still using the Tab bar or the spacebar to indent paragraphs.

A write not being thoroughly familiar with MS Word (or whatever program you use) is like a carpenter not being really sure what a hammer is for.

But to the topic.

***Basically, getting multiple streams of income*** first relies on making your work available in as many different venues as possible.

If you "publish" (distribute) exclusively with Amazon or anyone else, you can't do that. In fact, if you publish exclusively with Amazon, you aren't even allowed, legally, to post your short story or novel on your own website.

So that's the first lesson, a'right? Go wide.

I recommend distributing everything you write to Amazon and to Draft2Digital.

Smashwords also is a good distributor that will get you into a lot more minor venues, but I've never made a sale (since 2011) in any of those venues. So personally I don't allot any of my time to uploading my work to Smashwords.

Once you've settled on distributors, you can shift into the second level of building multiple streams of income.

Collect your short stories. Collect your novels. Period.

When I have written ten short stories, I automatically have 10 new streams of income.

If I make those stories available (through D2D and Amazon) in nine venues, that means I've just created 90 individual new streams of income.

If I also collect those stories in two 5-story collections and one 10-story collection, I've just created three more streams of income. Times the same nine venues.

So now, having written 10 short stories, I begin receiving income from 117 different streams of revenue.

Later, there's no law that says you can't combine two, three or four 10-story collections into one omnibus collection either. More streams of income.

*Of course, you can also group your novels.* You can sell the first five books in a series in one book. You can sell the last five books in a series in another book. And you can sell all ten books in a single book.

Again, from having written 10 novels, you're now bringing in revenue from 117 different streams.

Every time you find a new way to present your work, you create a new stream of income that is multiplied by the number of venues in which you offer that work for sale.

That's also why I use and recommend BundleRabbit. When your work catches the attention of a curator there and he or she bundles it, you've just created yet one more stream of income.

Try it. The math isn't as difficult as it seems.

And those trickling little streams of income all flow into the same river that feeds your bank account. It really is that easy.

Any questions or comments, please add them below or email me directly at [harveystanbrough@gmail.com](mailto:harveystanbrough@gmail.com).

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at around 3:30. Not sure what the day will hold.

I messed around, wrote the stuff above, then cross-posted it to the big blog (for January, 2018).

Then I went to the store and the PO, then back to the house.

I was thinking about BundleRabbit again when an idea hit. So I wrote the opening, about 350 words.

Once I had that, I saved it to my flash drive and headed for the Hovel. That was around 1:30.

I wrote on the thing for about an hour total, then went to put my spare for my 4Runner back underneath the truck.

Came back to the Hovel and wrote another half-hour, then called it a day. I didn't write anything on the novel, but I got a good start on what will probably be a short story in the same series. We'll see.

That or maybe it's a start on what will be the fourth novel in the series. A lot better than I expected when the day started.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's place, not really a lot, actually. He and Kris will offer a new online workshop titled "How to Edit Your Own Work". Might interest some of you.

### **Fiction Words: 1743**

Nonfiction Words: 770 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2513

### **Writing of "Beats All"** (probably a short story)

Day 1..... 1743 words. Total words to date..... 1743

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381

Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245

Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381

Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 14313

Total fiction words for the year..... 222869

Total nonfiction words for the month... 6650

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 63990

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 286859

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 505 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Distribution](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Self-Publishing](#), [Streams of Income](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 4/13**

[April 13, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I had a pretty good scare this morning.

I let the little girl out with dim, pre-dawn light in the sky. She skittered off around the corner of the house to her favorite place to look through the fence.

About the time I got settled at my outside table, a hoot owl started hooting. It was on a telephone pole some forty yards from the house.

But immediately after that, as I was still getting up, another one screeched.

And that one was much closer. It was perched on another telephone pole directly above my little girl's favorite place.

I raced around there. Probably that was a funny sight, me running in dark grey sweat pants, a black jacket and house slippers.

The baby hadn't even made it to her favorite spot.

There was a little "lean-to", where awhile back I leaned a heavy 3-feet by 3-feet piece of perforated metal against the backyard shed.

The lean-to was only about two feet from her, but she didn't even duck under there, another of her favorite spots.

The screech of the owl had frozen her with fear.

She was hunkered down, visibly trembling, on bare ground about five feet short of her usual place. A mostly white kitten against an all-but black background.

I scooped her up, then looked up and gave some nasty directions to the owl. Then I took the baby into the house.

When I went back out, I shined my flashlight on the one sitting on the more distant pole. I said, "Go on, git!" and he flew off.

The other one was already gone.

Time to buy a .410 and some shotshells.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:40 after a fairly late night. I processed some pics I took yesterday and posted them to Facebook, then read some email.

Then I handled the episode with The Owl and the Baby, then came here and wrote all this. It's almost 6 a.m.

Getting a slow start today, but no biggie.

Laundry day. Put on the first load around 8:30, did some other stuff while that was washing. Working around the house on various things today.

That includes moving Bryan out to the camping trailer we have parked outside. Kind of a reward for him getting into Job Corps, and to give him a little practice at doing things on his own, but with us only a couple hundred feet away.

He's getting electricity from the Hovel via a heavy duty extension cord (s/b able to run the AC unit).

He and I moved his bed and all his stuff, then cleaned the old bedroom, which is now the new dining and utility room. Yeah, it's an old house.

So all kinds of stuff up at the house today, rearranging and cleaning.

Received and installed a new passenger side mirror on the 4Runner, and received and returned the WRONG windshield washer reservoir for the Tacoma.

All in all, a very good day. But no fiction.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Four" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-four/>. This is another GREAT post.

Below that, if you're following his daily updates, "Story Twelve and a Wonderful Dinner." Actually it's pretty interesting.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 530

### **Writing of "Beats All" (probably a short story)**

Day 1..... 1743 words. Total words to date..... 1743  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 14313  
Total fiction words for the year..... 222869

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7180  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 64520

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 287389

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 506 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 4/14](#)

[April 14, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**



Wow. Almost half the month gone already. Amazing what even one missed day of writing does to the productivity. And I might have another nonwriting day today.

Bryan and I are headed for Sierra Vista this morning. Mostly to pick up a few essentials for him for his trek into a new life at Job Corps. That could happen as early as a couple of weeks from now.

And plus, I just want to get out of St. David for awhile. (grin)

Probably we'll dawdle and take much, if not all, of the morning. Then after we're back and settled, maybe I'll visit Hal (the writing 'puter) for awhile out in the Hovel.

Nope. Around noon I decided to build my BundleRabbit inventory instead.

If you're one of the folks who recently subscribed, please don't be dissuaded by this couple of days with no writing and no topics or writing tips. I'll be back to full power soon. (grin)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3 even though I went to bed a bit late for me. Hey, them's the breaks.

To Sierra Vista around 7:30.

Stopped to show Bryan some petroglyphs near Charleston/Millville (AZ), then to Walmart for a bunch'a stuff, then Sonic to slam down a couple'a burgers, then back here.

Got back at around 11:30, played with posting pics on FB for a little while. Found one that looks like the right profile of an ancestor of Captain Jean Luc Picard. (grin) That's him up there on the left.

12:30, I'm gonna spend the balance of the day uploading short stories to BundleRabbit. It's insane to have all this inventory and not be pushing it out the door in yet one more direction.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, "Mystery, Thriller, or Suspense: Does the Label Matter?" For the full article, see <http://diymfa.com/reading/mystery-thriller-suspense-label-matter>.

At Dean's, "Story Number Thirteen and an Answer" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-number-thirteen-and-an-answer/>. There are some gems in this one.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 290 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 290

## **Writing of "Beats All" (probably a short story)**

Day 1..... 1743 words. Total words to date..... 1743

Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

## **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381

Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245

Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381

Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 14313  
Total fiction words for the year..... 222869  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7470  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 64810

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 287679

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 507 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 4/15**

[April 15, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, it's Saturday. A short post today.

As it stands, I've watered the yard, and I'm planning to take a drive and a hike to see some petroglyphs with my wife and Bryan.

In the afternoon, I'll either return to one of my WIPs or read. No pressure, no worries.

I'm not stuck on either story. Just relaxing my way through the past couple of days, making other things and people priorities. Kind of a minor life roll. So it's all good.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3, but after a good night's sleep this time.

Around 10, went to hike to the petroglyphs near Millville (ghost town) AZ, west of Tombstone. Got some good pics. Had a good hike.

Back here around noon to make burgers for lunch, then posted some pics on FB. Helped my wife rearrange some things in the house, then went outside and sat with a good cigar, took some more pics, plastered them all over FB.

Around 2:15, inside, checked email, found a partial copyedit waiting. So now I'm gonna post this, then do that. Afterward, I'll read and/or blow off the rest of the day.

Tomorrow morning, back to writing. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's, "Story Fourteen and Other Stuff" <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-fourteen-and-other-stuff/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 210 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 210

### Writing of "Beats All" (probably a short story)

Day 1..... 1743 words. Total words to date..... 1743  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

### Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 14313  
Total fiction words for the year..... 222869  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7680  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 65020

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 287889

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 508 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 4/16](#)

[April 16, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

A few days ago I mentioned here that all the coyotes and other predators seem to have left the area.

A day after I wrote that, the owls were back and I had a scare. This morning, the coyotes are back.

Well now, isn't that the way it always works? (grin)

From around 4 a.m. I was serenaded for almost an hour straight by song dogs. No owls as yet, but I'm sure they're lurking out there somewhere.

But it's Easter, a day that always reminds me of the incredible gifts I receive pretty much every hour of every day. I only need to be aware of them.

For example, unlike human predators, the 4-legs and feathered in the rest of nature always seem to give warning when they're in the vicinity. That's a gift.

And those warnings get my blood pumping with regard to keeping my little girl safe. Another gift.

Whatever significance Easter holds for you, I hope today was a good day in your world.

\* \* \*

The plan for today was to write and read. We'll see how that turns out. It's Sunday and it's Easter, so probably a family day.

Guess maybe I'll get some reading done later today or tonight. No writing. Been kind of keeping myself available in case anyone wants to do anything.

I'm gonna post this, then go back to taking more pictures or something.

I guarantee you, barring a plane landing on my house tonight, I'll be back to full speed tomorrow.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out around 2:20, a little earlier than my preferred norm. (The baby slept-in until 4.)

Mona and I went to the store early (around 8), then home to put things away. Then the day just kind of unfolded. Very lazily. Took a lot of pics, put them on FB, but did very little else.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice "Six novelists reveal how to self-publish successfully" at <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/you/article-4401186/Independent-novelists-self-publish-successfully.html>.

At Dean's today, "Story Fifteen... Halfway Through the Challenge" <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-fifteen-halfway-through-the-challenge/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 330

### **Writing of “Beats All” (probably a short story)**

Day 1..... 1743 words. Total words to date..... 1743  
Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 14313  
Total fiction words for the year..... 222869  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8010  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 65350

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 288219

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 509 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 4/17**

[April 17, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

All right. Fourteen days left in the month, inclusive. If I’m gonna meet my monthly goal of writing at least one novel per month and my annual goal of writing at least 15 on the year, I have to get hot. (grin)

By the way, that “get hot” thing isn’t pressure. For me, it’s a realization and good news.

And writing a short story or two along the way wouldn’t kill me either. (Donors, they’re coming.) Man, I just wanna play.

\* \* \*

I've been screwing around each morning for awhile now, just kind of hanging around the house, not going to "work" in the Hovel until daylight (around 6:30).

I kind'a have to do that because I let the other babies out at 5. Afterward, they want to go outside, and I don't allow them out while it's still dark without me being at my outside desk near the house.

This morning I thought about heading out early. But instead, I think I'll try writing fiction on my business computer. Then when I'm ready to go to the Hovel (after sunrise) I'll put what I've done on a flash drive and carry it out there.

Probably I'll start that tomorrow morning. As I write this, I've already been up for three hours and the sky is growing light.

Either way, I'm hoping this will be a great day of writing.

At this point I don't even really care what I write. I only care THAT I write. Being away from it for even a few days is driving me nuts. And yeah, that's a pretty short drive for me.

### **Topic: A Bit More on Goals, and Elephants**

On Dean's post from yesterday (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-fifteen-halfway-through-the-challenge/>), another commenter (Mike Lawrence) asked DWS whether he was writing his current short stories "in public." In other words, is there someplace he can go to view them now.

He isn't. He's writing them to compile a "month of April" story collection as well as to fill the pages of Smith's Monthly, his magazine.

I responded to the comment as well with a lesson I learned back when I was writing a short story every week. My streak reached 70 weeks before I broke it, pretty much intentionally.

With the advantage of hindsight, though, I've come to understand that I broke my own streak (again, intentionally) because of pressure I put on myself.

Because I was posting those stories "live" in the same week I wrote them, eventually the pressure of having to post one every week ate my goal and the streak.

In other words, posting a new story every week became more important to me than just writing the story in the first place.

So it wasn't fun anymore. The pressure of "having" to post a story each week sucked all the fun out of writing them. And that is what killed the streak.

As I wrote in my comment

I tried later to “restart” another one-a-week story [streak], but it never got off the ground because I couldn’t shake the elephant out of my head. I was writing [the stories] one at a time, but I could never shake the sense that I had to do that for at least 71 weeks to surpass what I’d already done.

So again, no fun. All pressure. And what I hoped would be a new streak never got off the ground.

So consider this topic a cautionary tip.

The only way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time. If you look up and realize you’re trying to eat the whole elephant, eating it suddenly becomes an impossibility.

Setting an overall (large) goal that you can attain if you reach is a great practice.

But it’s important that you break that overall goal into smaller goals that are still attainable within tighter timelines.

Meeting those smaller goals creates the streak (an accomplishment), which in turn feeds your self-esteem and the larger, overall goal.

But don’t pressure yourself with something silly like I did.

Or look at it like this:

Letting someone into your story (short or long) will often kill the story.

For that reason, I never let anyone into my work before it’s finished.

But by posting a story a week “live,” I was allowing those who subscribed to my Free Story of the Week into my streak without realizing it. And so it died.

As I also mentioned in my comment on DWS’ site, I probably will attempt to write one short story per day for a month some time.

But when I do, I’ll publish them individually and in collections (six 5-story, three 10-story, and one 30- or 31-story). I probably will “leak” some of them to my donors, but I definitely won’t write them “in public.”

I won’t risk it.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2 again, but I sacked out a little early last night. It’s all good.

I read newsletters, wrote the stuff above and in “Of Interest,” and played on FB to start the day.

Well, a little under 3000 words on the day, but it was still a great day. I finished a short story and wrote some extremely terse scenes. Total score!

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See “Story Sixteen and Still Going” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-sixteen-and-still-going/>.

If you’re interested in the Strengths Workshops, they’re all up and he’s offering a special deal: <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/strengths-workshops-available/>.

If you enjoy great Cajun humor, check out <https://www.facebook.com/LelandAndBo/videos/239439739744449/>.

## Fiction Words: 2977

Nonfiction Words: 890 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3867

## Writing of “Beats All” (short story)

Day 1..... 1743 words. Total words to date..... 1743

Day 2..... 2977 words. Total words to date..... 4720 (done)

## Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381

Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245

Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381

Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 17290

Total fiction words for the year..... 225846

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8900

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 66240

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 292086

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 510 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Goals](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 4/18](#)

[April 18, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, yesterday I reported finishing a short story titled “Beats All.”

Yesterday early evening I read it aloud to my wife. At the end, I frowned. “This sounds like the beginning of a novel, doesn’t it?”

(I’ve long known and preached the value of reading aloud. Yet I’m still amazed at how valuable it really is.)

She said, “Yes. It ended, but it isn’t finished.”

Okay. Ugh. Now I have two novels going concurrently. And they’re in the same world and feature some of the same characters.

The Platinum Blond Perturbance will be the third Detective Galecki novel and it’s told from his POV.

Beats All features Galecki and another detective, but it’s told from the POV of a minor criminal.

Before you ask whether I can combine these, this is not a mix-and-match situation. Each of these recent novels have been first-person single-POV efforts, something I’m practicing.

I only jumped ahead to “finish” Beats All yesterday because I was certain it was going to be a short story.

I’ve already removed it from the lineup below (I clean up the Notepad version of this Journal as my last act of business each day) so I won’t add it back until I start writing it again.

I still think it works as a short story. Sometime today I’ll put together a cover for it and get it out to donors.

Then it’s back to The Platinum Blond Perturbance.

**Topic: The Differences Between Amateurs and Professionals**

Really, this isn’t a topic so much as a tease. To read the whole post (it isn’t mine), please visit <https://medium.com/the-mission/the-7-differences-between-professionals-and-amateurs-f8efc4840861>.

Here are the highlights:

1. Amateurs wait for clarity. Pros take action.

2. Amateurs want to arrive. Pros want to get better.
3. Amateurs practice as much as they have to. Pros never stop.
4. Amateurs leap for their dreams. Pros build a bridge.
5. Amateurs fear failure. Pros crave it.
6. Amateurs build a skill. Pros build a portfolio.
7. Amateurs want to be noticed. Pros want to be remembered.

A lot of gems to be mined in Jeff Goins' article. I hope you'll visit.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 2. Routine stuff for the first hour or so, then wrote much of what's above this.

At 4 I decided to get the admin stuff out of the way. I created a cover for "Beats All You Ever Saw," then formatted and uploaded it to D2D and Amazon.

Finally I posted it to the Free Story page on my website, then emailed the .mobi copy to my donors. All of that took about an hour and a half.

Around 6:30 I signed up for a free Ko-Fi account. It's yet one more place where visitors to the site can make a donation or "Buy Me A Coffee" if they want. For an example, see my page at <https://ko-fi.com/A37113T2>.

Finally around 9 I started cycling through the novel, getting it back into my head. I'm not worrying about word count today. I just want to get back into it and see where it goes from there.

Well, I'll call this a good day, despite writing just over 2000 new words on the day. I guess I'm easing back into this one, but I'm still having a blast.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

From yesterday, via The Passive Voice, "The 7 Differences Between Professionals and Amateurs" at <https://medium.com/the-mission/the-7-differences-between-professionals-and-amateurs-f8efc4840861>.

Want to give folks a chance to buy you a coffee? Get your free Ko-Fi account at <https://ko-fi.com/>. (Thanks to Scott Gordon. See his site at <http://segordon.blogspot.com>.)

At Dean's, "Story Seventeen" <http://www.deanwesleymsmith.com/story-seventeen/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2201**

Nonfiction Words: 610 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2811

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381

Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245

Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381

Day 4..... 2201 words. Total words to date..... 7582

Total fiction words for the month..... 19491

Total fiction words for the year..... 228047

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9510

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 66850

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 294897

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 511 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 4/19**

[April 19, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Laundry day and a novel to write. Except for the "laundry day" part, could anything get better than that? (grin)

I'm gonna try to work on the novel up at the house today (since it's laundry day). We'll see how that works out.

Same old routine for the first few hours this morning. Not sure where it all went except for chatting on FB for a little while with my new friend Scott Gordon.

As you know, I love meeting new writing friends who are serious about learning and practicing the craft. I only wish we could all live close enough together to meet and talk writing once a month or so. Sigh.

As some of you know, I'm from the school of "If I've Done It Before, I Can Do It Again." Well, you know, within limitations. For example, I've completed a 3-mile run in under 18 minutes. That's never gonna happen again.

But the overall principle is valid, and it comes in handy when I'm retraining myself.

This morning, during one two-hour period, I alternately tended to laundry and wrote about 1000 words. Significantly, the writing was all on my business computer, at my outside desk and then at my office desk.

That isn't a lot of words, but at least I'm showing my subconscious we can write on this computer and away from my usual writing space.

That's important as I retrain myself to write in the early morning before I move out to the Hovel.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out way late at 4, but I guess I needed to sleep-in a bit.

Involved myself in the routine I mentioned above until around 7:30. That and started doing laundry.

7:30, to the novel at my desk in my office, then outside, then back inside.

9:20, a break to finish tending to laundry and some other small chores.

Finally to the Hovel around 10:30.

I wrote off and on most of the day while tending to a lot of little things around the house.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Some great comments on Dean's "Story Seventeen" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-seventeen/>.

More good stuff in his "Story Eighteen and Half-Title Pages Explained" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-eighteen-and-half-title-pages-explained/>.

And finally, if you'd like DWS to be your first reader, see "I Opened My Mouth... So Here Is How It Could Work" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/i-opened-my-mouth-so-here-is-how-it-could-work/>. Given all the gems he lets slip at times, this might be a really great deal.

His deal boils down to \$10 per story if you finish 30 stories in 60 days. Not too shabby at all.

And his first reader service is FREE if you finish 30 stories in 30 days.

Seriously, if you write short stories and you can handle it, give this some thought.

**Fiction Words: 2579**

Nonfiction Words: 460 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3039

**Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381

Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245

Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381

Day 4..... 2201 words. Total words to date..... 7582

Day 5..... 2579 words. Total words to date..... 10161

Total fiction words for the month..... 22070

Total fiction words for the year..... 230626

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9970

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 67310

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 297936

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 512 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Retraining](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 4/20**

[April 20, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, kind of a dismal showing today, but a showing none the less. (grin)

Listen, if any of these posts key your Share mode, please feel free to comment on your own “process” or techniques or day, etc. You never know what another reader might find of interest or even a gem.

Epiphanies are everywhere, and they depend on the reader’s perception, not the writer’s intention.

\*\*\*

Interesting morning. After I wrote the topic (below) I was on my way to the Hovel to write.

Then I remembered there were things we need at the store. So I hooked a U-turn, went back to the house, added some stuff to the list. Then I went to the store.

Got back, put stuff away, and decided to finish mowing a few places on the yard. So I did that.

Then I was hungry, so I got breakfast.

Then, finally, I headed for the Hovel. I grinned all the way knowing now I'd get to play.

\*\*\*

All things considered, I seem to be relaxing my way through this novel. It's wonderful to feel that confident and comfortable, but already (less than 12,000 words in) I'll be glad when this one's finished so I can write the next one. Oh oh. (grin)

I think I'm tired of the world this one is set in. I already have the next one in the series started, too. But I think I'll take a break from this world on the next one and write in a different genre, different world.

### **Topic: On Word Counts and Averages and Productivity**

Scott Gordon lit my fuse on this topic in a comment on the 4/19/2017 edition of the Journal, so blame him. (grin)

Scott mentioned that he feels he needs a daily word count goal in order to attain his larger, longer-term goals.

Nothing wrong with that at all. As most of you know, I've done the same thing. In fact, I did it for most of the past three years.

Only recently did I discard the daily word count goal as a tool in my own arsenal. That action had two effects: the number of days I actually wrote decreased. But the average number of words on the days that I did write INcreased. Go figure.

But the daily word count goal can be useful.

If you want to write a particular number of words in a week or month or year, breaking that overall number into smaller segments (a daily goal) helps a great deal.

For me, the daily word count goal served its purpose. It provided a necessary catalyst to get me to where I am now as a writer. If you're familiar with Maslow's Heirarchy, I've attained self-actualization as a writer.

That doesn't mean I've mastered the craft or anything like that. It means the act of writing, in and of itself, is of the utmost importance.

Even publishing what I write is second to that in importance. Everything else (promotions, reviews, sales, etc.) is third. A very distant third.

Just as an example, one of my own "big" goals used to be to hit 1,000,000 words of published fiction in a year.

But one day I realized (for me) that's only a number. I routinely hit around 800,000 words of fiction per year anyway. Shrug. So for me, that goal lost its importance.

Still, I reiterate, using a daily word count goal is a great idea if it's something you want or need to do to help you attain your writing goals.

But bear in mind, in this game the Average is what matters.

There are life rolls, emergencies, family time and other reasons for non-writing or little-writing days. And that's fine. You're human.

Most people think I'm prolific. Well, I'm not. Not when compared with the old pulp writers, many of whom far exceeded 1,000,000 words of published fiction per year. On manual, non-electric typewriters.

But I do pay attention to two particular averages.

One is the average number of words per calendar day. That's to keep me humble.

The other is the average number of words per WRITING day. That's to keep my spirits up. (grin)

So how's that workin' out for you, Harv? Well, let's take a look.

Through yesterday, April 19 2017, I've written 230,626 words of publishable fiction.

Sounds like a lot, huh?

But if I didn't write another word of fiction this year beginning today, my mean average for the year on December 31 would be only 631 words per day. (So about a half-hour of work per day.)

But let's focus back down to reality.

Thus far (through April 19) there have been 109 days this year. Over that 109 calendar days, my average is only 2115 words per day. Given that my typical daily word count goal was 3,000 words per day, that isn't good. (See? Humility is a good thing.)

However, among those 109 days I've had 37 nonwriting days. (*Over a month of nonwriting days!*)

So over the remaining 72 days (the actual writing days), my average is 3203 words per day.

(To put that in perspective, had I written 3203 words per day all 109 days thus far this year, my publishable fiction word count would be up to 349,127 words. Sigh.)

Now, having figured all of this out for this topic, what's the take-away?

Well, that's up to you.

For me personally, I'm determined to have more writing days and fewer nonwriting days.

See, for me the secret is no longer a daily word count goal. I know if I write I'll average around 3,000 words per day.

Oh, and I also hate seeing "XXXX" in the "Fiction Words" section below. (grin)

So now I'm gonna go write.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 and spent the first three hours or so writing this stuff and doing little else.

Around 7, I was on my way to write and a bunch of other stuff happened.

At 10, finally to the Hovel and the novel. Around 10:50, a break.

11:10, back to the novel.

Took a break around noon, almost an hour. (At that point, as it turns out, my day was pretty much over.) I posted some pics to FB, etc. and back to the novel around 1.

I wrote a little, then decided to take a walk in the desert out back with my grandson and my camera.

A really short day on the novel today. But somehow that's okay.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Five" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-five/>. Great stuff.

Then “Story Nineteen and Some Updates on Challenge” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-nineteen-and-some-updates-on-challenge/>. Really wish I had the \$600 for this, or that there were two online workshops I still wanted to take. (grin)

Also some good comments on Dean’s original post about the short story challenge: <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/i-opened-my-mouth-so-here-is-how-it-could-work/>.

And finally (at Dean’s), “Quick Update to Short Story Challenge” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/quick-update-to-short-story-challenge/>.

Also via The Passive Voice, see “How a self-published author inspired by Stephen King knocked his idol from the top spot on Amazon” at <http://www.cnbc.com/2017/04/18/self-published-author-inspired-by-stephen-king-beats-idol-on-amazon.html>.

### **Fiction Words: 1344**

Nonfiction Words: 1130 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2474

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... 2201 words. Total words to date..... 7582  
Day 5..... 2579 words. Total words to date..... 10161  
Day 6..... 1344 words. Total words to date..... 11505

Total fiction words for the month..... 23414  
Total fiction words for the year..... 231970  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11100  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 68440

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 300410

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 512 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 4/21**

[April 21, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, in the midst of writing the topic below, I came up with a new challenge for myself. I'll announce it in the next couple of days.

There's an exciting new writing bundle out from StoryBundle. I bought it first thing this morning. To check it out, visit <https://storybundle.com/writing>.

I strongly recommend you drop \$15 and buy this bundle. Even if only so you can get DWS' lecture on Lester Dent's Master Plot Formula lecture (a \$50 value).

For one thing you'll get a ton of great information on structure. For a second, as I've said many times, DWS inadvertently lets slip a LOT of gems in his lectures. Oh, and there are some good books in this bundle too. (grin)

Speaking of gems, I happened across these "20 Writing Tips from Fiction Authors" at <http://www.iuniverse.com/Resources/Writing-Editing/20WritingTipsfrom12FictionAuthors.aspx>.

My recommendation (as always) is that you take to heart what feels right to you and ignore the rest.

### **Topic: Shut Up, Conscious Mind!**

I'm writing this stuff in the spirit of honesty and up-frontnicity, right? So I have to tell you, for a little while today I thought this story, my WIP, was grinding to a halt.

And even with all my practice, I didn't recognize the problem for awhile.

The other day I thought I knew how the rest of the story was going to go. So that made it boring to me. I almost shelved it then.

And then for the past couple of days, it's been like pulling teeth. I mean think about it. I went to the store rather than write. I mowed part of the yard rather than write.

But then a little while ago, a friend sent me half a boatload of Ko-Fi through my new account. (Thanks!)

That caused me to get on my hotspot (I'm in the Hovel) so I could thank him.

While I was there (natch) I checked email and then Facebook. Occasionally on FB I mention how the writing's going. (That's pretty much the sum total of "marketing" that I do.)

And while I was on FB, I saw a couple places where I noted how much fun it is to just tell a story.

And that's when it hit me. With this novel, at least over the past few days, I wasn't just telling a story. I wasn't playing. I wasn't having fun.

Instead, I was worrying about length. I was fretting over details in the setting. I was mentally haranguing myself (yes, haranguing!) about characters and situations and pretty much everything else.

The one thing I wasn't doing was writing.

See, this thing I'm writing, this story, is supposed to be noir, detective, pulp-type stuff.

By the way, "pulp" is not synonymous with "bad." If anything, it's synonymous with "entertaining."

So this is supposed to be a thrill ride. It's supposed to be fun. More to the point, pulp is a work that's strongly dependent on a single POV (detective or PI, perp, or victim).

In pulp story writing, the writer controls the pacing, whether slow or fast. (The slower parts make the faster parts seem even more intense.) That's what makes it fun to write and that's what makes it entertaining.

You absolutely can not "think" (conscious mind) your way through a pulp story. As we used to say in the Marine Corps, the gunny's job (now the writer's job) is to lay his ears back and attack in all directions. (grin)

So now that I checked in with myself, laid my craven soul bare and slapped my conscious mind around a bit, back to the novel. Or novella. Whatever it's gonna be.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Coffee and foolishness for the first couple hours.

Over the next couple of hours, I checked Dean's site and wrote a lot of this stuff. I also listened to the first few sessions of DWS' lecture on LD's Master Plot Formula, and then researched some stuff online that he mentioned. Some of those gems I talk about on here.

Then I remembered I have a novel or something to write and finish. (grin) It would be entirely too easy for me to take a day off and just read and learn. But I'll make time for that after this WIP is finished.

7:10, to the Hovel. I opened the novel, looked at it for a moment and drew a blank. Usually that's a sign that I took a wrong direction a short way back. I played a few games of spider solitaire.

Then around 8 I took a short walk to clear the cobwebs. Weird day. But it's okay. I feel like this thing's on the verge of breaking loose.

9:20 back to the Hovel and the novel.

11:40. Wow. I've done hardly anything on the novel. Then I realized I was trying to do too much. I was "thinking." Ugh.

I stopped and wrote the topic above. Then I wrote about the challenge I'm considering. I'll post that tomorrow or the next day.

12:30. Now that I got my head clear on what I'm supposed to be doing, back to it.

Calling it a day a little early today but a good day, considering.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

As you might expect, some very enlightening comments on Dean's "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Five" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-five/>.

He also has "Story Twenty" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty/>. And in case you're one who skims, not a bad idea to read that whole post, at least through "STORY CHALLENGE... Get Me to Read 30 Short Stories." Some gems there.

Finally, he also talks about a "Major New Writing Bundle" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/major-new-writing-bundle/>. This one was curated by Kristine Kathryn Rusch, and she also explains what's in the bundle. You even get a WMG lecture.

As I mentioned above, I've already bought this one. Just in case you want it to, the purchase link is <https://storybundle.com/writing>.

### **Fiction Words: 2513**

Nonfiction Words: 960 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3473

### **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... 2201 words. Total words to date..... 7582  
Day 5..... 2579 words. Total words to date..... 10161  
Day 6..... 1344 words. Total words to date..... 11505  
Day 7..... 2513 words. Total words to date..... 14018

Total fiction words for the month..... 25927  
Total fiction words for the year..... 234483  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12060  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 69400

Total words for the year (fiction and nonfiction)..... 303883

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 513 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 4/22**

[April 22, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I spent much of the early morning watching and listening to DWS' "Lester Dent Master Plot Formula."

Wow. It was as informative as I hoped (and more so) and chock full of gems. I hope you'll take this opportunity to get it through the StoryBundle offer I mentioned yesterday.

If you didn't, and in case you're interested, here's the link again:

<https://storybundle.com/writing>.

Again, you get nine books on the craft or business of writing PLUS the DWS lecture as well as a couple of coupons for \$\$-off on some products that some writers swear by.

\*\*\*

If you're thinking of taking Dean up on his "first reader" challenge, take time to read "One Added Note" in "Story Twenty-One" in Of Interest below. His offer just keeps getting better.

Also, his "Point of Interest" in the same post kind of tickled me from a personal standpoint. You'll see why.

\*\*\*

It's Saturday, so I'm not sure what the day will hold. Our time with Bryan is growing short, so I'm leaving myself (and my priorities) more open to doing things with family on weekends. So we'll see.

I'm gonna give a little more thought to the challenge I mentioned yesterday before I post it here.

Yesterday also, I happened upon the idea for my next novel. I'll be returning to the world of Wes Crowley for an 11th novel (my 28th overall).

**Topic: What Is Possible**

A bit of history. When I wrote my first-ever novel, *Leaving Amarillo*, I thought it would be a one-off.

But it needed a sequel. So I wrote *Longing for Mexico*. Then I wrote *South to Mexico*. I thought that was the last novel in a three-book series.

Then I wrote a novella and another novel in a different world.

But Wes tugged on my sleeve, wanting me to tell more of his story that happened before “*Leaving Amarillo*.” He also wanted me to talk about what he did in Mexico once he got there.

So I wrote three prequels (so novels 1, 2, and 3 in the eventual series) and then two sequels (so novels 7 and 8) in the series. Again, I thought I was finished.

After that I wrote an SF novel, and then book 9 of the Wes Crowley series. And I thought that was absolutely the end of the Crowley series. No more. End of story.

So I wrote a thriller. Then I wrote a mystery novel, then another SF novel, and then a war novel.

Then I wrote novel 10 of the Crowley series. Again, I was certain it ended the story. Absolutely certain. (grin)

Let’s pause for just a moment to think about that. A 10-novel series plus several short stories in that same world came from what I thought was going to be a one-off novel. Go figure.

Then, with the Crowley stuff finally behind me, I wrote a contemporary western thriller (though it did feature a descendent of Wes Crowley), then another SF novel and then a sweeping SF thriller about a superbug that made its way to Earth.

Then another feel-good, they-came-here SF novel, then a future-earth SF novella, and then the sequel to an earlier SF novel.

After that I wrote one more SF novel that takes place off the planet (and begs for a sequel) before dipping my pen into my two latest novels. Those and my WIP are pulp-detective-fiction-action-adventure-mystery-thrillers (grin).

And when I finish the current WIP, I’m looking forward to writing novel 11 of the Crowley series.

Only I’m no longer gonna try to foretell the future and say this will be the last one. ‘Cause after all, what do I know? (grin)

Oh, and for those of you who are relatively new to this Journal, all of that (and over 100 short stories) were since October 19, 2014. So almost exactly two and a half years.

Anyway, that's what's possible when you just follow Heinlein's Rules. You can get a free, clean copy by clicking <http://harveystanbrough.com/heinleins-business-habits-for-writers/>. (If

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. Spent the first few hours writing the stuff above, then playing around. That included email, FB and DWS vids. Then to Dean's site and the places it led me.

After breakfast, to the Hovel and the novel at 9:30.

I got a good start, then walked down to the house for a break with family at around 10:20.

Around 11 my wife and I took a quick walk out back, then grabbed some lunch. Back to the novel around 12:30.

With around 1500 words, another break at 1:30. Back to the novel at 1:50.

Well, a lot of cycling today, so another slow day on the story. I think this one's gonna wrap as a novella. I can't be sure just yet.

I hope it'll wrap tomorrow or the next day. I guess we'll see.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "Story Twenty-One" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-one/>. An interesting read that pulls him back into the realm of us "beginners."

Dean also links to "Nifty Resource for Covers" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/nifty-resource-for-covers/>.

For more information, you can go directly to The Digital Reader at <http://the-digital-reader.com/2017/04/21/14-sites-making-spectacular-book-cover/>. You can also sign up for their newsletter to receive "the latest news on ebooks and digital publishing."

I also ran across this: <https://designschool.canva.com/how-to-design-book-covers/>.

Enjoy!

## **Fiction Words: 2149**

Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3029

## **Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance**

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... 2201 words. Total words to date..... 7582  
Day 5..... 2579 words. Total words to date..... 10161  
Day 6..... 1344 words. Total words to date..... 11505  
Day 7..... 2513 words. Total words to date..... 14018  
Day 8..... 2149 words. Total words to date..... 16167

Total fiction words for the month..... 28076  
Total fiction words for the year..... 236632  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12940  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 702800

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 306912

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 514 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 4 novels  
Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 26 (includes 2 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 4/23**

[April 23, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I woke up Sunday mornin' with no way to hold my head that didn't hurt...

For some reason, I woke up with that in my mind.

I love that song, "Sunday Mornin' Comin' Down" by Kris Kristofferson, one of America's foremost poets in my estimation.

My own head isn't hurting except with the hope that my novella will wrap today or tomorrow. Though I do love my whiskey and have several bottles on hand.

But I love a clear head more, so I don't imbibe other than very rarely.

I currently have my two favorites — Jameson & Sons and Jim Beam — as well as Beam's Devil's Cut and a very special bottle of Rebel Yell. A friend gave me that. I was so ignorant that I opened it before I understood it was a collector's item.

One'a these days....

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out at 3 and per usual spent a few hours just playing. I did do one bit of creative work, creating a meme using a photo of a wiseguy and a two-word quote from a Berkeley cop: “Okay... And?” Great fun. At the expense of a very unprofessional professional.

Around 7, one more cup of coffee and out to the Hovel and the novel.

I cycled and wrote off and on for about an hour. Then Mona and I took a walk, just a couple miles out back.

Wow. Every story writes differently, but I hope I never have another one like this. Too convoluted, so too many opportunities for the critical mind to jump in and try to “figure things out.”

And OMG ugh. I’m definitely through writing in this world for awhile.

Anyway, I got the thing finished today. And since I include novellas in my novel count (easier than saying 20+ novels and three novellas), my annual goal for novels has just increased from 15 to 16.

Tomorrow’s schedule is up in the air until Bryan calls Job Corps. If they say “Come on down,” I’ll have a trip to Tucson tomorrow. If not, I’ll write and the trip will come later.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Some great comments and thought-provoking (and sometimes frown-provoking) questions at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-one/#comments>.

His “Story Twenty-Two” is pretty good too. See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-two/>.

## Fiction Words: 2571

Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2901

## Writing of The Platinum Blond Perturbance

Day 1..... 1381 words. Total words to date..... 1381  
Day 2..... 1864 words. Total words to date..... 3245  
Day 3..... 2136 words. Total words to date..... 5381  
Day 4..... 2201 words. Total words to date..... 7582  
Day 5..... 2579 words. Total words to date..... 10161  
Day 6..... 1344 words. Total words to date..... 11505

Day 7..... 2513 words. Total words to date..... 14018  
Day 8..... 2149 words. Total words to date..... 16167  
Day 9..... 2571 words. Total words to date..... 18738 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 30647  
Total fiction words for the year..... 239203  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 70610

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 309813

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 515 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 5 novels  
Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 27 (includes 3 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 4/24](#)

[April 24, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Some folks' need for boundaries is amazing to me. To see what I mean, read the comment by "Patrick R" on Dean's <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-one/> and then Dean's response.

With appropriate respect to Patrick R, I found the exchange hilarious.

\*\*\*

I did a spell check of The Platinum Blond Perturbance yesterday after I finished it. Ugh. Even writing the promo doc for this one was like pulling teeth.

And there are people who spend months or years writing a novel? I swear, I think I'd shoot myself. Or at least go find something fun to do.

This morning I'm going to create a cover and get it out. I want this thing off my desk.

For some reason this one really annoyed me. This is one of those that I was tempted to let die a few times. Even now I'm tempted to just throw it away instead of publishing it.

Fortunately, in my mind DWS keeps saying "What right do you have to pre-judge what the reader will like?"

And doubly fortunately, that admonishment was borne-out the last time I wrote something that I thought sucked canal water from all 50 states.

Not surprisingly, I don't remember the title, but it was a short story. And the day after I published it, a reader emailed me to tell me it was one of the best things she'd ever read.

Go figure.

Remember that, folks.

1. Writers really ARE the worst judges of their own work, not only when they think it's good, but when they think it's horrible.
2. Every value judgement really does come down to the reader's taste. Period.

\*\*\*

Well, Bryan finally got through to JobCorps at about 9, only to hear "call back in two weeks." That's what they said two weeks ago.

Well, I guess it'll be what it'll be. But I'm annoyed to say the least. The last WIP plus this has me wanting to do odd things. I'll leave it at that.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. I kept waking up and then just lying there until I went back to sleep.

I spent the first two hours reading stuff online. Spent the next couple getting a cover done and getting The Platinum Blond Perturbance distributed and uploaded to BundleRabbit.

Went to lunch with my grandson, then updated HarveyStanbrough.com and StoneThreadPublishing.com with the new book.

Nonwriting day today.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, "Story Twenty-Three plus stuff" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-three-plus-stuff/>.

From The Digital Reader (<http://the-digital-reader.com>) a compilation of tweets chock full of URLs for you to research and read if you're interested. See <http://the-digital-reader.com/2017/04/22/paul-bibas-ebook-elibrary-emuseum-epublishing-news-compilation-week-ending-saturday-april-22/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 440 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 440

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 30647  
Total fiction words for the year..... 239203  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13710  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 71050

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 310253

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 516 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)... 5 novels  
Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 27 (includes 3 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 4/25**

[April 25, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A few days ago I mentioned that I had an idea for an 11th novel in the Wes Crowley saga. A few of you cheered. Thanks for that.

Part of my reasoning was that the last novel (and the saga) didn't end the way I wanted it to. Several other readers also noted it didn't end the way it would have if they were the protagonist.

So I was all set to pull a Hollywood cheat. I was thinking maybe Wes had dreamed (nightmared, more specifically) book 10. I was going to have him wake up at the beginning of book 11 and go on with the story from there after shaking off the dregs of the nightmare.

But in preparation for writing that novel, I read over part of book 10, *The Right Cut*, this morning.

know what? The saga is finished. Just as I thought it was when I finished writing book 10 in June of last year.

And the ending was completely satisfying.

It still didn't end the way it would have ended if I (or others, apparently) had been the protagonist.

But I wasn't. Nor were others. The protagonist was Wes. Writing this particular book 11 would have turned Wes into someone he's never been.

So no, I won't do that.

More than anyone else I've ever known, Wes always lived up to the ideal that being upright is not a matter of degree.

As it is, the series explores Wes' life from the time he was 15 years old until he was nearing 60. And that's enough.

Oh, someday I might put together a collection of Crowley stories that he's telling his grandchildren or something like that. Of course, they would be stories that are not contained in the saga. We'll see.

But the saga, the main story of Wes Crowley, is finished.

For those of you who read only paper editions (no ebooks), I can tell you The Right Cut will be out in paper in a week or so. (grin)

As for me, well, beginning today, it's a whole new world. Time to write something new.

*Para ahora, adios, Wes Crowley, mi amigo.*

\*\*\*

I'm still planning another challenge. Soon. But it's something for which I'll need to take Dean's advice and "clear the decks," meaning prepare the way for fewer distractions.

At the moment, I'm in the midst of a life roll, so it'll be awhile yet before I announce the new challenge.

I can tell you it will have a great deal to do with actually writing in public. Beyond that, frankly, I haven't figured it out yet.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3. I spent most of the morning in a haze of general confusion. Mostly that means my brain was so full of thoughts it was difficult to grasp one, or even tail one to any kind of logical conclusion.

I messed around most of the day, looking at old story starts, old ideas. Nothing caught my interest.

I looked at a file of character names I have.

I looked through about 700 stock photos.

I looked at some old titles I have lying around.

Nothing.

Around 2:30, finally, my gaze lit on a file name in my Writing folder in my Dropbox.

I opened it, and there I found a quote that I liked so much I'd written it down and saved it.

The quote was from a friend and writing colleague. If I remember correctly, it was originally a caption that accompanied a photo of a wild flower. He posted it on Facebook.

The quote? "No matter how hard the ground, beauty finds a way out." (Thanks, Dan.)

Bingo.

I wrote "How Hard the Ground" across the top of a clean screen. Then I started writing.

About 500 words in, I realized it's gonna be another mystery thing. Short or long, I don't know yet. But a lot of rather morose fun.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Six" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-six/>.

"Story Twenty-four" is at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-four/>.

Some fun in the comments on Dean's post from yesterday at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-three-plus-stuff/#comments>.

This just in: I strongly recommend you read the comments under "Robert Prisig Dies at 88" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/04/robert-pirsig-dies-at-88/>. Specifically, the comment by Tom Simon. Really great stuff.

### **Fiction Words: 1807**

Nonfiction Words: 690 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2497

**Writing of How Hard the Ground** (story or novel)

Day 1..... 1807 words. Total words to date..... 1807

Total fiction words for the month..... 32454  
Total fiction words for the year..... 241010  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14400  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 71740

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 312750

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 517 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (16 novels)... 5 novels  
Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 27 (includes 3 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 4/26**

[April 26, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Very short post today. Knowing me, I'll be back with longer stuff tomorrow.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Dabbled in what people call "politics" for awhile, but that isn't an intense enough word.

5:30, I set aside the impulse to chew wheels and spit nails and escaped to the story. Cycling, of course.

Wrote for about a half-hour, then got busy around the yard, then a walk with my wife, then Walmart, then the PO. Finally back at 9:30, updated FB and checked email.

Almost 3 when I got back to the story. Did a TON of cycling. This is an odd duck. I don't like present tense writing. It sounds like stage direction to me. But this story felt like it lent itself to it, so I tried it. First reader has it now. We'll see.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Wonderfully interesting comments on Dean's "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Six" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-six/comments/>. It's almost another entire blog post.

Also see “Story Twenty-five” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-five/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1133**

Nonfiction Words: 170 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1303

### **Writing of How Hard the Ground** (short story)

Day 1..... 1807 words. Total words to date..... 1807

Day 2..... 1133 words. Total words to date..... 2940 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 33587

Total fiction words for the year..... 242143

Total nonfiction words for the month... 14570

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 71910

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 314053

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 518 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (16 novels)... 5 novels

Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 27 (includes 3 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Short Fiction](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 4/27](#)**

[April 27, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Today is a nonwriting day for fiction. It’s currently only around 1:30, and I’m making the call.

I’m in the Hovel, where I’m going to enjoy a good cigar in solitude and do something completely useless, like play solitaire or something. Then I’m going to finish a few chores at the house and call it a day.

I spent much of the morning doing things around the house, including putting a new screen on the upper panel of our front screen door, doing some laundry, stuff like that.

I went to the Hovel in the late morning and wrote most of what you see below. After that, as I began to cast about for something to write, my grandson came in.

For the next couple of hours he and I jumped through various federal and state and local bureaucratic hoops.

Finally, after we ran in frustrating circles for a couple of hours, Bryan's phone rang. It was yet another bureaucrat, but one of the rarest kind. Not only does she actually DO her job, but today she went out of her way to do her job.

In fact, she called us to clarify, simplify and set aside much of the instruction we'd been given by another bureaucrat earlier.

All we had to do, she said, was call our contact at Job Corps and have that person call her. She would personally fax the records directly to them on our behalf. End of story.

In short order, she rendered everything we'd done over the past two hours for the OTHER bureaucrat completely unnecessary.

Which is fine, because at least we learned some things from having to deal with the earlier bureaucrat, never mind the stress levels and the otherwise wasted two hours of our lives.

Like we learned how to use the combination copier/scanner/printer (I haven't done that for years); and how to fill out an Official Request Form online and then print it for signature and then scan it into a .jpg file —

So we could email them to him.

Me: Wait, what? Back up. We can EMAIL this stuff to you?

Bureaucrat: Yes, of course.

Me: Hmm. So then the signature isn't really necessary, since you're going to be looking at a picture of the document. I mean, how can you be sure who signed it?

Bureaucrat, after a pregnant pause: Ha! Y'know, I guess you're right. (Insert laugh track here.) Hey, how about that? Now ain't that just the funniest thing?

What I Wanted to Say: (Insert series of expletives, many never before uttered in that particular order in this solar system.)

What I actually said: No. No, it isn't.

And that's what I hate about cell phones. It doesn't have the same satisfying SLAM we used to get when we'd slam a telephone receiver into a cradle.

Oh, the issue? We wanted to get Bryan's HS transcripts for Job Corps. Which we were initially told Job Corps had gotten for themselves a couple of weeks ago.

So it was one'a dem days. Life rolls, eh?

Anyway, here's the topic I wrote earlier.

## **Topic: On Practice**

One of the invaluable lessons I've picked up from DWS over the past few years is that a writer must practice.

His way (and the way that works best for me) is to pick one or two techniques that interest him, and then practice that (or those) in the next work.

That's why I've been writing pulp detective fiction.

For one thing, the shorter novel (by definition, 25,000 to 44,999 words) is very interesting to me, and pulp readers expect shorter novels.

But the other, more important reason, is that I wanted to simultaneously study and practice writing high-tension, bang-bang-bang, action-adventure, thriller-type scenes.

And the cliffhangers and hooks that go with them.

Why? Because you only have to know four techniques to sell your stories:

1. Ground the reader in the scene. (In brief, experience the setting through the physical and emotional senses of the POV character.)
2. Write suspenseful, high-tension scenes.
3. Close (or "end," but I prefer "close") each scenes with a cliffhanger.
4. Open the next scene with a strong hook.

If you do those four things, the reader won't be able to put your book down.

In case of a house fire, right after the children and the dog, your book will be the first thing that makes it out alive.

In fact, your book will probably be tucked under the reader's arm while he's rounding up the kids and the dog.

But I digress.

After my latest novella was finished, I wanted desperately to be finished with writing "pulp detective" fiction — or at least with the main character in my last two novels and that novella.

In some ways, the guy's weak, and I don't like that. The detective in a pulp mystery or thriller should never be weak, at least not in any major way.

He can appear weak intentionally to set a trap (Columbo) or he can appear “sensitive” blah blah blah.

But he can't be indecisive or allow others to take the lead in his cases. And this guy even did that at least once.

So I'm through with him until he grows up. In fact, I might write one more with a different POV character and have Galecki killed off. Something. Shrug. I dunno.

Anyway, this morning I realized I'm not through practicing writing those suspenseful, high-tension scenes, cliffhangers and hooks.

And I'm not through practicing writing the two levels of pacing that go along with that. (The Two Levels of Pacing will be another topic.)

So whatever I write next, it will contain those kind of scenes because that's what I want to practice. Also I enjoy it.

Of course, such scenes can be written in literally any genre. I know I can write them in westerns or SF or pulp detective.

In fact, genre doesn't matter at all when it comes to this sort of psychological suspense-filled stuff because it's merely an interplay among characters or between the POV character and some part(s) of the setting.

I'm competent at doing this, according to various readers' input. My writing has never been called “thin,” for example (even when I thought it was).

And more than several times readers have gone out of their way to tell me they felt as if they were there, in the scene with the characters. Ba-ba-ba-bingo!

But I'm not expert at it by any means, and it's what I want to practice at the moment.

Give it some thought. What are you practicing?

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30. After email etc. I did some stuff around the house. Then Bryan got a phone call. Then the stuff above happened.

1 p.m., back out here to the Hovel to write the stuff before the topic and enjoy a cigar.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

“Story Twenty-Six” at <http://www.deanwesleymsmith.com/story-twenty-six/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1080 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1080

Writing of

Day 1 ..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 33587  
Total fiction words for the year..... 242143  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15650  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 72990

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 315133

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 519 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (16 novels)... 5 novels  
Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 27 (includes 3 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 4/28**

[April 28, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, the first reader for “How Hard the Ground” enjoyed it, so it goes to market today.

Of course, he’s alone with me often, miles from anywhere, way out in the desert. And he knows how well I can shoot.

So that might have had a lot to do with his positive report. (grin)

But I’ll take it.

**Topic: The Two Levels of Pacing**

If you’ve been following me or my work for any length of time, you know I enjoy studying and applying pacing.

Overall, pacing means doing things to make the reader move through the book very fast when you want him to (action scenes) and doing things to make him slow down (rest) when and where you want him to (lunch or a day off for a picnic with the family or something).

There are a lot of tricks to that overall story pacing. Shorter sentences and shorter paragraphs and less dialogue, for example, for a fast-paced scene. The reverse, pretty much, for a slower-paced scene.

But here I want to talk about the second level of pacing. What I call Internal Pacing. Pacing inside an action scene.

Even in the midst of high-tension action scenes, the POV character notices things he wouldn't ordinarily notice.

Realizing and understanding that and letting it come through your story will add another level of reality.

Plus it's a ton of fun if you enjoy being inside your POV character's head. And you should.

This is the point where you get to work with nuances. For that reason, these are the scenes to which I most often cycle back to let my character add detail when necessary. The POV character is in the heat of battle.

And you have to balance the bang-bang action with a description of the setting. (This is from within the character, remember.)

And the description isn't normal either. This is what the character sees, hears, smells, tastes and so on while his senses are in that heightened, adrenaline-fueled state.

If you've ever been in a car accident or other high-tension situation, you know what I mean. It's as if visual and auditory representations of what's going on come to you in stop-action, frame-by-frame pictures and sounds.

For a quick example, say you've come to a complete stop behind a flatbed truck that's stopped at a stop sign.

His right turn signal is on.

You look to the left and see that nothing's coming.

The guy in the truck lets off his brake and begins forward, so you let off your brake, assuming he's going to turn.

But for some inexplicable reason, he brakes again and stops.

And you brake again, probably hard. But the road is covered with ice.

You know you're going to slide forward and hit that ominous thick, flatbed truck and there is nothing you can do about it.

Still, you feel your eyes grow larger, you feel your grip tighten on the steering wheel, you feel yourself pressing harder on the brake.

And you see the hood of your car inching inexorably closer and closer to the ugly steel bumper on the back of the truck.

Everything slows down to a crawl during that intervening second or two. And then BAM, the hood of your car crumples and you're back to real time.

Now, does describing the setting inside an action scene slow the action?

No. It adds a great deal of depth (and reality) to the action rather than glazing over the surface of it.

As always, questions and comments are welcome.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out actually at a little after midnight. Sometimes that's how things work out.

I busied myself with email etc., then took a few pictures soon after first light.

Around 9:30 I moved out to the Hovel and started a new story.

11, a break and up to the house. My brain's working a little slower today.

12:18... well, that "break" turned into a whole thing. I ordered something for my grandson through Amazon. Amazon sent me an email saying it was delivered 2 days ago. Um, no, it wasn't.

So I went to the PO. ("Do you have a tracking number?")

So I went home, got my computer, and went back to the PO.

They looked up the tracking number. Said the package was delivered to MY address in St. David (my town) but after that, in Litchfield Park, up near Phoenix.

My PO got on the phone with the LP PO. Guy said it was delivered.

Wonderful. So I'm out \$10.

I went to Amazon, left “feedback” for the place that sold me what I ordered, then went to Ebay and ordered the same thing. It cost a little more, but it will be here in three days. And Amazon can bite me. (grin)

12:30, back to the story.

1:30, finished the story at exactly 1900 words. How weird is that? Plus it’s a weird story.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

“Story Twenty-Seven in Twenty-Seven Days” at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/story-twenty-seven-in-twenty-seven-days/>. Not a lot in this one.

See “A Novel Challenge” at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/a-novel-challenge/>. This is a really cool challenge. If you’ve ever wanted to push yourself and get expert feedback (possibly free), this is your chance.

## Fiction Words: 1900

Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2780

## Writing of Suction Cups (short story)

Day 1..... 1900 words. Total words to date..... 1900 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 35487

Total fiction words for the year..... 244043

Total nonfiction words for the month... 16530

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 73870

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 317913

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 520 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (16 novels)... 5 novels

Total novels to date (since Oct 19, 2014)... 27 (includes 3 novellas)

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 4/29](#)

[April 29, 2017](#)

Hey Folks,

Well, yesterday, even with my brain pretty much toast at around 2 p.m., I created a cover for “Suction Cups,” then a promo doc.

Then I published both “Suction Cups” and the story from a couple days ago, “How Hard the Ground” to D2D and Amazon, then uploaded both to BundleRabbit.

This morning I uploaded both to the website in the Free Short Story tab. One is up now, and the other is scheduled for a couple of weeks from now.

I also sent both of them to my donors. Thanks, all of you.

\*\*\*

During the process of preparing the stories to be posted on my site, I realized the second story (Suction Cups) feels like it’s part of a novel.

Maybe so, maybe no. I’m taking a couple nonwriting days today and tomorrow. I’ll fire up again on Monday, 1 May.

My goal this year is to write at least one novel per month as well as 15 novels on the year. Shouldn’t be all that difficult if I can stop frittering away days.

But the calendar thing gets me. After I finished the novella, there wasn’t time (the way I write) to begin and finish a second novel or novella this month.

That’s the main reason I wrote short stories over the past few days instead of starting a new novel.

But that’s just dumb. So beginning on May 1, no more wasting days to wait for the beginning of a new month.

I’ve written 4 novels in 4 months so far, plus a novella. So to hit my annual goal of 15, that means I have to write 11 novels in the remaining 8 months. I can do that.

Oh, I’m also tracking pretty much everything now down at the bottom of this.

\*\*\*

Hey, if any of you have a topic you’d like me to discuss, or one that you’d like me to discuss in greater detail, please email me. Many of my topics come from questions I’m asked in emails.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. I was very briefly busy with my routine stuff, then uploaded both short stories to my site, etc.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Some interesting comments on Dean's "A Novel Challenge" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-novel-challenge/#comments>.

Then see his "Story Twenty-Eight" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-eight/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 380 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 380

Writing of May Novel (novel)

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 35487  
Total fiction words for the year..... 244043  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16910  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 74250

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 318293

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 521 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 166

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 4/30](#)

[April 30, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Yesterday, after I filed my Journal, I was out in the Hovel messing around. Bought a new shop vac and carried it out there.

After I set it where I wanted it, I thought I'd enjoy a cigar and a few games of Spider. So I sat down at my writing 'puter, raised the lid and turned on the mouse.

And the first sentence of a short story popped into my head.

So I opened Word, hit Enter a couple times to move down the page, and started writing. I wrote a quick opening (around 250 words), then closed the computer. (grin) I love when that happens.

The fiction I wrote yesterday is included in today's total.

\*\*\*

Interesting morning around here. About 3:30 I was visiting Facebook when I heard what I thought was my little girl. It was a kind of distressed sound, but not her typical Siamese growl.

So I came unglued from my chair, grabbed my flashlight and dodged around my desk.

In the beam of the flashlight, I thought I saw something preceding her as she ran for the bedroom. Natch, I followed.

Bit had parked herself near a corner and was staring past a small trashcan in the bedroom.

I moved up past her, widened the beam on my light, and shined it straight down.

In the corner behind the trashcan was a bunny. It was hunkered in, naturally, and in that form it was about five inches long and maybe three inches across. And scared half to death.

It had that beautiful, tawny-brown fur, and its long but tiny ears were laid straight back. Making itself as small as possible.

I woke my wife to help me. She found another small trash can and I got a spatula to try to guide the little thing into it.

In the end, I just picked up the baby, nestled it close to my chest (babies like heartbeats) and spoke quietly to it. Then I carried it outside and released it near the fence. After a long moment, it moved through the fence and hopped away.

So it's already been a good day.

Started taking pics at around 7 and did that until around 9. I enjoy macro photography especially. Posted some stuff on FB and ate breakfast.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:15, excitement around 3:30, then spent the next few hours easing into the day.

I wrote off and on most of the day in 15 and 20 minute bits, and once as long as an hour. Finished another short story.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See Dean's "Story Twenty-Nine" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-twenty-nine/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3551**

Nonfiction Words: 440 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3991

### **Writing of "Saving Face" (short story)**

Day 1..... 3551 words. Total words to date..... 3551 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 39038

Total fiction words for the year..... 247594

Total nonfiction words for the month... 17350

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 74690

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 322284

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 522 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Short Fiction](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 5/1**

[May 1, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Hey, a new month and a new week! Does it get any better than that? I don't think so.

After I finished here yesterday, I set up my formulas for my May spreadsheet, then went in to cook supper.

\*\*\*

May I just say I don't like people who are ignorant?

I'm not talking about intellectual capacity or the lack thereof. I'm talking about a willingness to assert assumptions despite a complete lack of knowledge of the subject matter.

What's truly annoying is that such assumptions are most often delivered via snide remarks or innuendo. The whole thing conjures, in my mind, a crystal clear image of a braying jackass.

By their very nature, assumptions are almost always wrong. For that reason, they serve to further illustrate, rather than conceal, the ignorance of those who assert them.

Unfortunately, assumptions are also the lightest form of slander and may, in extreme cases, even lead to character assassination.

Time is far too precious to spend any of it on them.

Fortunately, during a brief back and forth on this very topic on Facebook this morning, I also did something useful and productive. I proofed a digital copy of *The Right Cut*, the 10th book in the Crowley series.

I had to ask the layout person to tweak a couple of alignment issues, but otherwise it was perfect. So in another day or two the entire series will be available in print.

Feel free to assume I'm thrilled about that. (grin)

### **Topic: A Forthcoming New Challenge**

Dean's blog is supposed to be a version of "writing in public." So is this one, as it's an unabashed look at the day-to-day of writing and other stuff.

But let's face it. Neither blog is really writing in public. Both are more like reporting in public. They still serve a purpose (I suppose) because they let others see what can be accomplished while doing all the other "life" things that happen.

Dean admits he got that term or the idea for it from Harlan Ellison, who at one point set up a desk and a typewriter in a storefront display window.

Harlan wrote several short stories, one page after the other. As he finished a page of a short story, he would get up and tape it to the window.

So the folks who gathered on the sidewalk could read the story, page by page, as he wrote it.

How's that for confidence in writing into the dark? (grin)

That was truly writing in public.

And it's a really intriguing idea.

I did a watered-down version of that once, sort of, when I was writing a short story every week and then posting it to my website. That lasted quite awhile. Around 70 consecutive weeks, I think.

But now I'm thinking about truly writing in public. I just have to figure out how to do it.

Probably I'll write a new short story every day for a month. (Sound familiar?) But I really like writing novels, and novels sell better.

Or maybe I'll write a series character. Whether in short stories, novellas or novels, all the work will rotate around that character.

Probably I'll create a new website just to hold that insanity, whatever it is, so those daily posts won't add further clutter to the current website.

In any case, I'll post my WIP every day for all the world to see. Folks will even be able to subscribe to it (free) if they want.

Note that this will NOT necessarily be the finished product. Viewers will see the day's fiction production, raw, as it comes off the computer, misspellings, inconsistencies, warts and all.

This challenge will have the added benefit of increasing my productivity.

One caveat: I won't allow anyone into my work as it's progressing (that's a sure way to kill impetus), so I won't allow comments on those posts.

I admit, part of the reason for this is to do something even DWS hasn't done. (grin) Kind of a "go where angels fear to tread" sort of thing.

I'm not sure yet when this will start. Probably June 1 or July 1. That will give me some lead time to clear the decks. Plus this month I already have several days scheduled when I'll be on the road for an unwelcome trip. I might have another trip in June too, but we'll see.

So what do you, as a writer or reader, think of this challenge? Great idea? Insanity? If it had dynamite for brains it couldn't blow its nose?

Let me know in the comments below. Or if you want, email me privately. I'd really like your input.

\*\*\*

Whatever I end up doing for the future challenge above, I have a new one starting today. It's simple, really. I want to get back to my 3000 words-per-day average.

I'd also like to turn out two novels this month. I plan to take one day off between novels and zero days off (that aren't forced) during novels.

The goal is to get ahead of the curve on my annual goal before I start whatever I'm going to do with the future challenge.

## Today, and Writing

Rolled out way late at 4:30. Ugh. I was awake around 3:15, but I just didn't get up. Mea culpa, but I'm paying for it. Lethargy rules the day.

I set the water on the yard, did some other stuff online and up at the house, and eventually moved to the hovel around 10. Then I wrote most of the stuff above this.

Now it's 11:40 and I'm headed for the house for a break. I will write fiction today, though at the moment I'm not sure what or when.

Wow. That turned into a whole thing. I copyedited a couple pages for a friend, answered a couple of emails, reset the water on the yard, and it's 12:30 already. Better look around for something to write. (grin)

Okay, I started a new novel, probably SF. Not too bad a day, considering I started way late.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See "Challenge Hit!! 30 Stories in 30 Days" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/challenge-hit-30-stories-in-30-days/>. Nothing really meaty, but still pretty cool.

### **Fiction Words: 3227**

Nonfiction Words: 1020 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4247

### **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Total fiction words for the month..... 3227

Total fiction words for the year..... 250821

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1020

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 75710

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 326531

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 523 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenges](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 5/2**

[May 2, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A few more thoughts on the forthcoming challenge—

I won't write a novel in public. There's no realistic way to do so.

Also, I've decided on a dedicated Facebook page as the venue for this challenge. Might as well make it truly "in public."

To that end, here's the post I added to Facebook this morning. I also shared it with several major writers' groups around the nation:

### ANNOUNCING A NEW CHALLENGE

A few decades ago, a writer named Harlan Ellison set up a desk in a storefront window and wrote short stories, one after another, on a manual typewriter.

As he finished each page, he stood and taped it face-out to the window so those interested could read his stories as they were being produced.

No editing, and (OMG!) no rewriting. It's called "writing in public".

I'm thinking of doing the same thing on a special, separate Facebook page I will set up in the near future specifically for this purpose.

I will also combine this with a personal challenge to write at least one short story per day for a month straight (in either June or July), mimicking my unintentional mentor, Dean Wesley Smith.

I'll post the pages of the story as they come out on the FB page so readers can follow along as the story progresses. I will neither request nor accept comments on the pages/stories. (Trust me, that would kill the impetus.)

Just to be sure you understand, I'm NOT challenging anyone else to do this. Only myself. I'm a masochist, not a sadist.

Thoughts?

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out right at 3. Checked email and found Gnondpom's comment awaiting approval. That led me to writing the first long bit above about the challenge. Which I later replaced with the Facebook post.

Around 3:30 I went to CreateSpace again to do the final proof of The Right Cut.

I seem to be taking a leisurely stroll into the day. That feels good. Around 8 a.m. I went to the Hovel, revised some of the above.

Around 8:30 I created a cover for the story I wrote a day or two ago and did the other prep work (formatting, promo doc, etc.). I saved it to my flash drive. Later today I'll upload it.

Around 9 I went back to the house to get my sunglasses (prevent too much glare from the computer screen). I ended up creating the FB page for my forthcoming endeavor.

10 a.m., finally back to the Hovel and the novel.

Worked on the novel off and on much of the day, interspersed with too much playing on FB with my new page, etc.

If you'd like to see the new page where the magic will happen (grin) check out <https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/>. Again, comments are welcome.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Some great comments on "Challenge Hit!! 30 Stories in 30 Days" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/challenge-hit-30-stories-in-30-days/>.

And some sheer excitement at "Wrap Up and Start New" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/wrap-up-and-start-new/>.

## **Fiction Words: 3366**

Nonfiction Words: 490 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3856

## **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593

Total fiction words for the month..... 6593

Total fiction words for the year..... 254187

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1510  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 76200

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 330387

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 524 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenges](#), [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 5/3](#)

[May 3, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

**Topic: More on the Challenge**

I've decided to label these "challenge" posts with the "topic" tag. These entries aren't really topics, but I figure some folks might get some insight from these ramblings.

One requirement of the challenge is to write a new story every day for a month (old hat — Dean's done it twice now). But to fulfill both requirements of my challenge, I also have to post each new scene/page as it comes through my fingers.

That presents a minor problem.

I love writing in the Hovel, but I don't have Internet out there. I get online via my phone's hot spot once each day at the end of the day to post my stuff.

But that uses data, and leaving the hot spot on all day would cost too much.

My grandson reports that the Internet signal from the house reaches the camping trailer, which is about 50 feet closer than the Hovel.

So for the duration of the challenge, I might have to move Hal into the camping trailer. (My grandson will be moved out by then.)

The other thing I'm thinking is that I want to post scenes, not just pages. (Most often my scenes are only a page or two long anyway, 600 to 1000 words.)

Posting scenes will enable me to focus subconsciously on cliffhangers and hooks, something I'm practicing right now. (grin)

I also think the "mini-story" between the hook and the cliffhanger will be more interesting for readers. And I'm thinking that could only be a good thing.

So that's the first real variation from Harlan's trick.

\*\*\*

One writer on FB yesterday asked why I wasn't jumping into the challenge right now vs. waiting for June or July.

The answer is, I'm clearing the decks physically and getting myself mentally prepared first.

Physically, I have a necessary trip to make this month, plus two days of the month were already gone by the time I decided to do this.

And mentally, if you hadn't noticed, I've been lax in my writing lately.

After turning out 92,000 words of fiction in January, I turned out only a little over 59,000 in February, 56,000 in March, and 39,000 last month. So in April, I had a mean average of a measly 1300 words per day. That won't cut it.

I've decided that every short story I write for the challenge will be range from 2,000 to 6,000 words.

So to prepare myself for that, I'm trying to write an average of 3,000 words per day through the month of May. Thus far (through 5/2) I have 593 words in the bank toward that average. So far, so good.

If I can get myself back to a "norm" of writing 3000 words per day on average, I'll have a lot better chance of completing the more important goal of the challenge: at least one new short story every day.

Also, I've decided to begin the challenge on June 1. July is now my "emergency" month. I'll slide the challenge to July only if something comes up between now and June 1 that prohibits me being able to complete the challenge in June.

### **An Administrative Note, or Shameless Begging**

If you're on Facebook, please support this challenge by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/> and clicking Like and Follow. Then share it with your writer or reader friends. (Those of you who already have, thank you.)

In the lead-up to the starting date, I'll keep the page relevant by adding little tips for writers (and inside glimpses for readers). With any luck, I'll make a dent in some of the myths of writing while I'm playing.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4. Did a lot of little stuff up until around 7:30 when I moved to the Hovel. There, I wrote much of the above.

9:15, out for a quick walk. When I get back, I'll begin on the novel for the day.

I worked on the novel for about a half-hour, then headed to the house for some iced tea. While I was there, I descaled the coffee maker with vinegar, put on a load of laundry (the descaling takes awhile), watered a row of vines outside and ate lunch (hot tortillas and colby-jack). Of course, I checked email and FB.

Back to the Hovel and the novel around noon-thirty. A break around 1:30, folded clothes and back to the Hovel.

Well, not quite as good today as yesterday. Still good on the average, though.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

From the StoryBundle FAQs page: "We're always in search of awesome indie books, so we're interested in checking out your work. If you're an author, email us at [submissions@storybundle.com](mailto:submissions@storybundle.com)."

Check Jack Giannis' comment at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/wrap-up-and-start-new/#comment-175199>. Excellent. But there's something erroneous in the comment that points at a lack of understanding. See whether you can find it.

Dean also posted about his new challenge (exercising). If you want to see that, it's at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/challenges-starting/>.

## **Fiction Words: 2893**

Nonfiction Words: 830 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3723

## **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593

Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486

Total fiction words for the month..... 9486  
Total fiction words for the year..... 257080  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2340  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 77030

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 334110

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 525 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 5/4**

[May 4, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a lot to post here today.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 4 a.m. Finally to the Hovel around 7:30. But back to the house to set water, then to order cigars, etc. Finally back to the Hovel and the novel at 9:40.

Again, I played in the world of the novel off and on much of the day. Just over 3000 words, so I'll take it. I really need to pick up steam on this one though.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

First up this morning, "Ebooks are not in crisis" at <http://selfpublishingadvice.org/self-publishing-news-ebooks-are-not-in-crisis/>. From the article "...disinformation has breached the indie walls – and that means it could be doing real damage to people's writing plans." Also, I urge you to check out this site beyond just what's posted here.

At Dean's, "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Seven." See <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-seven/>.

## **Fiction Words: 3172**

Nonfiction Words: 150 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3322

## **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593

Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486

Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658

Total fiction words for the month..... 12658

Total fiction words for the year..... 260252

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2490

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 77180

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 337432

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 526 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 5/5**

[May 5, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Happy Cinco de Mayo if that's your thing.

I'm making some major changes in my routine as I move toward June and the big challenge. (Big challenge because one new story every day plus posting every scene, scene by scene, on Facebook "in public." Plus remember I'll still need to write a novel for June as well.)

I've decided to overhaul my office, for one thing. The desk I have currently is massive at 3 1/2 feet deep by 5 feet wide. That's in an office that's about 10 x 10. It's maple and beautiful, but...

I love that desk (the drawers are as deep as the desk is), but it's the wrong height for a keyboard. So other than serving as a kitten landing pad and a storage area, it's not good.

So I'm gonna bite the bullet, sell the desk, and downsize. For today, I'll move the desk out, store it, and see what happens afterward. Now, while I have time, is the time to experiment.

I'll bring my short, tiny desk up from the Hovel, and I'll probably bring my wire outside desk in as well. One will hold my writing 'puter and one will hold the business computer.

The little girl won't be overly pleased (the office has been configured this way since she was an infant), but she'll get used to it.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4 again. Too much TV.

Messed around much of the morning. Grandson and I moved the big desk out to the Hovel and moved the little one into my office. I won't go into details, but this was a major undertaking.

Moved my outside desk in too, but I might move it back out. All of that was done by 11:30. Then I started the water on the yard, at lunch, etc. Around 1:30, to the novel for awhile.

Well, I played with it for a bit, but my office is still on my mind. I'm gonna stop for the day, finish what I have to do in here, and get back to more writing tomorrow.

See you then.

## **Of Interest**

"I'm Breaking Up With Grammarly" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/05/04/im-breaking-grammarly/>. (I never cared for things like this in the first place.)

Some good comments on "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Seven" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-seven/#comments>.

I urge you to read "Thirty-One Years Ago Today." It's much more than a look back. See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/thirty-one-years-ago-today/>.

## **Fiction Words: 1021**

Nonfiction Words: 360 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1381

## **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593

Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486

Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658

Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13679  
Total fiction words for the year..... 261273  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2850  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 77540

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 338813

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 527 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 5/6**

[May 6, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, the novel feels like it's stalled. It might or might not be — I've been through this before — but that's how it feels.

I'm not worried. I'll write at least one novel this month, whether it's The Storm or something else. And this is an adjustment month or transition month as I move my writing up to the house, refurbish my office, etc.

Fortunately, today I have some family stuff to do. Stuff away from the house. So in all likelihood this will be a nonwriting day.

I'm posting this early just in case (don't want to break my Journal streak), but I'll update it later if I'm back in time. More than likely I will be.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. Probably a nonwriting day today. We'll see.

Well, back in time to update this.

Yeah, no writing today. Turned out as I was exiting Ft. Huachuca, went over a speed bump and broke the left front axle on my Tacoma. Sigh. Called a tow truck, hauled the thing to my mechanic's place.

Our friend Diane came and got us. She met Mona at the main gate at Huachuca, then they came out to the mechanic's place. We offloaded the Tacoma into her pickup, and she brought us home.

Two thoughts: This is precisely why I sometimes post this Journal early "just in case." And this is not a big deal. A minor inconvenience at best. An annoyance, like a gnat I haven't smacked yet.

Not sure what the next day or two will hold. Guess we'll see.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Over at Dean's place, he has come up with an exciting new lecture series you might want to know about. See "Lecture Series Solution" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/lecture-series-solution/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 300

### **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227  
Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593  
Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486  
Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658  
Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13679  
Total fiction words for the year..... 261273  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3150  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 77840

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 339113

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 528 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

# The Journal, Sunday, 5/7

May 7, 2017

## **Hey Folks,**

The rebuild of my life continues with three major updates.

First, my new office is all but finished. It has a much cleaner, more modern look with a drafting table sloped to 27" to serve as my business area. It holds my business/Internet computer.

The office also has a 27" high matching typing table (and my writing 'puter) to serve as my writing area. (Yay!)

My outside desk remains where it was beneath my window so I can work on business or writing if I want to while enjoying a good cigar.

This morning we'll begin rebuilding my wife's office. Much of the day will be spent in that endeavor.

Second, my mechanic called last night around 6. I figured he was calling to give me a quote. Well, he did, but he also said he'd just finished working on the Tacoma. (grin) We'll drive over and pick it up today around noon.

Third, my greatest excitement came in the form of a story idea while I was in the shower.

The idea is strong, one that will involve my love of noir detective/mobster stuff but will not limit itself to that genre. It's also strong enough to carry me through several short stories and novels.

No doubt we'll begin seeing those shortly, into June, and beyond. I'm stoked. (grin)

If you enjoy my writing, photography, or instruction, consider visiting my page at <https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/>. While you're there, please Like and Follow. And let your friends know.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:40 and started helping the little girl get used to the new office. She isn't wild about it, but she seems to be warming to the idea.

Wrote the stuff above, and a little after sunrise I got the mower out of the shed and mowed the yard.

8 a.m., I was going to head back to The Storm to take another shot at it, but I got busy with something else. No writing today. A lot of family stuff going on.

I should be back up to speed tomorrow. Bryan calls Job Corps tomorrow, though, so we'll see what happens with that.

The last few days has been kind of a lesson for me, that it's all right to let go a little when there's a lot of other stuff going on.

However, that's also another way my "numbers" help me with my attitude. I know what I've done, so I'm aware of what I can do.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's, see "Fun Auction Tonight" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/fun-auction-tonight/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 430 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 430

## Writing of *The Storm* (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227  
Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593  
Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486  
Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658  
Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13679  
Total fiction words for the year..... 261273  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3580  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 78270

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 339543

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 529 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Life Rolls](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 5/8](#)

[May 8, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, nobody has perfect days all the time. This has been a rough weekend. And apparently, it continues. I'm out of sorts this morning and a bit frustrated.

I don't like starting the day this way, but I'll work through it. After all the moving stuff and then breaking an axle on my Tacoma and paying to have that fixed, last night my writing 'puter flashed a message:

Battery almost depleted. Plug in soon.

The thing is, it WAS plugged in.

So I tried two other AC converters, but it wouldn't charge. So now it's down for awhile. All I can figure is either the battery is shot or the power supply is kaput.

So on top of everything else, now my newer computer has to serve also as my writing computer. Which means I have to get used to the slightly different keyboard. Which, honestly, is the main reason I had a separate writing computer in the first place.

But yes, I can hear my own voice. I'm very much aware that all of that stuff — a computer, much less two computers — is luxury. And it'll all work out.

In fact, something like this could happen as easily in June during my short story challenge. What would I do then? Simply give up and stop the challenge?

Uhh, no. I'd find a way to make it all work.

So part of today will be devoted to getting used to this new keyboard (so writing) and part to making a few major tweaks to my office. I'm okay with this keyboard when I'm editing, etc. but writing is a different flow. You know what I mean.

I was thinking of reading over *The Storm* today to try to see why/where it's trying to commit suicide. But I think I'll wait another day or two for that. I need to write.

Oh, and when Bryan called Job Corps this morning, they said to call back in two weeks. Seriously? That's the third "call back in two weeks" he's gotten.

That's frustrating too, for all of us. The kid's life is on hold, two weeks at a time, until some unelected bureaucrat decides it's time to get off his coffee break and start work.

**Update on the Challenge**

I've been over this thing until my brain is beginning to bleed, and I don't think I'm going to be able to post a scene at a time.

Why?

Other than the break it will cost me to stop writing and post the scene to Facebook, I honestly don't think many folks are gonna be all that interested.

I mean would even Harlan Ellison keep standing up and taping pages to the storefront window if the only witness was an empty sidewalk?

So we'll see (as with all things recently), but I might just post the new short stories there once a day as I finish them.

Or maybe I'll post them on that website I was thinking of building and then pointing people to it from Facebook. Shrug. Something.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 and didn't do a lot other than email, Facebook, and working around the office for the first few hours.

Now it's late in the day. I wrote a little bit, just playing around, but I'm not even gonna count it. I worked (hard) in my office all day, straightening it up, arranging desk, table, bookshelves, etc.

I might still have a little to do tonight and tomorrow, but I should be back to writing tomorrow. In the meantime, I hope you're all having great writing days.

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Visit Dean's site today at <http://deanwesleysmith.com>. Two posts there, one general and one about his new lecture series and an offer to save money with a subscription.

I recommend subscribing to the newsletter from The Digital Reader at <https://the-digital-reader.com/>.

From Mad Genius Club (via The Digital Reader), "The ergonomics of writing" at <https://madgeniusclub.com/2017/05/07/the-ergonomics-of-writing/>. And there were other things.

If any of you write with Google Docs (I don't), see "Fourteen Amazing Google Docs Hacks" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/05/05/fourteen-amazing-google-docs-hacks-make-writing-next-novel-easier/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 630 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 630

### **Writing of The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227  
Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593  
Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486  
Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658  
Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13679  
Total fiction words for the year..... 261273  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4210  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 78900

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 340173

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 530 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Life Happens](#),  
[Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 5/9**

[May 9, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Today should be the last day of settling into my office. I think the more difficult task will be getting used to writing in here. I almost look forward to winter, short as it is, so I can move my writing back to the Hovel. I put a lot of stuff through my writing 'puter out there.

Speaking of the writing 'puter, it's back. (grin) I had nothing to lose so I plugged in an AC power (chosen at random from among three) and set it aside yesterday.

A little while ago, strictly out of curiosity I opened it and turned it on and voila! It's back.

**Topic: Epiphanies and Stuff**

I set myself a personal challenge. For the month of June, I want to write a new short story every day. That's tough enough.

But in addition to that, I want to write those stories truly "in public." I want the public to be able to watch virtually as the stories grow, scene to scene.

To that end, in the original challenge, I was going to paste each scene to a Facebook page I set up just for that purpose.

Then a couple days ago, my conscious mind wheedled its way in and I lost control. I decided maybe it would be better to post the whole story (albeit still once a day) to the Facebook page.

I reasoned that (1) apparently there weren't many folks all that interested and (2) those who were interested would still see the end product each day, follow my progress on the challenge, etc.

But then Robert J. Sadler, a dear friend in Texas, pointed out to me in an email that, frankly, I was chickening out. (grin)

And he was right. (Friends respect each other enough to tell each other the truth. In my world, that's the main qualifier to earn the title.)

In part of his note to me, he wrote

"...I can understand if the prospect of no story-starved pedestrians standing outside the window seems a reasonable reason for not implementing your challenge.

"That said, you made a point that this was your challenge and not issued to anyone other than yourself. So with that perspective in mind, whether the tree falls in the forest with no one around to hear it, the tree still falls. ...

"So ... if you wanna write-in-public, as you suggest, then knock yourself out... even if there is no public to witness it."

Or as Yoda put it, "There is no try. Do or do not."

And the epiphany?

Writing scenes has always been easy for me. Scenes pop into my head all the time, complete with characters, setting, dialogue and so on. So I can write scenes all day.

But with my conscious mind creeping in as I thought about the challenge, I allowed myself to "hope" the scenes would connect well and the characters would lead me through to the end.

And that's what I was doing wrong without realizing it. That whole "hope" thing.

Once I replaced "hope" with "trust" (thanks to my friend's email), everything else fell into place.

So the challenge is back on, in its original form.

Beginning on June 1, I will write one short story per day for the month. Each time I finish a scene, I'll paste it "live" to Facebook so whoever wants to can see it.

But my friend was right. It's my challenge. I'm not challenging others to do something similar, though if they do, it's all right by me. I'm not even challenging others to watch. I'm challenging myself to give others something to watch.

If they watch and enjoy, wonderful. If they don't, it will still be one hell of an experience. (grin)

If you want to follow along on that madness, visit <https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/>. Some preliminary stuff is already there. The challenge begins on 1 June.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4 a.m. Did little the first few hours. Went to the grocery early, around 8, to get that out of the way.

Back here I did some household chores and basically wasted the morning. Along the way I wrote this stuff and cross-posted a version of the topic to the big blog. It will post there next Tuesday.

I also read over most of *The Storm* and touched it a bit here and there, but I'm not counting today as a writing day.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you enjoy great photography and great fiction, stop by Robert J. Sadler's website at <http://robertjsadler.com/> and browse. You won't be disappointed.

See "The Elements of Style: '50 Years of Stupid Grammar Advice" at <http://boingboing.net/2017/05/08/the-elements-of-style-50-ye.html>.

See "How to determine your price point when self-publishing" at <http://blog.nathanbransford.com/2017/04/how-to-determine-your-price-point-when.html>.

At Dean's place, "No Writing Tonight" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/no-writing-tonight/>. Not particularly helpful, except to me at the moment after the last few days. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 790 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 790

## Writing of **The Storm** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227  
Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593  
Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486  
Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658  
Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13679  
Total fiction words for the year..... 261273  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5000  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 79690

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 340963

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 531 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenges](#), [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 5/10**

[May 10, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Today I worked on various things around the house, mailed out two packages of books.

One was a collection, the full set of *The Formalist*, a twice-monthly poetry magazine, to my eldest granddaughter.

*The Formalist* was a very nice, perfect-bound journal that lasted ten or twelve years. I was fortunate to have some of my poetry appear in it alongside some big-name poets.

The other mailing was a full set of the Wes Crowley series. It will be auctioned off in a silent auction at my high school reunion next month. (Yeah, mailing that one was fun.)

If anyone out there is interested, you can now get the full set of the Wes Crowley novels in paper. But if you are interested, write me for details. The full set (in paper) if bought anywhere else would run you just under \$150. If you get them direct from StoneThread Publishing, I provide a substantial discount.

\*\*\*

Everybody has good days and bad days. I've had a string of the latter lately. I'm not complaining, just explaining. No worries. I'll come out the other side.

Even Robert Heinlein himself said he'd broken his own rules several times. I just keep telling myself this is a transition month and it's all right.

I added a little over 1700 words to *The Storm* today. But honestly, the thing just feels stalled.

Unless lightning strikes today or tonight, I'm going to set it aside and move on to something else.

In the meantime, I'm taking the rest of today off. Hoping all this life-roll stuff settles out soon.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. Took care of all the stuff above, then started writing on *The Storm* at around 10:30. Why? Heinlein's Rule #2.

In fact, I was so busy with all that other stuff that I didn't even think to check Dean's site or update this Journal until a break at around 12:30.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's, "Ticking Clocks," on various offers that will expire soon. If you're interested, take a look at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/ticking-clocks/>. Otherwise, skip it. Not even a daily update today.

### **Fiction Words: 1735**

Nonfiction Words: 360 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 360

### **Writing of *The Storm*** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227  
Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593  
Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486  
Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658  
Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679  
Day 6..... 1735 words. Total words to date..... 15414 (stalled)

Total fiction words for the month..... 15414

Total fiction words for the year..... 263008

Total nonfiction words for the month... 5360  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 80050

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 343058

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 532 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 5/11](#)

[May 11, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. A lot in today's Journal and no fiction writing. Go figure.

As I write this, I just looked out my north-facing window and caught sight of a purple mountain peak. It's about 20 miles distant (+/-) and currently lined here and there with pink from the sunrise.

Another beginning to another beautiful day.

I'll accompany my bride at around 7:30 to a doctor appointment this morning, then to walmart for some things, then back here to begin the first day of the rest of my writing life.

### **Topic: On Specificity and Clarity in Writing**

I was going to write a whole post on this topic, but really, that isn't necessary. It's a personal pet-peeve kind of thing. And far be it from me to foist my "beliefs" on anyone else.

What pet peeve?

Well, people who write things and then postulate—not even apologetically, but more apathetically and with a wag of the hand—that “The reader will know what I mean.”

Yeah. Those folks get on my nerves. Deep and hard.

But I have come to understand that such things don't matter, by and large, to many people, writers and readers alike. Or at least it seems so to me.

For example, despite published writings that are replete with inappropriate instances of absolutes (*all, never, always, everyone, nobody*, etc.), apparently no writers actually write like that. Ever.

If you don't believe me, ask them.

And despite published writings that are chock full of eyes wandering out of heads and doing things on their own (her eyes flew across the room and came to rest on a barrel of metal shavings), again, no writer put those words on a page. Again, ever.

And the same goes for other body parts: "her legs raced along the sidewalk" or "his nose smelled something strange" or "her ears listened closely" or "his finger dialed the telephone" or "his hand crept into his pocket to retrieve his revolver."

No writers that I've been able to find write like that either. Ever.

But based on the hard evidence contained between the covers of some books, some do. Or maybe the publishers are sneaking that stuff in.

Anyway, if you mention those faux pas to the writers, they grin the grin of a thousand braying jackasses, wag that hand in the air as if you and they are old buddies and say something like, "Aah, you know, the readers know I didn't mean it like that."

And most often I smile and say something noncommittal, like "Hey, when you're right, you're right" or just "Ah."

But the truth lurks in my mind: No, Sparky, they don't.

Readers read for either or both of two purposes: entertainment and-or information. If you write "never," they read "never." They don't automatically substitute "seldom" or "sometimes" or some other less-inclusive, less blanket-clad word.

If you write that "her legs raced down the road," the reader sees disembodied legs racing down the road.

If you write that "her eyes came to rest on a barrel of metal shavings," the reader will wince. Because face it, that had to hurt.

And it isn't the reader's fault that they take you at your word(s). It's your fault.

After all, the reader has no choice but to accept what you put on the page, whether it's in your novel, in your Essay On Some Topic Of Major Importance or on your Facebook page.

I've never known a reader who was hungry for a verbal repast to go looking for a soup sandwich. But that's often what they get.

It is up to the purveyor of the repast to determine whether he or she is going to serve a nutritious, delicately balanced meal or something that's half-baked and barely slopped together.

Am I being nitpicky?

Yes. But only where my own sensibilities are concerned.

Hey, if you want to continue slopping grey, watery soup over stale bread in a bowl, go ahead. If you want to hit it with a dash of sea salt, proclaim it prime rib and hand it out to weary, gaunt-eyed travelers who are starved for sustenance, that's your business.

I'm only giving you notice that I will not partake. Nor will I sidle up alongside you in the soup kitchen, grab a ladle and begin flinging greasy dumplings at the wall in the hope they will stick and "be something good."

So anyway, I was gonna devote a whole post to this notion that writers, not readers, are responsible for the clarity or lack thereof in writing.

But it's a personal thing, so I won't.

I'll just pass along a wish that your characters' eyes will remain in their head. Unless it's a horror novel and they get whacked really, really hard.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Took Mona for her doc visit at 8, then walmart for stuff, then home. Put stuff away, did some watering in the yard, and somehow it's already 11.

Still, time for some writing today maybe.

So much for the plans of mice and guys like me. TONS of family stuff going on in seemingly cascading sheets. Some of it's great, some is frightening, some is in between.

I won't bore you with a lot of details, but three big things are going on today.

First the in-between. That was M's doc appointment. It was for cause, but nothing too alarming and it's all gonna work out fine. As a side deal, I picked up a new primary care person myself.

(Okay, that needs a little explanation. My PC doc recently left for a mission for his church and to work out some personal things in his life. He shifted me to a nurse practitioner. I went with M this morning to her appointment, hit it off with her NP, and switched before we left.)

Second, the frightening. I found out later in the day that I have a daughter in the hospital after she ODD on her regular meds. Everything is under control there. Awaiting updates, of course.

Third, the great thing. I'm working a back-door deal with two of my wonderful kids to get my wife a new-ish car. (She knows, so I'm not really giving anything away here. But she only knows it's happening. She doesn't know what she's gonna get or any of that.)

So all of that's taking up a lot of time and using a little of my stress quota.

On the good side, I'm also cooking two big pots of beans, blackeyed peas and taters (mixed...it's a long story that involves me alone with the pantry) along with red onion, green chiles, tomatoes, etc. Gonna be good. I'm tempted to toss a little ground beef and cumin in one pot to make chili, but probably not on this go-around.

I did finally think about writing at around 2 p.m. But with only a couple hours left in the day, I decided to pass and pulled out my camera instead.

I'll write tomorrow, given no earthquakes, lightning strikes or planes landing on my house.

But hey, at least you got a topic out of it, amarright?

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Just a little daily update at Dean's, "Movie and Dinner" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/movie-and-dinner/>.

An interesting insight for anyone who's locked into Amazon exclusively from The Passive Voice: "Amazon's Latest Move: Far From Profitability" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/05/amazons-latest-move-far-from-profitability/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1180 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1180

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 15414  
Total fiction words for the year..... 263008  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6540  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 81230

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 344238

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 533 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	24
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	3
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 5/12](#)

[May 12, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, probably this will be another nonwriting day, and maybe a nonwriting weekend.

It's early (7 a.m.) but I have to change oil in a car, pick up things in town, clean out the same car, then wash it and do a bunch of other stuff. All of this is to prepare for a visit from some of my children and grandchildren tomorrow morning. So life things.

Still, I won't post this until this afternoon. So we'll see.

\*\*\*

I saw a thing in a newsletter this morning that is straight out of a horror novel... only it's real life. For me as a human being who was raised when human life had real value, it was all but unbelievable.

For me as a writer of fiction, it was disheartening. Never has the old saw "Truth is stranger than fiction" been more clearly illustrated or had a greater impact on me. Wow.

Then again, there are several great story ideas in the article. (I guess that's me speaking as a mercenary.)

In case you want to see the story I'm talking about, I've included the link in the second spot in "Of Interest" below. If you'd rather pass, just don't click it.

Today, and Writing

Rolled out at 3:30 and started the day.

At 7 to Walmart to pick up an order, then to drop my wife off to get some labs. While she did that I waited and read.

Around 8:20, dropped her at work, dropped the car off to get an oil change, took a walk.

Around 9:15, found out the guy who changed the oil is a soon-to-retire Master Chief in the Navy, so he and I had a good chat.

It was good to share some common experience and language. Maybe I gave him a head start on some of the retirement stuff.

Back to the house to put stuff away, take care of email and FB, then to work on cleaning out the car, washing it, etc.

1:30, most of the stuff is done. Just have to ArmorAll the car and I'll be done. (grin)

Also took and posted some new pics on Facebook.

Back tomorrow.

Of Interest

Over at Dean's place, "A Catch-Up Day" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-catch-up-day/>.

And a story you might not want to read, but here it is nonetheless: "Couples Are Turning Their Unwanted Embryos Into Jewelry" <http://thefederalist.com/2017/05/12/couples-turning-unwanted-embryos-jewelry/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 380 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 380

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Writing of The Storm (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593

Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486

Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658

Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679

Day 6..... 1735 words. Total words to date..... 15414 (stalled)

Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 15414

Total fiction words for the year..... 263008

Total nonfiction words for the month... 6920

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 81610

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 344618

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 534 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Life Happens](#),  
[Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 5/13**

[May 13, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Wow, am I ever aware that half the month's almost gone. (grin) Kind'a adds to that challenge of writing at least one novel per month, doesn't it? But I'll do it or my name isn't Delbert McCrory. Or something.

And wow again, I almost forgot to post to the Journal today. Huh. It's almost 10:30 as I write this, and I'm only now posting to it.

Anyway, taking time out for family stuff yesterday, today and maybe tomorrow. Hope all of you are honored with and/or enjoy and/or participate in a great Mother's Day.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Routine stuff the first couple hours, then got busy with home and office things. Then the camera, off and on, and posting pics to Facebook.

Things are gonna get busy around here pretty soon, so I'm gonna post this early so I don't forget.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Not much around that I could find.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 160 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 160

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Writing of The Storm (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227

Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593

Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486

Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658

Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679

Day 6..... 1735 words. Total words to date..... 15414 (stalled)

Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 15414

Total fiction words for the year..... 263008

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7080

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 81770

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 344778

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 535 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Life Happens](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 5/14](#)

[May 14, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Yeah, this is pretty much another placeholder post to keep this Journal streak going.

I spent much of the early morning wrangling babies, shifting 4-legs from one room to another. Although the other two (cat and chihuahua) are fine around other 2-legs, my little girl gets hyper nervous.

That made for an interesting night and early morning. That baby has taught me more about patience in the past few years than I've learned from all sources (including experience) during the rest of my life.

Maybe that's why I can write novels now. (grin) And maybe that's why I can wait to write when I have to.

\*\*\*

## **Mothers Day**

Of course, today is Mothers Day. Yeah, it's a commercial thing, but it's much more than that.

For me this is a day to focus and reflect on moms and other women who have been or are significant to me.

I think of my wonderful wife who is a blessing to me. She's human and I'm human, with all the attendant ups and downs. But at the end of the day we're always there for each other, and I love seeing her laugh and smile.

I remember Mom, my stepmother, who passed five years ago and who gave me the kitten I talk about here so much, the one I call my youngest daughter.

I think of my estranged mother, the woman who gave me birth, and hope she is happy, by her own definition of that word, in her life.

I have two daughters who are moms in their own right. I have four "adopted" daughters — two married to two of my sons, one who is significant to my other son, and one who has left the family but whom I still consider a daughter and whose little girls I still count among my grandchildren. (Parents' foibles are never the fault of the child.)

This is a special day, in much the same way Veterans Day or Memorial Day or Independence Day or Thanksgiving are special days. An opportunity to reflect on other important (to me) people and events.

I hope it is as special for you, and for all the women in your life.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 again. My favorite time to get up.

Wrote the stuff above by around 6, and I'm posting it early so I won't forget and so it will be there most of the day today.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, "Open Driveway and Other Distractions" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/open-driveway-and-other-distractions/>. Nothing spectacular, but he knocked out 1900 words on his novel yesterday and another 2100 last night. The guy continues to amaze me.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 450 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 450

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Writing of The Storm (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 3227 words. Total words to date..... 3227  
Day 2..... 3366 words. Total words to date..... 6593  
Day 3..... 2893 words. Total words to date..... 9486  
Day 4..... 3172 words. Total words to date..... 12658  
Day 5..... 1021 words. Total words to date..... 13679  
Day 6..... 1735 words. Total words to date..... 15414 (stalled)  
Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 15414  
Total fiction words for the year..... 263008  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7530  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 82220

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 345228

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 536 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Mothers Day](#),  
[Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 5/15](#)

[May 15, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Back to writing sometime today. Maybe a short story, maybe a novel start (or both).

I also have in mind two good series characters. Each has a great name and a strong personality. One is male and one female. Not because I want to keep things equal, but because that's who they are.

I also have some other pressing things to do, not the least of which is extending the roof of the carport to provide additional shade for my wife's new car.

You can't live in southeast Arizona and avoid exposure to a severe sun, but you can mitigate the effects. Or you can try.

Confidential to Robert: Thanks for the encouragement. It's all good. (grin)

\*\*\*

I realized this morning I no longer have a writing routine. The past two weeks has been more disruptive than I initially thought it would, beginning with re-doing my office and followed by a lot of little life rolls.

There was the office rebuild, then the broken axle, then Mona's medical thing, then the new car search and the visit from the kids.

Routine is important to me. It's how I do things. Not a schedule so much, but a routine. So I need to reestablish that. I'll start working on that today.

I need to make writing a priority again. Not make "the writing" important, but make writing important.

\*\*\*

Okay, to the list of stuff above beginning with the office rebuild, we can now add putting a new door on the Adobe Hovel. (grin)

Around 2:45 I stepped out of the Hovel to head up to the house for another break and the door of the Hovel was laying about ten feet away. Wind got it. I guess I was so deep in the current story I didn't notice.

I had the door blocked open, so the air currents didn't change when the door headed for Deming. Anyway, thus began the search for another door for the Hovel.

The landlord had a lot of 30" doors, but they were all interior doors. So he's going to try to glue the old one back together. (As if he didn't have enough on his plate.)

In the meantime, I've been wanting to get reaccustomed to writing up at the house anyway with summer coming on. So maybe this will be a blessing in disguise.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4. I caught up on my sleep a bit last night after what was a very tiring and trying 10 days or so.

Around 10 I finished up the carport stuff I was doing, and around 11:30 I headed out to the Hovel to write.

12:30 a break up at the house to update this stuff and grab some lunch.

Another break around 1:30, then the final break of the day at 2:45. See above.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

At Dean's, "One Time Branding Workshop" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/one-time-branding-workshop/>.

Here's to writing off into the dark. See "Your Brain Can Only Take So Much Focus" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/05/your-brain-can-only-take-so-much-focus/>.

And good ol' California strikes again. See "California threatens to shut down book signings and therefore small booksellers" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/05/california-threatens-to-shut-down-book-signings-and-therefore-small-booksellers/>.

Fiction Words: 2751

Nonfiction Words: 500 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3251

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751

Total fiction words for the month..... 18165

Total fiction words for the year..... 265759

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8030

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 82720

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 348479

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 537 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Life Happens](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 5/16**

[May 16, 2017](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

Well, kind of a mixed bag today. I did a lot of non-writing stuff and still managed to knock out almost 3000 words. Details below.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4. Still catching up on my sleep, I think.

By 5:30 I'd had my coffee and read everything I recommended to you below in "Of Interest" plus some other stuff.

Around 7 I went to the grocery and was back by 8. Around 9 I went to the poor, doorless Hovel and wrote for a little while. Back to the house after a cigar.

Wrote a little more while I was up here. At 10, back to the Hovel.

Wrote for a couple of hours, then spent time off and on with my friend (and landlord) Richard as he worked to get the swamp cooler on the roof running. Did it myself in years past, but my back doesn't allow me up ladders anymore.

Around 3, back to writing for awhile.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "Book Bundling for Authors" at <http://www.thecreativepenn.com/2017/05/15/ebook-bundling/>.

See "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Eight" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-eight/>.

More interesting stuff below that at "Again A Busy Day" (<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/again-a-busy-day/>).

## **Fiction Words: 2986**

Nonfiction Words: 190 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3176

## **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751

Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737

Total fiction words for the month..... 21151  
Total fiction words for the year..... 268745  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8220  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 82910

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 351655

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 538 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [BundleRabbit](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Creative Penn](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 5/17**

[May 17, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, May is more than half-gone. I almost added “already,” but around here that isn’t really the case. The month thus far has seemed to drag by.

I was dawdling much of the morning. Still not happy with my office, so I adjusted the furniture again and ended up putting it all back.

What I need is a desk that’s around 4 feet wide and around 2 feet deep. (My old one was 5 feet wide and 3 feet deep.)

I’m very happy with my writing table. But the table I’ve been using for a desk is an odd shape. It’s fat in a deep-but-not-wide kind of way, so it’s awkward in my office.

But it’ll all work out.

Started the water on the yard and started a load of laundry. Richard came back with the glued door and we hung that.

Now the rest of the day is mine, minus time out to work on the laundry and other stuff now and then.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 4. Just didn’t want to get up. For me, that’s weird and kind of a bad start to the day. We’ll see what I can do to smooth out the rest of it.

Did all of the stuff above up until around 9, then played on Facebook awhile to catch up.

9:30, to the novel, wrote off and on. I wrote, I folded clothes, put them away. Put in another load.

Wrote, filled the hummingbird feeders.

Wrote, put the clothes in the dryer. Set up bags and water for a gallon of sun tea. Moved the water in the yard.

Wrote, folded clothes, put them away. Developed a headache along the way somewhere. Now it's 1:20 and I just moved to the outside desk with a cigar and the novel.

Not a good day of writing, but not bad.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Please see the comments on "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Eight." Absolutely mind-boggling.  
<http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-eight/#comments>.

### **Fiction Words: 2961**

Nonfiction Words: 340 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3301

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751

Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737

Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698

Total fiction words for the month..... 24112

Total fiction words for the year..... 271706

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8560

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 83250

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 354956

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 539 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## The Journal, Thursday, 5/18

May 18, 2017

**Hey Folks,**

Huh. Not sure why MailChimp didn't send last night's post. Still, any hard-core followers went to the main site to check it out. The post was there.

I put it up at around 5:15. And it was tagged appropriately (Daily Journal category) so MailChimp should have sent it out at 7. Here's hoping it'll go out today. I'm posting this at 4:41.

There was no topic in yesterday's post. The only matter of any real importance (probably) was my admonition to read the comments on Dean's "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Eight."

Some great comments. You can find that at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-eight/#comments/>.

I have to hit the grocery this morning. Probably I'll do that early. When I get back and get things put away, I should be able to write as much as I want.

Had an interesting thing happen yesterday with the novel. Right in the middle of it (well, short of that at around 8000 words), I wrote a chapter/scene that would also make an excellent beginning for a short story. Hmmm.

### **Topic: Bad Writing Habits Come in Degrees**

In the email update from The Digital Reader, Nate points to "Bad Writing Habits and How to Break Them" (<http://writerunboxed.com/2017/05/04/bad-writing-habits-and-how-to-break-them/>.)

I didn't put this in Of Interest because, frankly, it's sideways advice.

It isn't really good advice, except on the largest possible scale: Yes, it's better to avoid bad writing habits.

But when it comes to specifics, it's misleading at best and can be downright harmful, as evidenced by how rapidly the comments on that post deteriorated into counting repeated words, etc.

The main "bad writing habit" the author (Anna Elliott) cites is "how many times my characters nodded in agreement to something."

She goes on to say "probably 90 percent of those nods were entirely unnecessary [so] I cut them."

Okay, so be on the lookout for bad habits. Good advice on the surface.

But I was annoyed by that “nodded in agreement” thing. If everytime a character nodded in her book she followed “nodded” with a prepositional phrase (in agreement, in acceptance, etc.) THAT might have been what was boring the audio guy to tears.

“He nodded” or “she nodded” or “character-name nodded” is a ton less intrusive than “he nodded *in agreement*.”

Folks, every time ANYONE nods, it’s “in agreement.”

I’ve seen writers write “he nodded yes” and “he shook his head no.” But the fact is, every time anyone nods, it means yes. Every time they shake their head, it means no.

I’ve also seen them write “he shrugged his shoulders” (what else is he gonna shrug?).

I’ve seen them write all sorts of other bodily motions and then double-down with an in-sentence explanation of why the character made that motion.

Silliness. “If you want to stop a bad writing habit, how about cutting out the unnecessary explanation?” he said, with a voice that sounded as if exasperation were dripping off his tongue because he was so annoyed with the question.

And in the course of the comments following the article, I foresee a whole group of writers “experimenting” with cutting out ALL instances of “nodded” and “shrugged.” And if those are gone, can “gestured” or “smiled” or “grinned” or “laughed” or “chuckled” be far behind?

The answer to all of this is simple, of course. If your character nods (shrugs, smiles, grins, giggles, gestures, etc.) in response to another character saying something, write “He (or John or she) nodded.” Then continue with his/her verbal response if there is one.

“He nodded” is a short, quick narrative that enables the reader to see an action from the character. And it isn’t “unnecessary” if, at that place in the scene, the character nodded.

Not to even mention it’s over in a blink. 99% of readers don’t even notice it.

“He nodded in agreement,” on the other hand, is plodding, ugly and repetitive. It needs major surgery, as in cutting away half of it.

But once you slash away the truly “unnecessary” part, your reader won’t be nodding off. (See what I did there?)

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30.

Around 6 I headed for the store. When I got back, my wife met me outside. Seems my kitten had brought in a baby bird. It was a nestling, but with feathers and barely able to fly.

It was unharmed. I cuddled the little thing in my palm, took it to the back fence, gave it a good scolding and opened my hand. It just looked up at me.

I petted it with my index finger and said quietly, "Go on." It flew to the ground about ten feet away. So a happy ending.

After all that I put away the stuff I bought, then visited Facebook while I ate a quick breakfast. Then I came here to write all this stuff.

Wow. Slow day so far. I sat down at the novel at around 10:30 but I just didn't feel comfortable. Know what I mean? Uneasy for some reason.

I wrote a little, put the water on the yard and later moved it. Wrote some more, then did some other little stuff. Moved out to the Hovel with a cigar at around noon. I'm more comfortable out there. Kept pecking at the novel.

A little cycling but nothing major in that regard. Writing mostly brand new stuff, but at 1:30 (three hours after I started) only one new scene and a few touch-ups. A little over 1000 words.

Well, a good couple of hours, but I seem unable to break over a 3,000 word day. (grin) That's okay. Novel's coming along.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

For those of you who, like me, either missed or chose not to attend the Branding online workshop, see Business Musings: How To Build A Brand: The Early Stages at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/05/17/business-musings-how-to-build-a-brand-the-early-stages-brandingdiscoverability/>. I guess she's going to do a series of these.

To catch up and read Kris' first blog on branding, see <http://kriswrites.com/2017/05/10/business-musings-types-of-brands-brandingdiscoverability/>.

While we're on the topic, check out Raoul Davis' "7 Keys to Building a Successful Brand" at <https://businesscollective.com/7-keys-to-building-a-successful-brand/>.

And at Dean's place, see "Too Much Other Stuff" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/too-much-other-stuff/>.

## **Fiction Words: 2612**

Nonfiction Words: 1020 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3632

## **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310

Total fiction words for the month..... 26724  
Total fiction words for the year..... 274318  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9580  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 84270

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 358588

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 540 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 5/19**

[May 19, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I was relieved when yesterday's Journal posted to my inbox shortly after 7 p.m. Remember you can always read the current or back issues of the Journal at <http://harveystanbrough.com/category/daily-journal/>.

Really looking forward to today, and the month is finally moving too fast. Hard to believe today is already Friday.

I have other life-roll things coming up, but thankfully they're all in this month (so far, knock on wood). So June's still a Go for the scene-by-scene short-story-per-day challenge.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. Spent the first couple of hours with email and Facebook and reading on my computer.

Ate breakfast and otherwise just killed time for awhile.

Turned to the novel around 10, wrote for about an hour. It's moving along fine.

Then I looked around and decided to make some more changes (minor ones) in my office. Good thing I've labeled this an "adjustment" month. (grin)

Then I went out for a cigar (left the 'puter inside) and stepped into my backyard shed to get out of the wind so I could light up more easily.

I could barely get in there. Looked around. Excess garden tools, chunks of wood, etc. So I decided to clear out some things I very seldom use.

Two wagon-load trips to the Hovel (it's also a large, long storage shed) and now the backyard shed is a lot neater.

1:30, back to the novel.

3:30, the novel's still running well but I kind'a ran out of steam today.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you haven't yet, take a few minutes to check out <https://the-digital-reader.com/>. I signed up awhile back for his daily newsletter. It isn't always pertinent to me personally, but it's always very informative.

See "The Magic Bakery: Chapter Nine" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-chapter-nine/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2205**

Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2505

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751

Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737

Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698

Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310

Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515

Total fiction words for the month..... 28929

Total fiction words for the year..... 276523

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9880

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 84570

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 361093

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 541 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 5/20**

[May 20, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I fully intended to write today, and I did, but only a little. I'll call today a nonwriting day and pick it up again in the morning.

Because Bryan might be heading out for Job Corps this week, we decided to take him down to the San Pedro River. We spent a couple of hours down there, and we got a ton of pictures. I posted a lot on Facebook.

But when I first got back, I stepped out for a cigar. Very difficult for me to sit and do nothing, so while I was enjoying my cigar, I also watered our small east yard. Too small for the sprinklers, and it gives me something to do.

But I stayed in the heat too long. Several years ago (in the USMC) I was nailed with heat stroke. No sweating, red skin, nausea, the works.

The trouble is, that makes a guy hyper-sensitive to heat thereafter.

And today it got me. So I came inside, sat under a fan, downed a few glasses of Gatorade, etc. My BP was racing.

I'm all right now, but as I write this it's after 2:30, so I'm just gonna call it a day. (grin) I needed a day off anyway.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 and spent the next almost two hours just waking up. A bit later I had breakfast and did some things around the house and yard.

I wrote a little while, and then around 9:30 I asked Mona if she wanted to maybe go to the river. The rest is above.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Check Dean's site. Not much today, but some great comments over the past few days and the past two chapters of The Magic Bakery.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 300

## Writing of A Fresh Kill (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 28929  
Total fiction words for the year..... 276523  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10180  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 84870

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 3613093

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 542 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 5/21](#)

[May 21, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

Well, I decided early this isn't going to be a writing day today either. I have to get my office situation settled out. Worked on that the better part of the day and think it's finally there.

Tomorrow I'll dive back into the novel. It's been going great. No problems at all, and my favorite dictum, "just write the next sentence," is easy on this one.

So I'll probably blow through a bunch of it tomorrow. One proviso: tomorrow the kid calls Job Corps again, and if they say come on down, well, that'll take priority. But otherwise it's writing all the way.

### **Topic: Ask Me Stuff**

If you need help with your writing, and if you think I can help, please feel free to ask. You can ask as a comment or in a private email. Either way is fine.

As I wrote to a friend earlier today, I've long believed the Question is the most important grouping of words.

Not only (or even) because questions lead to answers, but because they evoke thought. In both the questioner and the respondent.

When I'm asked a question about writing, I try to provide the best response I'm able to give at the time (at my current level of skill).

But to do that, I have to think. It's impossible to know anyone else's situation, of course, regarding their writing process or otherwise.

So I tell them what has worked (or is working) for me, to include anything new I've learned since we last talked.

But during that process, I also reinforce within myself the things I'm doing and/or remind myself of things I should be doing.

I'm pretty sure that's why "they" say the easiest way to learn something is to teach it. I don't know whether it's the easiest way, but it's definitely the best way.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Didn't really want to, but it felt like it was time (if that makes sense) so I did.

Screwed off the first couple of hours, then got busy on my office. That's one of the reasons for all the slow starts recently. Too distracted by the desire to fix the office.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Kind of interesting what Dean's doing with his running. If you're interested in running. Or you might be able to adapt it to your writing. See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/started-running-finally/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 400 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 400

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 28929  
Total fiction words for the year..... 276523  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10580  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 85270

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 361793

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 543 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 5/22**

[May 22, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

During my morning reading, I hit upon an article titled "A Publisher Tries Podcasts As A Gateway To Audiobooks."

I'd be interested in knowing what you think of this.

I've toyed with the idea of starting a podcast, perhaps as an extension of the June challenge. Maybe in July I'd read the short stories I wrote for the challenge in June. Something like that.

So whaddya think? Interesting? Something you'd listen to? Something you might want to try yourself? Something you already do?

The link to the article is in Of Interest.

\*\*\*

Finished all the major moving and rearranging in my office yesterday. I've drastically downsized, but it's a lot more comfortable. I don't feel quite so much like I'm packed into my office when I'm in here now.

Remains the task of retraining my mind to my new writing space.

I put a lot of words very quickly, almost automatically, through my computer when I worked in the Hovel. That was mostly because my mind was trained for it.

My subconscious knew that when I went to the Hovel, it was time to play. Now that I've switched back up here, I have to create a new mindset to go along with the new space.

At the house, too, there are more distractions. So I have to create workarounds for those too.

I'm not complaining. Exploration and new discovery is fun or I wouldn't be doing it. And at any time, I can always grab my writing 'puter and head for the Hovel for awhile if I have to.

But being at the house alleviates other problems too, like the little girl isn't as tempted to get out of the yard when I'm at the house. So I'm motivated to make the transition.

\*\*\*

Well, my grandson Bryan called Job Corps this morning (his third "call in two weeks" phone call). Now they say Phoenix is still looking over his paperwork and they'll call him.

If they can hold him off until his 23rd birthday, he'll be ineligible because of his age. I'm beginning to think that's what's going on.

I told him to apply for a few jobs around. Thing is, unless he gets mega-lucky and staggers into a guy who's willing to be patient and teach him a trade, his whole life is going to be working at fast food, Walmart, stuff like that.

It's SO damned aggravating. I have a grandson who might be able to live an adequately self-sufficient life only if he gets very lucky. I can only hope the current situation with Job Corps isn't the result of discrimination.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 and per usual spent the first couple hours just messing around, waking up. Took a few pics and posted them to FB.

Then I spent about an hour grouping and arranging pics in a folder on my desktop.

I wrote off and on through the morning. I wrote at my outside desk under an umbrella, but couldn't see the screen very well. The umbrella is not transparent, but light does get through.

I wrote at my inside desk, and that was fine, but new, so something I have to get used to.

And I wrote at a picnic table under a shade tree in a breeze. That was nice, but there's no back support and the angle is wrong for computer work. So I could only do that for a little while.

Finally, a good day of writing. Crossed into novella territory today. Still in the middle of the book and no clue where it's going, but man is it going. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "A Publisher Tries Podcasts As A Gateway To Audiobooks" at <http://www.npr.org/2017/05/17/528730680/a-publisher-tries-podcasts-as-a-gateway-to-audiobooks>.

From the Dumb Advice section of the PC vault, "Spy author Anthony Horowitz 'warned off' creating black character" at <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-39988992/>.

At Dean's place, see "A Response Letter..." at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-response-letter/>. A great little gem of a post.

### **Fiction Words: 3739**

Nonfiction Words: 660 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4399

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254

Total fiction words for the month..... 32668

Total fiction words for the year..... 280262

Total nonfiction words for the month... 11240  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 85930

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 366192

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 544 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 5/23](#)

[May 23, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Happy birthday to my dad. He would have been 89 years old today. He's been gone just under 30 years, having left far too soon just to show everyone he could.

Today my youngest son comes in from Indiana, so I'm not sure what I'll get done today. Also my wife is home ill today, so. But we'll see.

**Today, and Writing**

Rolled out way late at 4:30 after a "late" night getting to sleep around 10.

Just stuff for the first few hours and visiting with my neighbor.

8:30 to the novel.

Around 9 I interrupted myself. Remembered I need to check the pump on the evap cooler on the roof. It wasn't working yesterday.

Hard to sit down and just play. A lot on my mind, and a visit coming up, plus I have some other things to do, not the least of which is open my newer 'puter and blow it out with compressed air, etc.

I think I wrote maybe a couple hundred words before I was sidetracked again. Think I'll just cut my losses and call it a nonwriting day.

But I won't post this until late this afternoon to leave today's ProWriters post in place for awhile. If anything changes, I'll report it here and in the numbers below.

Roy got here fine. He, Bryan and I are sitting around a picnic table in the shade and a cool breeze, enjoying Negra Modelos, cigars and some great music. It doesn't get much better than that.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Some good comments on "A Response Letter" at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/a-response-letter/#comments/>.

Interesting watching his progress on "Running, Workshops, and Writing" at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/running-workshops-and-writing/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 280 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 280

## Writing of A Fresh Kill (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 32668  
Total fiction words for the year..... 280262  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11520  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 86210

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 366472

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 545 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 5/24](#)

[May 24, 2017](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

Whew! Had a pretty good party yesterday on a picnic table under the shade of a desert ash tree in the front yard. Mostly it was my son and grandson, me, music videos on my computer, and Negra Modelo.

My wife came out a few times, and my neighbor stopped by for a little while.

By and large, I don't drink alcohol to any extent. I usually have a six pack in the fridge, but that six pack usually lasts a year or longer. That was not the case yesterday. (grin)

But today it's back to more serious matters. My wife has a doc appointment in Tucson this afternoon (about an hour away), so we'll do that.

My son and grandson will be around for a couple of days before the former heads north to Flagstaff and the latter goes with him to help him unload his moving truck.

I'll enjoy the visit, but I'm also very aware of the calendar. Today is May 24th. If I want to keep up with my "novel per month" challenge, I still have to finish a novel this month. And I do. So I will.

Then next month begins the "short story per day" challenge plus posting it on Facebook scene by scene as they fall on the page (that will be at <https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/>) PLUS writing a novel for June.

I was thinking about attending my high school reunion in June too, around the 20th. That would add a whole other level to the short story challenge.

But I think I'm not gonna bite off that particular chunk. Too much to swallow all at once.

For the next couple of days I'll be writing as I am able. Necessary interruptions are probable, so more than likely I'll be in that "keep coming back" mode. We'll see how that works out.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 after stomping around the house in a bout with a severe leg cramp around 2. (grin)

Did little or nothing much of the day. A lot of little things, but nothing worth noting here.

I went to the novel two or three times, but just too much going on today to concentrate on the storyline. I'm calling this another nonwriting day.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Nothing of particular interest today. I'm an avid follower of DWS, so I'll continue to check his site every morning. But unless there's something pertinent there, I won't cross post.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 420 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 420

### Writing of A Fresh Kill (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 32668  
Total fiction words for the year..... 280262  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11940  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 86630

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 366892

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 546 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 5/25](#)

[May 25, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

Not a lot to report today. A lot of little nonwriting problems swimming around in my world right now. Most of them aren't mine, but they belong to family members so I'm not getting as much done as I'd like.

I'm almost looking forward to June 1, just because my focus will be one day at a time, one story at a time, even one scene at a time.

Not that I'll necessarily nail it, but I think I'll have a good chance because of that different focus.

I've found too that I'm going to almost have to reopen my office in the Hovel. There are times when it's just too hot to write outside.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4 after kind of a rough night. Today will be another day of writing as I'm able, as I have time. A keep-coming-back day. We'll see how that turns out.

As I expected, I wrote off and on all day intermixed with a ton of other things.

See you tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

"Damn the Facts..." on The Digital Reader at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/04/27/damn-facts-ebook-sales-narrative-must-maintained-costs/>.

## **Fiction Words: 2988**

Nonfiction Words: 190 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3178

## **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... 2988 words. Total words to date..... 20242

Total fiction words for the month..... 35656

Total fiction words for the year..... 283250

Total nonfiction words for the month... 12130

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 86820

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 370070

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 547 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 5/26**

[May 26, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, the good news is, barring any major tragedies, I'll finish the novel this month. The sort-of bad news is that I know the ending already.

I hadn't created a reverse outline for it yet, so I started the day by doing that.

But as I developed the reverse outline, the storyline became clearer than it usually is at this point. And the ending stood up and waved at me.

Did I use that to make an outline of future events?

No. But I did jot down a few notes.

If anything in the novel varies from any of those notes, of course, I'll let my subconscious rule.

But if the writing runs the way I think it's going to, today will be a very good writing day and I'll finish the novel in the next day or two with a couple of days to spare.

Before anyone jumps all over this, in defense either of outlining or of writing off into the dark or some hybrid of the two, remember that every novel writes differently.

And as Forrest Gump once said, that's all I have to say about that. (grin)

\*\*\*

Glad I moved back out to the Hovel. It's too hot outside to write in the morning (and the sun is over my shoulder). And in the house, there are too many distractions.

This morning, my wife's at her job and the boys are on the road having fun. (Yes, they're up there to work, but you could strand those two on a desert island at daybreak, and by noon they'd find a way to have a good time.)

And I'm in the Hovel, writing my butt off. It's all good.

\*\*\*

I recommend you check out Writerology at <https://www.writerology.net/>. It isn't all good, but some of it will pertain to you and help you. For that reason, I added a link to this resource the Writers' Resources on the left sidebar of my website.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 with the express purpose of getting my son and grandson up. I did that around 3:30, and by 4 they were headed north via Tucson and Phoenix (early and avoiding rush-hour traffic) to my son's rented storage unit in Camp Verde south of Flagstaff.

I dawdled for the next couple of hours, getting dressed, eating breakfast, photographing the sunrise, etc. And being both sad and very glad that cross-country moves more than likely are all behind me.

To the Adobe Hovel at around 6:30 to write. I started by cycling through parts of the novel, mostly adding a bit here and there and moving chapter heads. By 8:30 I'd added only a couple hundred words.

Took a break to the house and found out the boys made it to their destination fine. So one less thing to worry about. (grin)

Another break turned into a longer thing and I ended up trying to repair a staple gun and some other stuff. Annoying. Stuff that should take less than a minute and turns into over an hour and a half.

Well, not as good a day as I'd hoped. But I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, at Writerology, "7 Signs You're Stuck in Research Hell" at <https://www.writerology.net/blog/post/2016/10/7-signs-youre-stuck-in-research-hell/>. Just sayin'.

Also from Writerology, "10 Productivity Secrets from Very Prolific Writers" at <https://www.writerology.net/blog/post/2015/12/10-productivity-secrets-from-very-prolific-writers/>. I like this one. Well, parts of it.

Frankly, I was a little surprised they didn't include Stephen King in their list of Very Prolific Writers.

## **Fiction Words: 3239**

Nonfiction Words: 590 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3829

**Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... 2988 words. Total words to date..... 20242  
Day 8..... 3239 words. Total words to date..... 23481

Total fiction words for the month..... 38895  
Total fiction words for the year..... 286489  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12720  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 87410

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 373899

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 548 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writerology](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Saturday, 5/27](#)**

[May 27, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

When I started the day, I thought I might finish the novel today.

Then again, it's Saturday, and my son is still here. So I'll play it by ear. Since I realized I'll finish the novel this month with no problem, I've kind of relaxed.

Plus with the June challenge coming up, relaxing's probably a good idea. (grin) That's gonna be hectic, but it'll be a good kind of hectic.

I do plan to jump right into another novel as soon as this one is finished, though, just so I can get a bit of a head start on writing a novel for June. And I think I might have found a series starter in the current novel, so it's all good.

### **So in June...**

Ideally, I'll write five or six hours per day on weekdays and three hours per day (or whatever it takes for a short story) on weekends. Of course to do that will take a lot of focus.

And then out of that will come the little bit of time it takes me to post scenes to Facebook as I finish them. But that's all right.

Plus, posting the scenes is kind of an extra bonus, a secondary goal. If the act of posting the scenes gets too much in the way of the writing, I'll stop posting the scenes and just write and post the stories.

This is for the fun of the public, but as a friend pointed out awhile back, it's for me and my writing first.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 and did little to nothing the first couple of hours. Moved out to the Hovel and to the novel at 6:30.

Around 7:15, a break down at the house to help my wife with some things and then check email and all that.

8:30, back to the novel. 9:15, to the house to mow the back yard while it's still halfway cool.

Well, I wrote off and on through much of the day and quit around 2 p.m. Still a good day, especially for a Saturday. I expect to finish the novel tomorrow or Monday.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nothing important, but I urge you to explore the links under Writers' Resources along the left side of my website at <http://HarveyStanbrough.com/>. I add new links often.

### **Fiction Words: 3338**

Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3708

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... 2988 words. Total words to date..... 20242

Day 8..... 3239 words. Total words to date..... 23481  
Day 9..... 3338 words. Total words to date..... 26819

Total fiction words for the month..... 42233  
Total fiction words for the year..... 289827  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13090  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 87780

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 377607

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 549 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#),  
[Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 5/28**

[May 28, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, today or tomorrow I should finish my WIP. This will be my 25th novel (plus 3 novellas). My son's still visiting at least part of today, so that and other things will decide whether I finish today.

### **Reflecting**

Reflecting back on May, I kind of wish I'd been able to have the writing days (10) all in a row. I could easily have gotten ahead on my goal of writing 15 novels on the year.

With the practice writing and pacing I'll get during June, I suspect maybe I'll pull ahead of my novel goal in July and maybe exceed it for the year. Plus June should put me over 200 short stories, so kind of another milestone.

If so, and with the usually productive months of August through November yet to go, 2017 is stacking up to be a banner year for me from a productivity standpoint.

No big rush on finishing this one now, as I mentioned a day or two ago. But I'll be sad to see it go. That's one more reason I'm excited that I think this WIP will be the "source" story for a series and recurring characters.

All writing is practice, but this series will also enable me to practice what I learned awhile back about teams in fiction (NCIS is the big example Dean uses).

Then in June (Thursday) I'll begin writing one new short story every day and posting the scenes "live" as I finish them over at my Writing in Public page (<https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/>). I'm hyper excited about that, if you couldn't tell.

And yes, this is in addition to writing a novel for the month of June. (grin) What wonderful fun!

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out way late at 4:30-ish. It's now 6:30 and I'm just finishing up email, FB, etc.

8 a.m., heading for the grocery soon. Then the rest of the day, whatever it will be.

Well, had a nice breakfast "out" with my son, then the store, then home. Doing no writing today. Hope you all have a sober (somer) and thoughtful Memorial Day.

Back tomorrow to finish the novel.

### **Of Interest**

Not specifically (but maybe peripherally, up to you) about writing, see Dean's post at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/and-then-there-were-four/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 360 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 360

### **Writing of A Fresh Kill** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... 2988 words. Total words to date..... 20242  
Day 8..... 3239 words. Total words to date..... 23481  
Day 9..... 3338 words. Total words to date..... 26819  
Day 10... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 42233  
Total fiction words for the year..... 289827

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13450  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 88140

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 377967

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 550 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 4 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 24  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 5/29](#)

[May 29, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I allowed Microsoft to install the “Creator Upgrade” (something like that) on my computer yesterday.

This morning when I started to write on my novel, I wrote about three words and my cursor was jumping all over the place because of the incidental contact of my palm with the touchpad.

Okay, it’s a new update, so I assumed I needed to go back into my Device Settings and disable the touchpad again.

Nope. Can’t do it. The option is gone.

Long story short, I finally had to revert to the previous version of Windows 10 in order to get back to having the option to turn the touchpad on or off.

My attempts to disable the touchpad, including searching the Internet, installing (and then uninstalling) two programs designed to block the touchpad (they didn’t work), etc. and finally reverting to the earlier version of Windows 10, sucked away almost three hours of my writing time.

What I DON’T need is some pimple-faced 20-something MBA at Microsoft deciding for me what I need or don’t need. That’s just annoying.

I found it particularly ironic they choose to call the most recent edition of Windows 10 the Creator’s Upgrade (ostensibly for “creators,” you know, like novelists) when the upgrade itself further limits my creative choices.

So a caution — if they offer you the Creator Upgrade and if you don't want to have the touchpad crammed down your throat, don't accept.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little after 4. Being lazy.

To the Hovel at around 7 to get back on the novel. What ensued next is detailed above.

Finally to the novel at 9:30.

Wrote off an on until 2 p.m. and finished the novel. In the interim, I started some laundry, put the water on the yard, made a gallon of sun tea, and saw my son off on his way to Flagstaff.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

From The Digital Reader, <https://the-digital-reader.com/2016/09/06/whale-math-reasonable-ebook-prices-devalue-books/>. (Hint: The proposition is pure, unadulterated BS.)

## **Fiction Words: 3080**

Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3410

Writing of His Mother's Virginity: A Stern Richards, PI Case File

Day 1..... 2751 words. Total words to date..... 2751  
Day 2..... 2986 words. Total words to date..... 5737  
Day 3..... 2961 words. Total words to date..... 8698  
Day 4..... 2612 words. Total words to date..... 11310  
Day 5..... 2205 words. Total words to date..... 13515  
Day 6..... 3739 words. Total words to date..... 17254  
Day 7..... 2988 words. Total words to date..... 20242  
Day 8..... 3239 words. Total words to date..... 23481  
Day 9..... 3338 words. Total words to date..... 26819  
Day 10... 3080 words. Total words to date..... 29899 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 45313

Total fiction words for the year..... 292907

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13780

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 88470

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 381377

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 551 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 5/30**

[May 30, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Unsure what the day will hold. But my son is safely ensconced in his new life in Flagstaff, my wife goes to her job today, and my grandson is still mired in “hurry up and wait” mode.

So probably I’ll start a new novel. (grin)

I’m excited about the new series for which the the novel I just finished will provide the basis. BUT...

I’m kind’a jonesing to write in a different genre. Or maybe from a different character POV in that series. Hmmm. So we’ll see.

Either way, I’d like to get started on a new Something (novel) today to give me a little head start on the novel for June.

I just noticed this morning that another writer who keeps a running tally of words written tends to overestimate.

I found that curious. I mean, when you do that, you’re only fooling yourself. (If you’ve noticed too and want to comment, please don’t mention any names. It is not my purpose to embarrass anyone.)

Anyway, to each his own. But that spurred me to write this little note about word counts.

When I total the Fiction Words written for the day, it’s pretty straightforward. I don’t approximate. I go by the word count at the bottom left corner of my Word document.

I pop up my onscreen calculator. I enter the total words of the WIP from the bottom left corner of Word, then subtract yesterday’s fiction word count for that particular WIP from the previous Journal entry.

That gives me the specific number of new words I've added to the WIP for the day. That's what I record for Fiction Words.

When I total the Nonfiction Words written for the day, it's less straightforward and a little sloppy.

Say you've got a pot of beans boiling on the stove. The way I count nonfiction words, maybe sometimes there are a few places where bean juice leaks over the edge of the pan in a few small streams. (When I've reported maybe 5 or 6 words that are repeated.)

But I take care to avoid boilothers. (grin)

When I've finished writing the Journal entry on my Notepad document, first I highlight everything from the first paragraph through the last "Of Interest" item.

Then I copy and paste it into Word, and record whatever Word says is the word count. Then I round that off to the nearest 10 and record it in the space for Nonfiction Words.

In other words, I don't include anything from "Fiction Words" to the end. To me, that would be cheating myself and artificially inflating the word count. And why would I want to do that?

I do include the titles ("Of Interest" and "Today and Writing") but the nonfiction word count is only an approximation anyway.

BTW, I approximate it because after I copy/paste from the Notepad document to the actual Journal post online, I read it over. During that process I often add another thought here and there, and of course those don't get added into the word count.

I've mentioned here before that keeping track of my fiction and nonfiction word count is important to me. It's a tool I use to drive myself.

But if I over-report anything, I'm gutting the tool, so I might as well toss it out.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out WAY late at 4:40. The sky was light for goodness' sake.

Piddled away much of the morning. Moved out to the Hovel at around 8, but couldn't decide what to write so I just messed around out there too.

Back to the house around 9, and my kitten met me at the gate. She's being a bit needy this morning, so I'll spend some time up at the house. I still plan to write, but closer so she knows I'm not way out in the Hovel. (grin)

Well, after awhile I went back to the Hovel. I wrote about 2100 words of new fiction, but it was boring me to tears.

After the opening (around 600 words that bored me), I thought “Well, I’ll keep going awhile and see what happens.”

Nope. I should’ve tossed it when the opening didn’t work.

Anyway, I’m not counting the words today. Yes, I wrote them, but there’s no chance I’ll use them in the current form, so I’m not counting them.

If I use any of those words later (great title, great idea) I’ll count them then.

So today is a nonwriting day. Tomorrow I’m Tucson bound to end the month so I might not get anymore fiction written this month.

That’s all right either way. Looking very forward to June already.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

“How to Give a Book Reading” at <http://annerallen.com/how-to-give-a-book-reading/>. There are some things here with which I stringently disagree, not the least of which is “To write a book, you need to sit alone at a computer for several hundred hours.” I mean, how freakin’ long is that book? (grin) But you might find a helpful gem or two.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 840 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 840

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45313  
Total fiction words for the year..... 292907  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14620  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 89310

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 382217

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 552 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 6/1**

[June 1, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Journal entries might be sparse here during this month.

I kicked off the challenge this morning at around 5 a.m. by posting the first scene of the first story. Woohoo!

You can see it (and others by the time you get this) at <https://www.facebook.com/HarveyStanbroughWritingInPublic/>.

You can also see the whole story in the right sequence by clicking <http://harveystanbrough.com/the-june-challenge/>.

In the “Writing Of” section below, short stories for June will be numbered for now (unless I have a title for it), 1 – 30. If I start/write a novel, that will be shown separately beneath the short story.

### **Topic: Picking Out Patterns**

Uh, no, I’m not getting married again. I’m not entirely sure my wife would go along with that, plus one is more than enough for me.

I’m talking about pre-judging patterns. Seeing them before they’re fully developed. Or maybe developed at all.

Can you sense a pattern that you need to adopt after one day of a 30-day challenge?

I think maybe so.

I started writing at about 4 a.m. this morning. I posted the last installment (scene) of my first short story for June just before 9 a.m.

Five hours in and out of the chair, doing other little things, no rush. But at 9 a.m. it was posted and behind me.

Meaning I have the rest of the day to explore other ideas for short stories, start a novel, chores, whatever I want to do. Hmmm.

So now I'm thinking that was a great way to do it. I'm thinking I'll make a concerted effort to get up at 2 or 3, knock out the short story for the day by 8 or 9, and then use the rest of the day for whatever comes.

What's more, if I continue to do it that way, I can write the short stories up at the house where the Internet's close. That means I can post the scenes in real time as I finish them. And that means it's as close as I can get without a camera or a storefront to actually "writing in public."

Then I can retire to the Hovel with my writing 'puter to work on my novel. I'm not stupid enough to say this is gonna be a snap, but I'm just ignorant enough to feel like it's gonna be a ton easier than I thought it was gonna be.

Hmmm. Yep, I like it. (grin)

And as kind of an odd and very favorable twist, posting the scenes as I write them hasn't added Any Pressure At All. (I thought it might.) But what it HAS done is drive me to the chair. So a score on that front.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3, and started writing the first story of June at 4 a.m. Around 5, I posted the first scene.

I posted the last (4th) scene of "Getting Paid" on FB and at <http://harveystanbrough.com/the-june-challenge/> just before 9 a.m. Woohoo!

That leaves me a lot of time to come up with lines or ideas for future stories and more than enough time to start my next novel.

I put some water on the yard, watering some trees and shrubs I can't get to with the sprinkler without wasting a lot of water. After that I turned the sprinkler on the back yard. Then I went in and fixed some breakfast for myself.

Around 11:30 I headed out to the Hovel. I thought I'd look over the story I wrote this morning. I added 73 words to it, and it wanted to keep going. Who knew? I think maybe I lucked out and found my novel for the month. And I'm glad. I really like this character. (grin)

Around 3:20, back to the house. A good day for me.

Because this month's novel is a continuation of the first short story, the word count for the novel will look odd at first. It isn't.

### **Of Interest**

See "Infographic: America's Most Misspelled Words" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/05/31/infographic-americas-misspelled-words/>.

See “Now That’s a Series” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/now-thats-a-series/>.

Via The Passive Voice, see “John Grisham’s Do’s and Don’ts for Writing Popular Fiction” at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/31/books/review/john-grishams-tips-how-to-write-fiction.html>. Note: Some of these are pure, unadulterated (or maybe adulterated, I don’t know) hooley.

**Fiction Words: 4925**

Nonfiction Words: 700 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5625

**Writing of “Getting Paid” (Story 1 for June)**

Day 1..... 2677 words. Total words to date..... 2677 (done)

**Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Total fiction words for the month..... 4925

Total fiction words for the year..... 297832

Total nonfiction words for the month... 700

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 90680

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 388512

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 553 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 167

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 6/2**

[June 2, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. It’s really odd how, with this challenge, I go from chock full of self-confidence to being a scared little rabbit-like creature. (grin)

That made me think I should use the Journal for this month to record a series of topics on this experience. If you read them, no matter how accomplished you are, chances are you'll learn something that will help in your own writing.

So here goes...

### **Topic: Day Two of the Challenge**

Yesterday (Day One) everything worked perfectly. Truly a writer's dream the way words rolled out through my fingers. Remember? I started writing at 4, posted the first scene by 5 and finished the story by 9. A snap, right?

Then this morning, I got up later than I had hoped. Then other things (mostly from the animals) conspired to interrupt the flow of what I was trying to do.

I managed to write only one opening scene early, and it was like pulling teeth with pliers while looking into a warped, broken mirror.

I finally recognized that first opening for what it was (I was boring myself to tears) and tossed it away. It's not reflected in today's numbers.

I also found myself looking forward, off and on, to getting back to the novel even though I know that probably won't happen until this afternoon.

To get back on track, I took a few deep breaths and reminded myself the world won't end if I don't get a story written or if I don't write on the novel until tomorrow or the next day.

It won't end even if the novel start doesn't pan out and I abandon it for another one later. No biggie, really.

Then I was finally able to sit down and write another opening. I was in the Hovel by then (no Internet access) so I kind of cheated. I wrote three scenes and part of a fourth (again, the words flying out through my fingers) before I finally brought the computer back to the house to post the first scene.

So I said all of that to say this: Remember to not allow your stories to become "important." The pressure comes from your critical mind, and it will stop you cold.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Facebook and email, and to the first scene of the day at 4:30.

Wrote an opening, but it just doesn't feel right so I dropped it. Ideas are neither gold nor at a premium. But other folks are up and about now, so I'll get started a little late.

6:40, to the Hovel and my idea file.

I wrote an opening that worked, and then 2 and a half more scenes. Around 8 I headed for the house so I could post the first scene to FB and my site and to spend a little time with my wife before she left for work.

After that I went back to check FB and email, then to begin putting together the combination collection and nonfiction book that will result from this insanity. (grin)

I posted the second scene to FB and the site at around 9:30, then back to the story around 9:45.

FINALLY posted the last scene (8) to FB and my site a little after 4 p.m. I'm pooped! But a pretty good writing day. (No writing on the novel though.)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Please read "In Defense of Grammar Pedantry" at <https://theconversation.com/in-defence-of-grammar-pedantry-78670/>. My stance? If you are a writer or other professional user of words, you should be a pedant. Unapologetically. Should that pedantry consciously make its way into your fiction? No.

And check out "Promoting 'Captain Underpants' To Reluctant Readers Doesn't Help Them" at <http://thefederalist.com/2017/06/02/promoting-captain-underpants-reluctant-readers-doesnt-help/>.

### **Fiction Words: 5335**

Nonfiction Words: 620 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5955

### **Writing of "The Storm" (Story 2 for June)**

Day 1..... 5335 words. Total words to date..... 5335 (done)

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 10260

Total fiction words for the year..... 303167

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1320

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 10260

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 394467

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 554 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 169

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [June Challenge](#), [Professional Writer Series](#),  
[The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 6/3**

[June 3, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

The challenge is going great so far. With only two days in, I've already touched the two extremes.

First there was a story of around 3,000 words that flowed out as if anxious to get on the page. It was also a possible novel start.

Then a story of over 5,000 words that happened only after a false start on another story (almost 1000 words that I didn't count).

So two days in, one great day and one day that made me whimper a bit. (grin) So far, so good.

**Topic: Day 3 of the Challenge**

Well, today's going to be challenging. An hour or so after I got up, my allergies struck full force. So writing, sneezing, writing, blowing my nose, and writing will be the order of the day.

The story went pretty well today. But again, I learned something about myself.

I've been used to writing novels at a rate of a few thousand words per day. But a short story is not a particular length. And when I have to finish one every day, well, if it's over around 4,000 words, it gets difficult because I'm not used to writing that many words in a day.

But I guess I'll get used to it if I have to. I'd just rather not get used to it all at once. (grin)

Today was easier than yesterday, but considerably harder than Day 1. Mostly because today's story was so long at just under 5,000 words.

I'm hoping more of the stories from here on out will be in the 3000 word range. If they aren't, they aren't, but that's what I'm hoping for.

Trouble is, I have to do that without sacrificing physical description, etc.

So we'll see. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 2 this morning. With this being Saturday, I thought maybe a head start was in order. However, I didn't get to take advantage of the head start.

Moved to my outside desk at around 3. My allergies are right in the middle of me this morning for some reason. I didn't get a lot done what with having to constantly tend to myself.

I did write an opening. Almost immediately cycled back and allowed myself to get mired in that process. So I finally decided to toss it and start over. (So kind of a repeat of yesterday that way.)

Finally moved out to the Hovel at around 6:30.

Started the same story with a different opening, and it took off. At noon, I posted the fourth scene in the story. I've written over 3,000 words today already, and the story isn't close to being over. At best, it's in the second half.

I have a feeling it's going to be easy to go back to my daily word count goal of 3,000 words per day in July. If that were my only purpose right now, I'd be done for the day. (grin)

Got the story finished and posted at around 2:30. Long day for a Saturday.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nothing much around the web that I could find today.

### **Fiction Words: 4851**

Nonfiction Words: 510 (Journal) 570 (nonfiction book intro) Total 1080

So total words for the day: 5931

### **Writing of "Untitled" (Story 3 for June)**

Day 1..... 4851 words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 15111

Total fiction words for the year..... 308018

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2400

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 92380  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 400398

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 555 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 170**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#),  
[Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 6/4](#)**

[June 4, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

**Topic: Grounding the Reader**

Mistakenly thinking I was asking for story ideas (a mistake I invoked by saying a few days ago I was “gathering ideas”), a friend sent me this:

“Ralph pulled hard on the paddles fighting the current to pass through the water funneling between boulders. A bullet plowed into the rock directly in front of him as the blast of a high-powered rifle reached him.”

When I explained I wasn’t really looking for people to send me ideas, he wrote back that he was going to write a story with it himself, but that he wondered where I’d go with it.

I told him I might use it toward the end of the challenge. I didn’t want my take to affect his.

But I probably won’t use it at all. At least not as-is, same POV, etc.

I take great pride in my ability to ground the reader in my stories. And I’m still learning and practicing how to do that.

In short, I would want the reader to feel he’s in the boat with the guy

And that’s the problem.

I’ve never been in a boat on a river. I’ve never used paddles, though I can imagine the feel of them in my hands.

I can imagine the muscles of the arms knotting well enough, maybe even one elbow twinging a bit from a reagravated old injury, etc. I can imagine the feeling in the guy's back and shoulders and shoulder blades.

I know the sound of a bullet ricocheting off a rock, and I know the sound of a bullet splatting on a rock and the sound of one hitting two solid surfaces one after the other.

I know the smell of a river (at least the one I "see" when I think of his lines). I know the sights around it. I know the tastes it evokes in my mind.

But I don't know the motion of the pitching boat, the sound of the paddles in the water or the current going by. I don't know the tug of the current on the paddles.

And all of those things (and more) are necessary in a good opening. But in many fewer, more terse words.

Will I get a story from his idea?

Yes. Yes I will. Maybe even today.

But it will be peripheral, a result of the thought process that resulted in this post as much as the result of the original idea.

Grounding the reader is just that important. And it does involve writing what you know.

## **Topic 2: Day 4 of the Challenge**

Trying a new tack today. Instead of fretting and searching, etc. for a story idea, I'm just gonna relax.

Moved out to the hovel around 6:30.

Ha! It worked. By 9:30, and with two short breaks mixed in, I had written the story for today.

I posted the first scene to my site at around 8:15, then cut loose and just wrote. (In the Hovel, no Internet.) The story flowed, and I'm done.

Back to the house to update.

Also, mostly because what goes on Facebook is "out there" free forever, I'm not going to continue posting my challenge stories to Facebook.

I'll continue posting them, once scene at a time (most of the time) to my June Challenge page on my website.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3. Then all the stuff above happened. (grin)

Had a nice lunch with my wife, then went back to the Hovel at around 1 to work on the novel a bit. A couple days ago, something didn't feel right about it. So I used the excuse of the big story word counts to put it off.

Today I opened it and realized the main character's voice had changed. So the novel had taken a wrong turn.

You know all the detective stuff I've been doing lately? He was becoming one of those. And that isn't who he is. Hasn't been from the beginning.

So I cycled back a bit, deleted a few sentences (where he and I made that wrong turn) and turned him loose again to be who he is.

The result is nothing short of amazing.

The influence of the conscious mind pops up in all kinds of strange ways.

I only got a few hundred words done on the novel today, but I'm tired so taking the rest of the day.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "43 Words Invented by Authors" (video) at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/06/43-words-invented-by-authors-2/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3047**

Nonfiction Words: 740 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3787

### **Writing of "The Pity of Bill Trevor" (Story 4 for June)**

Day 1..... 2542 words. Total words to date..... 2542 (done)

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430

Total fiction words for the month..... 18158

Total fiction words for the year..... 311065

Total nonfiction words for the month... 3140

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 93120  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 404185

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 556 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 171**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 6/5](#)**

[June 5, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, through my first weekend and the challenge is still on track. And 1/6th over after today. (grin) Harder than it looks. Then again, I know what it is to dig a ditch, so....

The more I think about it, the more I think I'm going to move this Daily Journal blog back over to another website.

My main website feels cluttered, and I haven't had more than a couple of new signups for the Journal over the past few months since this blog has been over there.

If you're subscribed via email, this won't necessitate any change on your part. The posts will still be emailed to the same list of folks.

And more than likely it won't necessitate any change on the part of those who are subscribed via RSS either. But I'll be sure to post the new URL just in case.

### **Topic: Day 5 of the Challenge — Exercising the Idea Muscle**

When I was speaking at a lot of writers' conferences, attendees often complained of how difficult it is to come up with story ideas.

I knew what they meant. They meant it's hard to come up with stories that are born whole, beginning, middle and end. Characters, setting, conflict, and resolution.

Yes, it is. But why would you want to do that anyway? More on that later.

So what is a story idea? Actually, it's only one kind of a story "starter."

A full story idea is a character with a problem in a setting. That's it. The problem might or might not even be 'the' problem of the story. Doesn't matter.

As I said, that's one kind of story starter.

Other story starters might be just a line of dialogue or an action that pops into your head.

It might be an odd characteristic of a character's face (a cauliflower ear, a nose bent sideways, startling eyes).

Or it might be the aforementioned character with a problem in a setting. But it won't be a story born whole.

The sole purpose of a story starter (or story idea) is to get you to the keyboard.

As I write this, I'm beginning day 5 of a 30-day short-story-a-day challenge.

Yesterday, as part of my growth as a writer, I made a point of coming up with two new story ideas before I called it a day.

I plan to do that every day through the rest of this challenge. Why?

For one thing, coming up with story ideas at the end of a good day of writing is much easier than coming up with even one good story idea in the midst of waking up in the early morning.

It also alleviates the pressure of having to try to come up with something during that groggy hour or so.

For another, coming up with ideas (story starters) is not difficult, but it's an acquired habit. To do it easily means to do it regularly.

So I'm practicing. I'm exercising the idea muscle.

And it works. I actually came up with three story ideas yesterday. But one of them was born whole.

A line popped into my head, followed closely by the POV protagonist, the antagonist, an extra character, the conflict, and the resolution. The whole story.

I tossed it out.

Why? For the same reason I don't outline novels.

I write first to entertain myself, to see what the characters are going to do and say, and where the story's going to go. It's exciting.

If I already know the end, writing the story will bore me. And if it will bore me, chances are it will bore the reader.

As always, I'm learning as I go. Part of that is acquiring the habit of exercising the idea muscle.

This challenge is the perfect time to acquire a habit like that.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30. Messed around with waking-up stuff and wrote everything above this.

After that I scheduled "Exercising the Idea Muscle" for publication over on the big blog too. It will come out sometime early next year.

Around 7:15, I moved out to the Hovel.

Well, the story starts I came up with yesterday — neither of them worked. Still, I plan to make that my last act of the day, every day, coming up with a couple of story starts.

Usually when I write an opening it takes off. This morning I wrote two and both of them fizzled.

Onward.

Finished the story. Gonna spend the rest of the day to coming up with more story starts. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "The Best Advice an Author Can Get" at <http://thefutureofpublishing.com/2017/05/the-best-advice-an-author-can-get/>.

While you're there, consider subscribing to The Future of Publishing blog.

### **Fiction Words: 2843**

Nonfiction Words: 790 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3633

### **Writing of "Untitled" (Story 5 for June)**

Day 1..... 2843 words. Total words to date..... 2843 (done)

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925  
Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 21001  
Total fiction words for the year..... 313908  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3930  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 93910  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 407818

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 557 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 172**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Future of Publishing](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 6/6](#)**

[June 6, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, just last night I was saying I might as well stay up later and get up at a more normal time. The staying up later part isn't that difficult, but the other is much easier said than done.

That's all right.

Easing into the day today. As I write this it's almost 9 and I've done nothing relative to writing.

I did go to the grocery early. I like to get there when nobody's parking their cart sideways in the aisle or backing up in front of me without looking or otherwise pretending there's nobody on Earth but him or her.

Kind of annoyed about my challenge. I didn't think it through quite thoroughly enough.

You know that life roll I've mentioned here a few times? That will end sometime this coming weekend or early the next week, one way or another.

Bryan's time with me is coming to a close. He'll either go to Job Corps this week (they're mulling over some things) or he'll move to NM to visit his uncle.

If the former, no worries. I'll drive him into Tucson and send him into his future. If the latter, I'll probably have to drive to northwest NM. That will all but kill the challenge. For this time.

So we'll just have to wait and see.

### **Topic: Day 6 of the Challenge**

I didn't brainstorm any new story ideas last night as I had planned. But I eased into today, so it'll be all right.

I mentioned above that the challenge might end prematurely sometime between three days and a week from now. That's out of my control, so I'll just have to wait and see what happens.

But I'm already thinking of the next one, especially if this one doesn't work.

If I do this challenge again, the "writing in public" aspect will take center stage.

Probably I'll open a new website (I own several). I'll advertise the snot out of it, and then I'll take subscriptions. Those who want to read the stories scene-by-scene as they progress will subscribe to them.

Probably it will still be free, with donations accepted. But this way the stories will go to a group of folks who are dedicated to seeing them. Or at least dedicated enough to subscribe.

I'll write each story a scene at a time, and then I'll post each scene, as it's finished, to that "blog." Each scene will be emailed automatically to those who subscribe, and then the whole story will be posted to the website on its own page.

Yep, I like it.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 2:30. Did pretty much nothing most of the early morning, then went to the grocery at around 5:30.

Home and put stuff away around an hour later, then a quick English-muffin and cheese breakfast.

Saw my wife off to work at 8:30, then came here to write some of the stuff above.

Finally to the Hovel around 9. I wrote the topic, and now I'm gonna cast about for a story starter.

Around 10 I hit on a story idea and started writing.

Around 11 I went up to the house for lunch, then took a phone call from a good friend.

A little after noon, back to the story.

1 p.m. to the post office and maybe (if necessary) to Benson.

Around 3:30 I finished the story. It flowed really well when I had time to work on it.

Nothing on the novel today. I need to get a handle on this stuff.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

A pretty good post on rebranding (with examples) with “A Fun Series” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-fun-series/>.

And a friend reminded me to remind all of you, if you need EXCELLENT print or ebook formatting or covers at extremely reasonable prices, visit Cover to Upload at <https://covertoupload.com/>.

## Fiction Words: 3258

Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3908

## Writing of “Incident in a Cantina” (Story 6 for June)

Day 1..... 3258 words. Total words to date..... 3258 (done)

## Writing of June Novel

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430

Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 24295

Total fiction words for the year..... 317166

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4580

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 94560

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 411726

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 558 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 173**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cover to Upload](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 6/7](#)

[June 7, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a lot to report today.

### **Topic: Day 7 of the Challenge**

Well, the challenge is rolling along. I feel like I'm settling into this thing.

By that I mean I'm not frantic, "worrying" about coming up with story ideas, etc.

The conscious, critical mind repeatedly attacks in various ways. But once I recognize it for what it is and set it aside, I'm able to get back to writing.

Today's story went really well and really quickly. In a little over 2 hours of writing time, I hit the end at something over 2700 words.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 and spent the first few hours doing nothing but Facebook and email stuff. Put on a load of laundry (the first of two) and headed to the Hovel around 6:30.

Finally around 7:20 I started the story for the day. It's a gangster thing from the gangster's POV. Interesting.

With a couple of breaks to check and fold and put away laundry, I finished the story at around 11:30 and posted the whole thing (two very long scenes) to The June Challenge page on my website.

Off for a bit to change gears, and I hope to add some to the novel today.

Nothing on the novel again today. Job Corps and other stuff on my mind.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

You might get something out of "When I Worked in Advertising" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/06/when-i-worked-in-advertising/>. I stopped reading at "In one of the 16 or so drafts of my new book..."

### **Fiction Words: 2738**

Nonfiction Words: 260 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2998

## Writing of “What Happened That Day” (Story 7 for June)

Day 1..... 2738 words. Total words to date..... 2738 (done)

## Writing of June Novel

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430

Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 26997

Total fiction words for the year..... 319904

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4840

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 94820

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 414724

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 559 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 174**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 6/8](#)

[June 8, 2017](#)

### Hey Folks,

First, before I forget, awhile back the editor of a magazine in Mexico asked me to write a short story for her magazine.

I did and submitted it.

She loved it and asked permission to translate it. Of course, I said yes.

If you're interested, here's the link to the story in Spanish in the magazine EstePaís:

<http://www.estepais.com/articulo.php?id=1057&t=ila-y-el-pinonero>

I'd be happy to send a copy of the English original to anyone who wants it. Now, too, I can finally self-publish it. (grin)

**A little personal stuff...**

Well, my life roll is coming down to the end.

It will be a tense couple of days as we await some records from Indiana (supposedly mailed last week on Tuesday) and Roswell NM. Those will determine, in large part, my grandson's future.

As an action-oriented kind of guy, I feel a little helpless when things are completely outside of my control. Especially when bureaucrats are involved.

When I think of what set this excellent 22 year old boy on this path, and especially when I consider what kept him on this path — being prescribed drugs he didn't need and those drugs creating the symptoms they were supposed to alleviate — I just wanna chew wheels and spit nails. In particular directions.

But as with all things in life, it simply is what it is and we'll deal with it.

In the meantime, for now, we wait and hope Job Corps will happen for him.

Now to the escape of writing for awhile.

### **Topic: Day 8 of the Challenge**

Overall, this challenge hasn't been difficult at all. It hasn't been easy — a challenge shouldn't be easy — but it hasn't been difficult either.

In fact, whether or not the life roll intervenes and ends the challenge prematurely, I will do this again, complete with the writing-in-public part.

The challenge thus far has been a matter of

1. Coming up with a story starter (for me that's usually a line of descriptive or philosophical narrative or a line of dialogue);
2. dropping a character with a problem related to that line into a setting;
3. and writing. Oh, and every now and then,
4. telling my critical voice to sit down and shut up.

That fourth one is a matter of patience and persistence.

If a story beginning (opening) is boring me to death, I trash it and either move on to the next story starter (I've done that twice) or I start over.

More often, my critical voice tells me (on an opening that isn't boring me) "this is not good" etc.

To overcome that, in every case, I remind myself that I won't personally like every story I write. But that has no bearing on whether another reader will or won't like it.

So I persist, follow it through to the end, and publish it.

And invariably, some reader pops up out of nowhere and tells me how wonderful is the story that I thought sucked canal water from all 50 states. (grin)

That's some great validation and reinforcement for shutting out the critical voice. Just sayin'.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 4. Spent the first hour-plus fully awake, sipping coffee and reading some great stuff, most of which I shared below in "Of Interest."

Around 7 I sat down at my office desk and began writing.

Around 8:30 I moved to the Hovel.

With a couple of breaks, by 11 I had 2800 words on the story. No end in sight. (grin)

I wrote some more, then went to the PO to check for some records that were allegedly mailed from Indianapolis on June 30. Unfortunately, they still haven't arrived.

Long talk with my wife and then my grandson. Around 2, finally back to the short story.

With everything going on, I forgot to post the new scenes after scene 2. I finished the story around 3.

Nothing on the novel again today.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Some very good comments at Dean's <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-bunch-of-things/#comments>.

Also see Robert J McCarter's posts on his challenge at <http://robertjmccarter.com/2017/05/sswm-introduction/>.

I've also added Mr. McCarter's category "Short Story Marathon" to Writers' Resources on my site, or you can see it at <http://robertjmccarter.com/category/story-marathon/>.

See "10 Tools That Help Me Sell More Ebooks" at <https://www.kseniaanske.com/blog/2017/6/4/10-tools-that-help-me-sell-more-books/>.

### **Fiction Words: 4507**

Nonfiction Words: 720 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5227

## Writing of “Adele and the Makers” (Story 8 for June)

Day 1..... 4507 words. Total words to date..... 4507 (done)

## Writing of June Novel

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430

Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 31504

Total fiction words for the year..... 324411

Total nonfiction words for the month... 5560

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 95540

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 419951

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 560 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 175**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Robert J McCarter](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## The Journal, Friday, 6/9

June 9, 2017

### Hey Folks,

One astute reader noticed I wrote that the files I was waiting for were mailed on June 30. So, um, that would be almost a year ago.

They were mailed on May 30. In this situation, it still feels like a year ago. I corrected it. (Thanks, JGV)

### Topic: End of the Challenge

Unfortunately, yesterday was the last day of the challenge.

Another friend (Thanks, RS) mentioned privately I could write a couple of flash fiction stories (up to 99 words) or short shorts (up to to 1999 words) to keep the challenge going.

I don't want to use flash fiction. That would feel like cheating to me. I understand that most readers probably wouldn't mind, but I'd mind. For me, using flash fiction breaks the spirit of the challenge.

And as for writing short shorts, that would be fine. But once I start writing, I can't predetermine a story length. The characters take it to where they want it to go. It simply is what it is.

*Spoiler alert: You'll see a much longer version of this topic over on Pro Writers next Tuesday.*

I'll be back with another similar challenge before too long.

I found this challenge extremely beneficial to my work. Even abbreviated, this challenge

- dramatically increased my production. As I said, now I have 8 new short stories I wouldn't have had without the challenge. Also, I've averaged just under 4,000 words of new fiction per day.
- increased my proficiency. Because I was posting the stories "live" scene by scene, I felt a sense of urgency to write them cleanly and get them out there.
- actually decreased the harmful influence of my critical mind. Again, because I was posting the scenes "live," I cycled back through them one time to add any obvious omissions. Then I spell-checked them, and then I published them. The sense of urgency kept me from getting mired in the process. (No rewriting, remember?)
- enabled me to learn and practice new techniques more quickly and more cleanly, again because of the sense of urgency that was attached to it.
- handed me 2 new novel starts. That's right. Out of only 8 new stories, 2 of them will be developed and expanded into novels.

I'll use the rest of this month to gather story ideas (story starters), finish my novel and maybe write a second one, and create covers for and publish the stories I wrote this month.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little before 4. Did little the first few hours but write the stuff above and another blog post.

I probably won't even write on the novel today, though I might, later.

Right now I'm switching Internet browsers from Firefox (been with them for years) to Microsoft Edge. Firefox updates every few days and it still crashes regularly. Enough is too much.

So logging into sites I use often, saving passwords on the new browser, all that.

I'm also putting together the dedicated website I'll use when I start the next writing in public challenge. Slowly. But still fun.

Well, I called Job Corps. Despite their saying earlier that today was the deadline, we're still up in the air. The lady said they're re-reviewing his package, so I guess that's good. We'll see.

In the meantime, I had already called off the challenge. It's already after 2 p.m. With all that's happened today I'm just gonna make this a nonwriting day for fiction.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Just this morning in The Digital Reader I learned of a place called Reedsy. Among many other things, Reedsy offers free courses on various aspects of writing, publishing, marketing etc. Check them out at <https://blog.reedsy.com/learning>. As always, take what you learn there with a grain of salt.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal) 1130 (blog)  
So total words for the day: 1710

## Writing of June Novel

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925  
Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 31504  
Total fiction words for the year..... 324411  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 97250  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 421661

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 561 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 175

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 6/10](#)

[June 10, 2017](#)

## Hey Folks,

Yesterday I outlined how “writing in public” positively affected my writing. This morning, I had an exciting idea.

You already know I’m preparing a website for my next Writing in Public challenge. It should be good to go before July rolls in.

Those who are interested in reading stories or novels as they develop will subscribe. Then each post will be emailed to them as it’s posted.

I’ve decided to open that challenge to a few other writers. Here’s the nutshell:

- Basically, you can write whatever you like and post as often as you like.
- You’ll have your own log-in information and complete control over your part of the site.
- The parameters of your challenge are completely up to you.
- The one requirement is that you write “in public.” (Duh. Otherwise it would defeat the purpose of the site.)

If any of you would like to participate, email me to let me know and we’ll work out the details: [harveystanbrough@gmail.com](mailto:harveystanbrough@gmail.com).

\*\*\*

I mentioned yesterday that Bryan’s back in wait and see mode with Job Corps. We hope to hear something on Monday.

### **Topic: Story Starters (and some ways to come up with them)**

*(Note: This is excerpted from a post I wrote yesterday as an article for a regional writers’ group publication and for the Pro Writers blog. But it won’t post over there until early 2018. I didn’t include this topic in today’s nonfiction word count.)*

There are two ways to start a story: with a story starter or with a story idea. Those are not quite the same thing, though they can be.

What I call a “story starter” is a seed, period.

It might be a line of dialogue or narrative that pops into your head. It might be you asking yourself “What if?”

It might be a philosophical thought or a photograph or event and the feeling or thought it evokes.

It might also be a story IDEA, the skeleton for the opening of your story.

The story idea is simpler to define. It’s a character with a problem in a setting. (The problem doesn’t have to be “the” conflict problem of the story.)

The story idea, if it occurs to you whole, can also be a story starter.

But the sole purpose of both the story starter and the story idea is to get you to the keyboard.

Or put in a slightly different way, the sole purpose of both the story starter and the story idea is to cause you to sit down, right now, put your fingers on the keyboard, and start typing.

So how do you come up with story starters?

The typical professional fiction writer would say, “How do you not?” But here are some specific ways that have worked for me.

### ***First, prepare.***

Open a new blank document or flip open your notebook and pull out a pen. I use Notepad. Don't worry about formatting. It isn't important right now.

Keep that document open on part of your computer screen (or on your lap). Then, in any order,

### ***Browse Photos***

Begin looking at photos one at a time.

These can be photos you took, photos you acquired from a stock agency, public domain photos or even photos you see in magazines, on Facebook or wherever.

If you choose a “found” photo — one other than your own or other than those you acquired from a stock agency — you can't use it for a cover. But you can use it for whatever thought it evokes in your mind. The thought, not the photo, will become part of the actual publication.

Look at the photo and write down the first line that springs to mind. It might be narrative or dialogue. It might be a philosophical thought. That's a story starter.

If nothing comes to mind, don't dwell. Set it aside and move on to the next one.

### ***Events***

Whether recalling a memory or witnessing a live event, write down the first line that springs to mind. That's a story starter.

### ***Other Stories and Articles***

Read. If you're a writer, chances are you read.

Often a line from another story or novel will grab me. And often that becomes the basis for my own story or novel. (No, this isn't plagiarism.)

Sometimes too, comments in a nonfiction article or a description in a travel article will move something in me. And become the basis for a story or novel.

You get the idea. Just read. And keep your pen and paper handy.

### ***Titles***

Sometimes a title will pop into my head. I have zero idea what the story will be, but I know what it will be about. Maybe even the general direction it will take.

DWS has a voluminous collection of old stories and novels. From those he makes lists of “half-titles.” He writes the first half of a title on one list and the last half on another.

When he’s stuck for a story starter, he’ll browse the list of half-titles, crash two of them together to form a new title, and start writing.

Most of us don’t own a large collection. But you can still go to your local bookstore (or Amazon) and browse titles, right?

You can even lift whole titles if you want (I don’t recommend this), as long as they aren’t trademarked. Titles can’t be copyrighted individually.

That’s just a few ways to come up with story starters. Once you get in the habit of exercising your idea muscle, you’ll come up with many more on your own.

In short, if you want to write, you can write.

1. Get an idea.
2. Sit down with your fingers on the keyboard.
3. Write whatever comes. Don’t edit. Don’t “fix.” Don’t think. Just write.
4. DON’T intentionally write sloppy copy. That’s bad training.

It really is that easy and that difficult. If you haven’t tried this yet, you’ll be amazed at how much fun you’ll have.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out just before 2 a.m. My son drove down from Flagstaff. He got here just before I got up, and went to bed soon after.

I wrote on the novel for a little while, then got caught up in the day and visiting.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Dean has a pretty informative post over at <http://www.deanwesleymsmith.com/writing-a-novel-in-five-days-while-traveling-turned-in/>, especially if you missed his posts on the topic. (He links to them and the resulting novel.)

I posted a few pics of a big range fire (the Dragoon Fire) near here on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/harvey.stanbrough>.

### **Fiction Words: 1204**

Nonfiction Words: 310 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1514

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430

Day 3..... 1204 words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 32708

Total fiction words for the year..... 325615

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7580

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 97560

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 423175

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 562 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 175

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 6/11](#)**

[June 11, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Wow. Already had a few writers sign up for the upcoming Writing in Public Challenge. I was pleasantly surprised. Excellent.

Once I get the site put together, I'll send out an email with log-in specifics, etc. If you're interested, I recommend emailing me fairly soon.

There's still room if anyone else wants to jump in. Remember, how you structure your own challenge will be completely up to you. The only requirement is that you post things so readers can read.

I also had an email asking whether it's all right to share the invitation with a writers' group or critique group.

Sorry, but no. Everyone's welcome to follow along. It's "writing in public," after all. But please don't share the invitation to participate.

However, if you want to share the invitation with a friend who's also avid regarding the craft (so a pro or wants to be a pro), that's fine.

For example, DWS doesn't subscribe to this Journal. But if he emailed me and wanted to post his own challenge from my site, of course I'd sign him up.

Anyone can set a goal and embark on a challenge of this kind at any time on their own, and I encourage them to do so. But I have to limit participation on the website.

### **A Thought on Writers' Groups**

First, a disclaimer: Whatever works for you is fine. Hey, you gotta do what you gotta do.

My personal take on writers' groups (critique groups, etc.) is this:

I would kill, maybe literally, to meet regularly with a group of other professional writers and aspirants.

In that sort of "group," the attendees would strive to contribute new information on what works and doesn't work for them in the business and-or craft of writing.

Those are extremely rare because most pro writers and serious aspirants would rather stay home and write. That's why I follow sites like those of DWS and Kris Rusch and J Conrath and Kevin Tumlinson and Robert J. McCarter and others.

Then there's the TYPICAL writers' group, of which there are hundreds.

In those, would-be writers gather, maybe share a meal, and listen to a speaker present a program during which he or she spouts the same tired old clichés regarding writing.

Uhh, No.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out late at just before 4. That was annoying, because I was wide awake at 2:30, but opted to sleep-in. Time is so precious, and I just tossed half a handful of it overboard.

I wrote all the stuff above and listened to the podcast mentioned in “Of Interest” below. I hope to write sometime today, but it’s Sunday. Maybe a lazy Sunday.

Moved out to the Hovel at around 10. I started working on the novel again, and noticed there was another short story in it.

I copied and pasted the excerpt to a new file, wrote a new opening (398 words) and now I have a new stand-alone short story. I love when that happens.

During the interim, my son left, headed north again, and before that he lost a screw out of his glasses. I had some extras, so I fixed them for him.

Around 1 or so I moved back to the house to write a little more on the novel. But it’s definitely a lazy Sunday.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See Dean’s “A Couple of Fun Things” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-couple-of-fun-things/>. If you don’t, you’ll miss a couple of important links. (grin)

Check Kevin Tumlinson’s site at <http://kevintumlinson.com/>. Check his Blog. Check his Podcasts. A lot of good stuff on his site. The segment with Dean begins at about 10 minutes into the WordsLinger podcast.

### **Fiction Words: 1933**

Nonfiction Words: 600 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2533

### **Writing of “The Fight” (short story, derived from the novel)**

Day 1..... 0398 words. Total words to date..... 2701 (done)

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925

Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430

Day 3..... 1204 words. Total words to date..... 6634

Day 4..... 1535 words. Total words to date..... 8169

Total fiction words for the month..... 34641

Total fiction words for the year..... 327548

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8180

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 98160

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 425708

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 563 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176**

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kevin Tumlinson](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 6/12**

[June 12, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Kind of a neat post over at Dean's place today, about domain-name hoarding. I can relate.

I have domain names for all of my personas, some of my pseudonyms and some of my characters, like Wes Crowley. I have domain names for my own name, and also some for business names that I don't want to risk losing. Go figure.

Just yesterday, as an afterthought, I looked up WritingInPublic.com.

Of course, it was already taken. It won't make money for me anyway, so I didn't bother finding out who owns it so I could make an offer to buy it.

But I suspect it's Dean. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 4 again. Started working on the new Writing in Public website and did that for the first 3+ hours.

Moved out to the Hovel around 8:30 and started on the novel. Some cycling back and a lot of new words. Around 10, up to the house for some iced tea.

Not a bad day of writing, but not great. Still, I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

"Amazon Releases Word Doc Templates..." at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/06/09/amazon-releases-word-doc-templates-making-better-pod-books/>.

“Amazon Overhauls its Publishing Portal...” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/06/09/amazon-overhauls-publishing-portal-new-dashboard/>.

Both of those are at The Digital Reader. If you don't already subscribe, consider it at <https://the-digital-reader.com/>.

Dean's "Domain Collecting" is interesting at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/domain-collecting/>.

And just in case you're interested, "Bob Dylan Rescues Literature From The Literary Set" at <http://thefederalist.com/2017/06/12/bob-dylan-rescues-literature-literary-set/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2825**

Nonfiction Words: 240 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3065

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925  
Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430  
Day 3..... 1204 words. Total words to date..... 6634  
Day 4..... 1535 words. Total words to date..... 8169  
Day 5..... 2825 words. Total words to date..... 10994

Total fiction words for the month..... 37466  
Total fiction words for the year..... 330373  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8420  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 98400  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 428773

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 564 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 6/13**

[June 13, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

**Topic: Foiled, Sort Of, By Technology**

Well, I called off the challenge I extended earlier re writing in public. Thus far I haven't found a WordPress plug-in that will email multiple postings per day from a blog to subscribers. Much less from multiple feeds.

As my friend Robert pointed out awhile back, writing in public is still writing in public even if nobody's being notified or watching.

And I very much enjoyed my abbreviated effort earlier this month, so I still plan to do it again soon. I'll keep you posted in case any of you want to follow along.

(If DWS was doing this, I'd follow along avidly, if only to pick up tips on how to do it.)

Anyway, while I was looking for the aforementioned plug-in, I realized the few who signed up have their own websites as well.

From a marketing standpoint — and really, isn't everything about marketing? — it would be better for them if they post on their own blog so any readers will already be on-site to buy their books.

I know that sounds fickle and maybe a little lazy, but the fewer times a reader has to click to buy your books, the more likely they are to buy.

I hope everybody who's reading this will dive into a challenge of your own. And if any of you happen to find a plug-in that will do what I outlined above, please share the info.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3:30 this a.m., and probably this is the last time I'm going to mention it.

Most mornings I browse emails and Facebook while waking up with my morning coffee.

Today, like yesterday, was an exception. I worked a bit on the new website from the time I got up. About an hour into that process, I realized it wouldn't work the way I'd hoped.

At that point I called time of death. I emailed the few participants to let them know and offer some advice, then moved on to other things.

Around 6 I headed out to get the lawnmower. Chores this morning. Cool! Took only an hour to mow front back and west yards.

Now I'm resting up a bit and working on the new website a bit. Just playing, really. Biding my time as we have an appointment around 9:30 and don't want to start anything serious before then.

After Mona's doc appointment (she's better than good, healthy as a healthy horse) I hit WalMart, then bought gas, then a new gas can (the old one is severely cracked, which I found out just after I'd filled it), then home to write.

I was writing along fine from about noon, but then Job Corps called with yet more requirements. Back to hurry up and wait.

And I still have to go back to pick up Mona from work, so I'll have a better writing day tomorrow.

See you then.

## Of Interest

"The Magic Bakery: Last Chapter" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-last-chapter/>.

## Fiction Words: 1631

Nonfiction Words: 510 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2141

## Writing of June Novel

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925  
Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430  
Day 3..... 1204 words. Total words to date..... 6634  
Day 4..... 1535 words. Total words to date..... 8169  
Day 5..... 2825 words. Total words to date..... 10994  
Day 6..... 1631 words. Total words to date..... 12625

Total fiction words for the month..... 39097  
Total fiction words for the year..... 332004  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8930  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 98910  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 430914

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 565 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 6/14](#)

[June 14, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I keep feeling like I need to take a day to create covers and promo docs for the last nine short stories I wrote. Then I need to distribute them and ship them off to BundleRabbit.

I'm ever aware that each day I wait is a day that story isn't able to accumulate sales.

Usually I do all that stuff as I go, often the same day I write the story. But in the frenzy that was my recent writing in public challenge, I let it slip.

And just my mindset, when I get in the mood to create covers, it will be better to do them all one after the other.

So soon I'll do that. But not today. Today I get to "novel" for awhile. (See the topic below.)

\*\*\*

In the midst of everything going on — or actually not going on — with Job Corps, I got a Facebook message early this morning with some bad news. One of my heroic uncles (lifelong forest ranger, firefighter and so much more) is fading.

Depending on various factors back there, soon I'll take a couple days to go see him or to attend the funeral. Part of life and living, but so much of it gets to be a drag after awhile. I know I'm confiding in the choir here.

**Topic: Please, Don't Be Ignorant**

Or at least don't put your ignorance on display.

Ignorance is not a "bad" quality. It just means a lack of knowledge.

But if you choose to be a writer, shouldn't you at least try to learn everything you can about the language and word usage?

It seems to me we've entered an age in which many of us would rather sound cool than illustrate that we aren't ignorant.

I'm talking about creating nouns of verbs and verbs of nouns and other word-usage anomalies where there's no reason to. Other than wanting to sound cool.

I don't mind, really. But it's still annoying. And disappointing.

When I read the work of a favorite author and see, in narrative, phrases like “should of” instead of “should have” or “should’ve,” it doesn’t completely destroy the reading experience. But it mars it.

When I hear that a writer “journals” when what she means is “writes” or “keeps a journal” or “makes entries in a journal” I want to hurl chunks. I know, I know, but bear with me.

When I hear that someone “journals,” I wonder why nobody “diaries.”

And why doesn’t anyone “novel” or “short story” or “flash fiction” or “poem”?

“I can’t go tonight,” she said. “It would interrupt my journaling.”

Yeah? Well, I can’t go either. It would interrupt my “short storying” and maybe even my “noveling.”

In “Of Interest” today I feature an article by Nate Hoffelder of The Digital Reader.

In his article, he features an infographic that’s titled “The Ultimate Flowchart for Finding Your Next Book.” Perfectly legitimate, that.

But in the title of the article he wrote to showcase the infographic, Nate saw fit to change “Book” to “Read,” as in “The Ultimate Flowchart for Finding Your Next Read.”

Why?

The change doesn’t enhance the meaning of the title. It doesn’t make it more descriptive or more informative.

It only makes me wonder whether the author is actually ignorant, is trying too hard to be innovative, or is just lazy. (Lazy because “read” used as a noun is short for “reading experience,” which of course means “book.”)

I feel the same way when, in a work written for publication, I find “gift” used as a verb in place of the perfectly adequate “give” (or “gifted” for “gave” or “presented”).

And I feel the same way when I hear professionals use “likely” when they mean “probably.” Or when body parts are given human traits (“nose smelled” “legs raced” “eyes looked” “ears heard” etc.).

Contrary to what some folks believe, I don’t go around looking for instances where the writer’s ignorance is on display. I really don’t. Even when I edit.

I just read. Those instances of ignorance on display leap off the page at me and interrupt my reading.

And then I don't buy anymore of that author's work.

Food for thought.

## **Today, and Writing**

Spent the first couple hours of the day playing with Facebook and then writing the stuff above. Cross-posted the topic to the ProWriters blog too.

Around 6:30, I went to the Hovel to "novel" for awhile. (This is fun.) As has become my habit in this book, I cycled back first, then wrote about 600 new words in a new chapter. Moving right along.

A good day of writing today. We'll see what tomorrow brings.

See you then.

## **Of Interest**

See "D2D Partners with Findaway Voices to Provide an Alternative to ACX Starting 7/18/2017" (More Freedom and Control Over Your Audiobooks) at <https://draft2digital.com/blog/d2d-partners-with-findaway-voices-to-provide-an-alternative-to-acx-starting-7182017/>. Sounds like a really good opportunity.

Take with a grain of salt "Q & A with Peter Stampfel, Submissions Editor of DAW Books" at <http://themetropolitan.metrostate.edu/issue/2016/12/005/>. (Thanks, Ann!)

See "Infographic: The Ultimate Flowchart for Finding Your Next Read" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/06/13/infographic-ultimate-flowchart-finding-next-read/>.

"Two Bundles With Two Novels" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/two-bundles-with-two-novels/>. I have to admit, I've bought both of these bundles.

## **Fiction Words: 3462**

Nonfiction Words: 870 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4332

## **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1.....	2248 words.	Total words to date.....	4925
Day 2.....	0505 words.	Total words to date.....	5430
Day 3.....	1204 words.	Total words to date.....	6634
Day 4.....	1535 words.	Total words to date.....	8169
Day 5.....	2825 words.	Total words to date.....	10994
Day 6.....	1631 words.	Total words to date.....	12625
Day 7.....	3462 words.	Total words to date.....	16087

Total fiction words for the month..... 42559  
Total fiction words for the year..... 335466  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9800  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 99780  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 435246

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 566 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 6/15](#)

[June 15, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, there y'go. Half the month is almost gone already.

Kind of two topics in the post today. Read down through the "Today and Writing" section for some craziness.

### **Topic: More Thoughts on Challenges**

I was telling someone a day or two back that any 30-day time period is still 30 days even if it doesn't start on the first of a calendar month. Duh.

I've pretty much decided when I finish with the June novel, I'm going to start my story-per-day challenge again while posting each scene "in public" to my new Writing in Public website.

I hope to eventually add other writers with similar challenges into the mix. I'll make the offer again when I find a plugin that will enable us to send subscribers an email update each time we post a new scene, vs. once a day.

In the meantime, if you have a website already and you want to start a challenge, you can do so right there. Just do it.

Especially if your website isn't already cluttered with your past writings, lectures you're offering and two blogs. (grin)

You could even post your updates “live” to Facebook, though I advise against it. What goes on Facebook is out there forever whether you like it or not. Putting it on my own website gives me the option of taking it down.

## **Today, and Writing**

Started the day with coffee, email and Facebook, but then did some more work on the new Writing in Public website. I don't want to start that yet anyway, but I want the site to be ready when I do.

To the Hovel, finally, around 10:30.

Well, I feel like the novel took a wrong turn somewhere. I'm listening to my creative subconscious, not my critical, conscious mind.

The little voice deep inside's been nagging me over the past couple days of writing even as I wrote. That's how I know it's the creative subconscious.

I wrote some good stuff during that time (I think) but it went in a different direction, maybe into a different story, maybe even into a different genre. The current WIP is action-adventure, and this thing wandered off into romance or something.

Not like a romantic episode or twist, but like the story's turning completely into a cute-meet, boy gets the girl sort of thing. Ugh. Fun enough to write, but not the same story.

Then again, this is not the typical girl who appears in a male-dominated action-adventure, so maybe she and the situation are supposed to be there. We'll see.

So I started reading way back at the first word, allowing myself to touch the story as necessary, just very minor tweaks and corrections of inconsistencies. I have a feeling I'll know when I hit the point where the story wandered off in the wrong direction. If it did.

Doing nothing but cycling I added around 1100 words by 2 p.m.

Then I moved up to the house and got distracted. Made some tea, fed a cat, responded to an excellent comment (see “Of Interest” below) etc. Finally back to the reading/cycling at 3.

Well, I didn't finish the read-through today. I did learn that the part I thought I was going to cut doesn't need to be cut. The woman involved just hasn't shown me yet who she is.

I'll start again tomorrow where I left off today. A little cycling and then (I hope) full steam ahead.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

For a wonderful surprise, see “The Magic Bakery: A Chapter in the Center” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-a-chapter-in-the-center/>.

For fun, check the comment and my response on my previous Journal post at <http://harveystanbrough.com/daily-journal/the-journal-wednesday-614/>. (Thanks again, Elise!)

For more fun, visit The Passive Guy’s site at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/>. Some great humor there. Specifically I’m thinking of “How a Witch Cured My Writerly Envy” and “My Partner Doesn’t Use Bookmarks....”

### **Fiction Words: 1113**

Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1763

### **Writing of June Novel**

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925  
Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430  
Day 3..... 1204 words. Total words to date..... 6634  
Day 4..... 1535 words. Total words to date..... 8169  
Day 5..... 2825 words. Total words to date..... 10994  
Day 6..... 1631 words. Total words to date..... 12625  
Day 7..... 3462 words. Total words to date..... 16087  
Day 8..... 1113 words. Total words to date..... 17200

Total fiction words for the month..... 43672  
Total fiction words for the year..... 336579  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10450  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 100430  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 437009

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 567 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels)..... 5 novels  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 3  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 6/16**

[June 16, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. When I got up, I started almost immediately working on the Writing in Public website. I enjoy doing that. It's kind of a hobby. Now if I can figure out the new subscription plugin.

Anyway, I got so wrapped up in doing that, I almost decided this would be a nonwriting day. That will happen before too long, but I'd like to finish the novel first.

\*\*\*

Sometimes I think I'll never learn.

Y'know all that guff about the story slowing down, me taking a wrong turn, all of that?

Nope.

I tried to continue the story past the natural ending. That's all it was. More on that below.

I started cycling through today, just finishing off what I did yesterday, and the ending flashed through, crystal clear. It was as if the characters were lined up in the back of my mind, their hands on their hips, all of them frowning and mouthing, "What are you *doing*, Harvey? Stop it!"

And here I am with another finished novella. That and a reminder that every book writes differently.

## **Revising Goals**

Another realization came over me this morning. It's been a day of realizations.

I set a goal at the beginning of the year to write at least one novel per month and to write 15 on the year.

Today that slapped me in the face. Hard.

The thought actually crossed my mind that I should "expand" my current WIP, which finished itself today, so it would be a novel.

But I don't like that. It adds pressure, and it's unnecessary. Plus, it would lead me to force something on my characters and my storylines, and I just don't want to do that.

So I'm revising my goal instead. In fact, I think I mentioned this awhile back, but I'm not sure. Anyway, I'm doing it now.

I will write at least one long work per month (novel or novella) and 15 on the year. What the hey? It's my goal anyway, right?

## **Today, and Writing**

Worked on the new Writing in Public website for awhile this morning (a few hours). Finally to the Hovel at 8 a.m. and to the novel around 8:30.

So my writing day was over early, at around 11. Then putting the water on the yard, etc.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See “The Magic Bakery: An Epilog” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-an-epilog/>. And I do recommend checking back and reading the comments on recent earlier posts.

Fiction Words: 1378

Nonfiction Words: 400 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1778

## Writing of Jobs Like That (June novella)

Day 1..... 2248 words. Total words to date..... 4925  
Day 2..... 0505 words. Total words to date..... 5430  
Day 3..... 1204 words. Total words to date..... 6634  
Day 4..... 1535 words. Total words to date..... 8169  
Day 5..... 2825 words. Total words to date..... 10994  
Day 6..... 1631 words. Total words to date..... 12625  
Day 7..... 3462 words. Total words to date..... 16087  
Day 8..... 1113 words. Total words to date..... 17200  
Day 9..... 1378 words. Total words to date..... 18578 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10850  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 100830  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 438787

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 568 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Into the Dark](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 6/17](#)

[June 17, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

My son is down from Flagstaff, so I thought this would be a nonwriting day, but it doesn't feel like a nonwriting day. So I guess we'll see.

**Topic: Falling Off Heinlein's Rules**

Wow. I'm so close to falling off Heinlein's Rules it isn't even funny. And not the ones you would think of first (Rules 1, 2, or 3).

I'm all set to fall off of Rule 4. Frankly, it would be a little frightening. Well, if I cared. Maybe that's the frightening part. I don't really care.

The problem is, the "new" of all this has worn off. Way off.

Well, off everything but the writing.

I have a pretty sizeable backlist of novels that aren't in paper yet. That doesn't bother me too much. At least they're "out there" in ebook form. They're available in over 1200 sales venues around the world (including libraries). And they're selling here and there.

But I just realized this morning, I also have a backlist of unpublished stories.

One novel, two novellas, and ten short stories. So three collections, too. A ten-story collection and two five-story collections.

That's 16 publications I'm (so far) letting slip through my fingers.

And at the moment, I flat don't care. Really! (grin)

It was such wonderful fun to Just Write the things, yet today I can only barely remember what some of them were about. Much less care whether anyone else ever reads them.

Every now and then you hear about some writer from the past and that his (or her) heirs have discovered sheaves of his (or her) unpublished stories in an old desk. Or bundles in a trunk. Or something.

Maybe I'll just start tying mine into electronic bundles for my heirs to find. Shrug. Who knows?

**Today, and Writing**

Filled bird feeders (5 of them) and got them hung this morning. Then to Dean's site, FB and to work a bit more on the Writing in Public website.

Started the water on the yard early. I have a lot of yard to cover, and I got only three sections of it watered yesterday.

Well, yes, a nonwriting day. I actually wrote a little, started a new story, but was interrupted. I'll restart it again whenever with the same first line.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Please see the comments at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-magic-bakery-an-epilog/#comments>. Really good stuff.

And a little more on challenges with "Two Books Ready" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/two-books-ready/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 410 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 410

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10260  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 1001240  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 439197

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 569 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 6/18](#)

[June 18, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Okay, first, Happy Father's Day to all the dads out there. I hope you have a great day. I'm sending this out early, and then I plan to have a good day myself.

**Topic: Website Stuff**

This morning I worked to revise the postings on my new Writing in Public blog at hstanbrough.com.

I deleted the old email plugin and added a new one. Then I scheduled Jobs Like That (the novella) to repost in several parts.

It should go out every two hours from 9 a.m. this morning through 11 p.m. tonight. Tomorrow it will resume at 7 a.m. again, and the final post will go out at 5 p.m. tomorrow.

The “posts” page on the site is The Stories.

Pretty much any plugin will send an email when a new post happens. (JetPack comes to mind.)

But this one is supposed to send an email each time a new post happens per category.

Subscribers can subscribe to one or more categories.

So two or five or twenty writers can post scenes from their own short stories in their own category. Subscribers will receive emails only for the categories to which they’re subscribed. But all from the same site. Amazing.

If the plugin works (fingers crossed), I’ll report that here in case any of you ever need to try something like this.

And when I’ve ironed out the bugs, I hope some of you will join me.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out really late this morning. I’ll correct that very soon. Nonwriting day today. I’ll be watching posts from Writing in Public. With any luck, there will also be a baseball game on somewhere.

If I get to do any fiction writing, I’ll report that in tomorrow’s Journal.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Nothing that I saw.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 290 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 290

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11550  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 1001530  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 439487

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 570 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#),  
[The Writing Life](#), [Topic](#), [Website Stuff](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 6/19**

[June 19, 2017](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I've taught my grandson Bryan about as much as I can teach him. I expected the situation to resolve this week one way or the other. But my part in it resolved yesterday.

At my son's invitation, Bryan chose to go north with him to Flagstaff, a much larger area with great opportunities.

If Job Corps calls and he decides to still go with them, I'll arrange to get him to Tucson. If not, at least he has a start on his life.

\*\*\*

The Mandel Center has made the United States Holocaust Museum's Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos (1933-1945) available online FREE in searchable PDF files. This is an invaluable resource if you're interested.

Visit <https://www.ushmm.org/research/publications/encyclopedia-camps-ghettos/volumes-i-and-ii-available-online/>.

You'll have to answer a brief questionnaire, then be patient as each part downloads. The whole thing downloaded for me in only a couple of minutes. Again, the download is free, whereas a hard copy of each book costs nearly \$300.

### **UPDATE on Website Stuff**

Well, the plugin I had such hope for isn't working. It hasn't missed sending me a copy of my own posts in my own category. But I posted six different posts in three other categories, and it didn't send out any of those. So I guess I'll call time of death on the experiment.

For those few of you who hoped to join me in this Writing in Public endeavor, sorry. I really thought it would work.

However, I still encourage you (all of you) to set up your own challenges, writing in public or otherwise. It really is great fun when you push yourself.

\*\*\*

I'm off to New Mexico in the morning, about a 6 hour drive. I have a pair of uncles over there I really need to visit. I'll be staying in a motel, though, so I hope to get some writing done while I'm gone.

\*\*\*

Funny. Yesterday a friend sent me a link to a western magazine where I might want to submit short stories before I publish them outright. (Thanks, Alison!)

Today, I received a request from a curator at BundleRabbit to include two of my westerns in the upcoming Guns of the West bundle. One is my contemporary western novel, No Kind'a Time, and the other is a short story, "A Turning Point for Charlie Pilsen." Cool, eh? I'll announce it here and on my website when the bundle is out.

### **Today, and Writing**

I woke early but rose late. You know how that goes sometimes. I spent the first several hours working on the Writing in Public website, tweaking the subscription plugin, etc. but to no avail.

I'll spend a little time packing for my trip, and I'll hope to write at least a short story today. We'll see. I have a couple of great starts in mind.

No writing again today. I think I'm resting from everything that's gone on the last couple of days and what's coming up. That and fretting over the Writing in Public site.

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Not much other than the stuff above about the Holocaust Museum.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 510 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 510

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12060  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 102040  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 439997

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 571 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#),  
[The Writing Life](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 6/20](#)**

[June 20, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Traveling a bit later today, so I'll post this early. If I have a chance to update it later, I'll do so. If not, well, at least there's this.

I expect to write the whole time I'm gone. Well, each day that I'm gone. That will provide a bit of a challenge in itself.

I think maybe I'm gonna put together a Kickstarter campaign. Definitely going to look into it. I have an idea that I think will both generate a lot of interest and provide me with a challenge at the same time.

To see what I'm rambling on about, check "Of Interest" below. (grin)

**Today, and Writing**

I might not report on writing during my trip. But if not, I'll bring the reporting all back up to speed after the dust settles.

See you tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Wow. Via The Digital Reader, see the article on Kickstarter at <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/sep/14/how-kickstarter-became-one-of-the-biggest-powers-in-publishing-crowdfunding/>.

Yesterday Dean announced two new online workshops if you're interested. Today he issued a reminder about the bundle, Moonscapes. I bought that one early.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 190 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 190

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12250  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 102230  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 440187

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 572 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kickstarter](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Guardian](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 6/21](#)

[June 21, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, zero fiction writing yesterday. Frankly, the trip took more out of me than I expected it to.

No AC in my pickup currently, so it was six hours of heat, being buffeted by the wind, and noise. (grin) A true adventure.

And it was only six hours, but it's been a long time since I did a road trip of any significant length.

Anyway, so last night, after squaring away a few things about the room, I researched Kickstarter a bit, did some other similar business-related things, then settled in for some TV to west my widdle bwain.

Traveling regionally and visiting today, so again I'll post this early then update it later if necessary and if possible.

Maybe writing, maybe not. No big deal. I WILL be doing another writing in public challenge soon. Probably I'll begin that within the next few days.

I'm excited about that, but too pooped to do anything about it at the moment.

\*\*\*

In "Of Interest" today, Nate Hoffelder lists "Six Sites With Truly Free eBooks."

In the article, he writes "[S]ometimes I need a site that has ebooks worth reading, doesn't have DRM, and doesn't require an account."

So "ebooks worth reading" but apparently not "worth reading" enough to warrant actually paying the writers for their efforts. Hmm.

On his website, Nate also offers "Help for Authors" in the form of website development and on-demand tech support. He doesn't provide those services free, though, so I guess I'll pass.

Oh, but he does offer a "free website critique." So I wrote him to request that. I'll report on how it goes. Now if I could just find a few sites that list free plumbing, mechanic services, carpentry, etc.

Anyway, to take advantage of that free critique, visit <https://the-digital-reader.com/wordpress-support-design/website-critique-analysis/> and fill out the form.

## **Today, and Writing**

It's looking more and more like I won't write during this trip. Busy visiting today and probably heading back early (way pre-dawn) tomorrow morning.

See you tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

On The Digital Reader this morning, Nate Hoffelder lists "Six Sites With Truly Free eBooks" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2014/03/16/5-sites-with-truly-free-ebooks/>. You already know what I think.

If you're a cat fanatic, check "Time for a Cat Update" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/time-for-a-cat-update/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 360 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 360

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12610  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 102590  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 440547

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 573 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 6/22](#)

[June 22, 2017](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I'm back in St. David. Left Alamo this morning around 2:30 a.m. and got here at around 8. It was a good trip, and very enjoyable, but I need to get back to what I do.

Although I hoped to write while I was gone, it just wasn't in the cards.

For one thing, on the travel days I was tireder than I used to be after a trip like that. On the visiting days, I felt more relaxed to just let things flow than I used to. And that's more or less what happened.

Not sure whether I'll write anything today either. Today feels like a "parts" day. I'll put away things from the trip, get a few chores done, and take care of some other "parts" of what I usually do when I'm here.

And I'll get ready mentally to storm back into writing.

Of course, if a pressing idea hits, all bets are off.

## Today, and Writing

Nope, no writing today. Still looking forward to that writing in public challenge, though, and to my next novel, whatever it'll be.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Please see Dean's "I Get Startled At Times" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/i-get-startled-at-times/>. Perfectly said.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 210 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 210

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12820  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 102800  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 440757

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 574 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Nonwriting Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Writing Life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 6/23](#)

[June 23, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, here we are back at HESTanbrough.com. Yep, I've moved the Journal back over here. Much more on that in the topic below.

\*\*\*

Thirty-three years ago today Mona found out I'm a much better judge of women than she is of men. That's when we tied the knot, and she hasn't figured out how to untie it yet. (grin)

\*\*\*

The first gem I took from Dean's current post (see "Of Interest") when I started reading was this: "Challenges get me focused for short bursts of time on writing."

There you go. That's the reason to establish a challenge. A personal challenge creates focus.

If you have a go at a challenge, at worst you'll fail to succeed. Meaning you'll have more work when the challenge stops than you would have had without it.

And if you succeed outright, you'll have even more work out there plus the knowledge that you accomplished something you weren't sure you could do.

### **Topic: Decluttering and Revamping My Writing Business**

The plan for the day is to revise and tweak websites. I'm posting this as a topic in case it gives some of you an idea or two:

***StoneThread Publishing*** — I'm giving up on StoneThread Publishing as a separate entity.

StoneThread was designed to give discounts to booksellers and private readers. Thus far (after almost two years) not one bookseller and few, if any, readers have taken advantage of it.

I'll retain the name as my publisher, of course, unless I get a really good offer.

***HEStanbrough.com*** — This is the once and future home of The Daily Journal.

I'm sending the Journal back down to the minor leagues beginning today. (grin) Those who are subscribed shouldn't notice a difference.

I moved the Journal to the main site almost exactly two years ago in hopes of garnering new subscribers. But that hasn't happened, so away it goes. This move will help declutter the main website. From now on, only the Pro Writers blog posts will appear on the main site.

Also, as more Topics from The Daily Journal become Pro-Writers blog posts, there will be less overlap on the main site.

***HarveyStanbrough.com*** — This is my main website. First, I'm simplifying the menu (I started that yesterday). If you have a moment, take a look and let me know in the comments what you think.

I'm also transferring everything from StoneThread Publishing (individual book pages, etc.) over to this main site. Then I'll link the StoneThread URL to the main site. I should be finished with this process in a few days.

Now to one more website and the challenge I mentioned above:

***HStanbrough.com*** — This is the new Writing in Public site. This is my modern-day effort to recreate what Harlan Ellison did in that storefront display window several decades ago.

Only those who subscribe to HStanbrough.com will witness my efforts to write short stories (and maybe novellas and novels) “in public,” posted one scene or one chapter at a time.

Everybody who watches NASCAR or Indy car racing watch for one of two reasons: To see whether their favorite driver will prevail or to witness the wrecks first hand.

Wanna see me succeed and watch as I'm building stories? Subscribe. Wanna see me crash and burn? Subscribe. (grin)

Either way, I'll be glad to have you along.

But don't dawdle. The new Writing in Public challenge will begin on July 1 at the latest. But knowing me, there's a good chance it will begin sooner than that.

## **Today, and Writing**

No fiction writing again today, but I made a lot of headway on the websites.

See you tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Dean's “Another Crazy Challenge For Myself” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/another-crazy-challenge-for-myself/>. I haven't read it yet (as I write this), but I suspect it will jump start me.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 520 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 520

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13340  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 103320  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 441277

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 575 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Announcement](#), [Challenge](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 6/24**

[June 24, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Not a lot to report today. It's Saturday and I'm still clearing decks to prep for the upcoming challenge.

This morning so far I made more tweaks on the main website. Then I moved over and made a few tweaks on the Writing in Public website.

After that, I worked on this website, The Daily Journal, to include creating a new header. I also narrowed it a bit and revised some of the colors. Finally I made some major revisions on the MailChimp side of things.

Now I've been to the store (with Mona) and am about to go back over to mess with the Writing in Public website again.

Speaking of Writing in Public, Linda Maye Adams is about to embark on a similar challenge at her website. Check out her site at <http://lindamayeadams.com/>.

Hey, thanks to Alison for mentioning that moving the tag cloud on the main site wouldn't be a bad idea. And to Gary for mentioning that when he swipes stuff off a blog post, he'd prefer it would have a white background rather than yellow. (grin)

Keep 'em coming. If any of you have any recommendations regarding any of the three main websites (HarveyStanbrough.com, HESTanbrough.com or HStanbrough.com) please let me know.

### **Today, and Writing**

Yeah, no writing today. Still doing prep work with regard to the sites. And with regard to my subconscious, I think.

A few days ago, I had a story idea. The next day, three or four occurred to me. Yesterday and today they've been almost nonstop.

It's a little like being nagged by a two year old, but I'll take it. (grin)

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Mark Coker of Smashwords says in this year's survey he found a lot of gold. See the survey at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/06/smashwords-survey-2017.html/>. *Note: This is a slideshow. The actual survey begins on page 25 of 111. The summary of key takeaways begins on page 101.*

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 330

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13670  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 103650  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 441607

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 576 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenge](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 6/25](#)

[June 25, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, the best laid plans, etc.

An unexpected trip popped up for tomorrow morning. We'll leave here around 6 for a 10-hour turnaround to Flagstaff to pick up Bryan.

Job Corps finally decided they have a slot for him. They called a few days ago (did I tell you that?) while I was in New Mexico.

Originally, Mona was going to drive to Casa Grande (about 3 hours) to meet Roy and drive Bryan back here.

But due to circumstances, Roy can't do that now, so we'll drive to Flagstaff to get him. Then on Tuesday, I'll drive him into Tucson to his new digs at Job Corps.

### **Today, and Writing**

So no writing today. In fact, I'm posting this a little early to keep the posting streak alive. I'll try to punch in the "Of Interest" section before we leave.

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Dean offers some thoughts on challenges. This is very good. See "Challenge Thinking" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/challenge-thinking/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 160 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 160

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13830  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 103810  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 441767

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 577 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 6/26**

June 26, 2017 by Harvey

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. I could post this right now and chances are you'd find value in it. Just check out today's "Of Interest" to see what I mean. There's a lot there.

\*\*\*

By the way, I requested and received a "free website critique" of my main website from Nate Hoffelder.

In a word, the guy's legit. He's also super helpful. My website doesn't suck, but (to continue the analogy) he pointed out a few places where vacuum leaks exist or are forming. So I'll take care of those over the next week or so.

So once again I encourage you to visit The Digital Reader at <https://the-digital-reader.com/>. Not only for his usually useful notes on the publishing industry, but for his services.

\*\*\*

For those following the Saga of Grandson Bryan, he's safely ensconced at my house again. I'll drive him to Tucson early on Tuesday morning and he'll begin his training with Job Corps and then his new life. The older I get (seemingly day by day) the more I envy the excitement of young people experiencing new discoveries.

But new discoveries are neither limited to the young, nor are we more-mature folks banned from them. With this chapter of his and my life closing, two new doors also are opening.

Bryan will set off in wide-eyed wonder on his life's journey, and I'll begin the new challenge I've been hawking here for awhile.

### **Topic: Goals, Life Rolls and Establishing Routines**

Stealing a bit of thunder from the "Today, and Writing" section, there's something to be said for the interaction of goals, life rolls and establishing routines.

For example, now that my current life roll has almost come to a close, I'm clearing the decks to prep for the upcoming challenge.

If I can finish that prep work today, the current plan is to begin the challenge tomorrow. If this effort carries through Tuesday, I'll begin the challenge on Wednesday.

But the disruption of this life roll has also brought a new insight. Why not use the current challenge not only to reach a desired goal, but to establish a new routine?

So no matter when I begin the challenge, I've decided not to limit it to a set timeframe.

I still have to write a novel for July, but I also want to write a complete short story every day through at least July 31. No matter when I start.

I once logged a 26-hour workday in the oilfields of New Mexico in a single 24-hour day. So why can't I expand "Stories from July" to span June 27 or 28 through July 31?

And by July 31, if I have a routine down, I see no reason to voluntarily stop at that point, to voluntarily end the streak.

Think about it: It's all well and good to write 31 stories in 31 calendar days from July 1 through July 31 and then publish Stories from July.

But why not continue through August 31? Or September 30? You see where I'm going.

And I've come to realize that's the real purpose behind this goal and this challenge: to continue in my training (or retraining) as a writer by establishing a routine.

Certainly the short stories and collections and novels will be a pleasing by-product (to some readers) of that training, but nothing more than that.

Carving out time to write is important. Writing is important. But the stories themselves are not important in the slightest. They're something to enjoy and let go.

So what's the importance of establishing a routine?

The best, most deeply imbedded routines are those that can be interrupted by life rolls but to which you return automatically when the life roll ends. You know, instead of erratically "starting over" each time.

If I can do that, maybe I'll emerge feeling like a "real" writer. We'll see. (grin)

## **Today, and Writing**

Today, and probably the balance of tomorrow, I'm continuing to clear the decks for my challenge. The websites are done, all but minor tweaks. So I'll finally design the covers and other promo materials for my 10 unpublished short stories, a novel and a novella.

Then I'll publish them, then upload covers to the website, create new pages on the website for the novel and novella, etc.

UPDATE: As of 11:30, I finished formatting the documents and writing promo documents for them. Now I only have to find the cover pics, create the covers, and distribute them. Piece'a cake, amIright? (grin)

By 1:30, I identified pics for the novel, novella, and 7 of the short stories. I have a feeling the last three will have to wait awhile.

It's almost 3 so I'm gonna post this. I have 4 covers done. I'll do at least one more today.

See you tomorrow.

### Of Interest

Check out "Why Indie Authors' Websites Need to Evolve Over Time" at <http://selfpublishingadvice.org/is-it-time-to-evolve-your-author-website/>.

More importantly, see "US Copyright Office recommends sweeping, welcome changes to America's DRM laws" at <http://boingboing.net/2017/06/23/us-copyright-office-recommends.html/>. (I personally NEVER use DRM and recommend strongly against it.)

And see "Hoopla Digital and HarperCollins Disrupt Library E-Lending" at <https://copyrightandtechnology.com/2017/06/25/hoopla-digital-and-harpercollins-disrupt-library-e-lending/>.

From Linda Adams via email, if you're a veteran and you'd like to start your own business (publishing, anyone?) check out "VetToCEO – Veterans Entrepreneurship Training Program" at <http://www.vettoceo.org/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 880

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14710  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 104690  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 442647

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 578 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#) [Leave a comment](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 6/27](#)

[June 27, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Wow, there sure are a lot of blank spaces on my spreadsheet where there should be fiction numbers.

I don't imagine that bothers you a lot since they're my goose eggs and not yours. But just in case, I can promise you they're going to change pretty soon. (grin)

Probably in a big way.

What follows is a bit of personal rambling, which is why it isn't preceded by the word "topic."

I might have mentioned here before an old Marine Corps acquaintance of mine. I won't mention his name here. It wouldn't mean anything to you, and with any luck at all he's changed.

The guy was a corporal when I was a young PFC. He was my first NCO, and about the first one I met outside of boot camp.

But the guy was a head. (That's what we called them back then.) He smoked dope. A lot.

That's the only thing the guy ever introduced me to by the way of leadership. I looked up to him, and that's what he offered me. Literally.

And yeah, I took him up on it. Until I realized I couldn't function as well as I did otherwise while my head was melting. I like having a clear mind. Fortunately, I was smart enough to say No Thanks after the first couple of times.

I only mention that because I got back in touch with him around 3 years ago. About the time I was launching all this writing stuff seriously.

Excited, I told him all about Heinlein's Rules and writing off into the dark. I told him eventually I hoped to write a novel in six months or less, and to turn out two or more every year thereafter. Along with the occasional short story when a tale didn't want to stretch into a novel.

In short, he said it was impossible. That I'd burn out. That even trying it would destroy me.

I wonder what might have happened if I'd come away from my early Marine Corps experience actually trusting the guidance of that guy? What might I have been today if I had learned early on that it was better to listen to him than not?

Wow.

Anyway, I didn't. And this year, if I weren't messing about with challenges and the like, I'd have a novel a month made in the shade. I might even get close to two a month if I wanted to.

Still, I'm glad he and I met all those years ago. After all, who knows where I might be and what I might have accomplished if I hadn't learned from him, inadvertently, to think and decide for myself?

And I actually like to think he's one of the reasons I get so annoyed at "writing instructors" who pass along really bad advice. Not just the clichéd stuff, but maybe especially the clichéd stuff.

Maybe he's one of the reasons, too, that I'm so stubborn about sharing what I've learned and know to be true. Especially the stuff that goes against conventional "wisdom" but actually works.

Odd thing, this Life Trip. Sure glad I get to tag along with the likes of you.

### **Today, and Writing**

Yesterday, I wound up formatting everything, then created nine covers. I still need pics for three short stories, but everything else is done.

Today I'll upload what I did yesterday to my distributors and BundleRabbit, then work to find a few more cover pics. Of course, all of that is after I get back from delivering Bryan to Tucson.

Around 5, getting Bryan up and ready to go. We'll leave about 6 for Tucson.

I got back about 8:30 and turned-to, updating my main website. (Swing by and let me know what you think.)

I'll also be tweaking it to implement some of Nate Hoffelder's recommendations over the next week or so, but it's mostly finished now.

Then I walked down the lane, clippers in hand, trimming overhanging mesquite tree limbs back. By the time I got back I thought sure it was 110 out there. It was only 96. I've gotten to where anything over 90 is rough on me I guess. Sigh.

Anyway, it's almost 12:30 now. I'm gonna distribute the stories I completed covers for yesterday and then see what the rest of the day holds.

Well, publishing is a thoroughly disgusting process. I started around 1:30, uploading to D2D. Less than a half-hour later I was done with that part.

Then I went to Amazon. One book loaded cleanly. All the others encountered an “error,” asked me to try again later, then let me refresh the page, which took me back to the previous page. There they processed my upload again, etc. Sigh. Truly annoying.

When I do the challenge, I might well just not publish the stories that result. I love writing, but I’m really close to giving up on the idea of publishing them anyplace but my websites.

Anyway, I’m gonna post this, then go back to trudge through Amazon some more. Oh, and then BundleRabbit.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

If I may slip back into the personal for a moment, this film clip (about 25 minutes) should be mandatory viewing for any who call themselves Americans:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_oUtJxE4sjs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_oUtJxE4sjs). I especially believe it should be part of every college orientation session.

I recommend “Bookselling in the Age of Amazon” along with Passive Guy’s take on it. See <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/06/bookselling-in-the-age-of-amazon/>.

If you write, typos are a continual and unavoidable nuisance. Check out these typos from famous authors’ works: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2017/jun/16/misprint-the-legends-famous-typos-from-james-joyce-to-jk-rowling/>. (Thanks, Gary.)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 920 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 920

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15630  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 105610  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 443567

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 579 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 6/28](#)

[June 28, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, frankly I was too tired to keep going yesterday. I didn't upload stuff to BundleRabbit, and I didn't update my novel-novella page and my short fiction page on my website.

So probably one more nonwriting day today. I'm getting a lot of "writing related" stuff done, but I'm not writing. Writing is putting new (fiction) words on paper.

Ah well. Either way it should be a banner July. Guess we'll see.

\*\*\*

Had a guy unsubscribe today from the big blog. I wouldn't mention it but he listed the reason as "Did not sign up for list." Only thing is, he subscribed way back on July 10, 2014. I have to wonder how he's been receiving it for almost three years but never signed up. (grin)

**Topic: BundleRabbit**

I can't sing the praises of this outfit enough.

If you don't have an account, and if you're a writer or a reader, get one. You can do so at <https://bundlerabbit.com/>.

A few days ago, I was invited to have two of my titles — the novel No Kind'a Time and the short story "A Turning Point for Charlie Pilsen" — in the forthcoming Guns of the West bundle.

And yesterday, I received another request to have my novella, A Rough New World, in the forthcoming Dystopia bundle.

I've had work in two previous bundles: SF and Chills, Thrills and Spills. (Both are off-sale now, though the books are still available.)

If you're a reader, bundles present an excellent opportunity to taste the writings of different authors in a single, low-priced grouping.

If you're a writer, bundles afford you the opportunity to increase your readership. And even while in the bundle, your books are still available wherever you have them distributed.

Finally, if you have your ducks in a row (a folder for each book with an .epub from D2D, a cover, and a promo doc) it takes about two minutes per title to upload to BundleRabbit.

(If you'd like to know how to put together a folder like this or a promo doc, email me.)

This is a good deal, folks. Don't miss out.

### **Today, and Writing**

Around 4:30 I started uploading nine new titles to BundleRabbit. I was finished a little before 5. Two to three minutes per title.

Filled the hummingbird feeders (this is a major undertaking) and will soon begin uploading book and story covers to my main website.

Okay, by 9 I added three new book pages and nine new covers. Also updated the Novels and Short Fiction pages. Now I'm gonna take a break, then go through all the pictures in my media library to delete the ones I don't need.

Then I'll find cover pics for the remaining three stories and get those out and up.

Finally got the last three covers done and got the last three stories uploaded to D2D, Amazon and BundleRabbit. It's 3 p.m. (grin)

I'm sure looking forward to being this exhausted from a day of writing instead of all this necessary stuff.

Tomorrow, I'll see whether there's anything else I need to do to clear the decks. If there's little or nothing, I'll get back to writing.

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

A great little post titled "Some Movie Stuff" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-movie-stuff/>. Both gave me a laugh and captured my interest.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 560 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 560

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16190  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 106170  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 444127

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 580 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 6/29](#)

[June 29, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I love to enter a room to find most common sense has fled. The absence makes me feel superior.

Yeah, I need to stay away from Facebook more. (grin)

Hey, both Christopher Ridge (<http://creaturecritter.blogspot.com/>) and Linda Maye Adams (<http://lindamayeadams.com>) are taking on a major writing challenge at the moment. Visit their websites to follow along and support their efforts.

I've also added a link to their pages on my main website under Readers' Resources.

Last night my brain was full and I thought I was finished with website stuff. Then I sat down and hovered my cursor over a book cover on my Wes Crowley Series page (under Books) and found the URL still pointed to StoneThread Publishing.

So I revised the page, uploaded the covers and redirected them to the appropriate book pages on the main site. NOW I think I'm finished. You know. Mostly.

While I was browsing this morning, I came across a comment on the article in "Of Interest." It prompted a comment of my own and the topic for today.

### **Topic: The Purpose of Punctuation**

First, punctuation is not meant to be noticed. Its sole purpose is to direct, subliminally, the reading of the work. In the comment I mentioned above, the guy wrote that if punctuation draws attention from the text that's a good thing.

What? How is that possibly a good thing?

Reader thought and any ensuing water-cooler conversation should be about the story, not the punctuation (or capitalization or odd spellings or the lack of or inclusion of quotation marks, etc.).

Readers noticing and commenting on punctuation is like casual observers standing around a beautiful mansion and commenting on the type of nails the carpenter used.

Words and punctuation are tools, nothing more.

As to punctuation, the comma forces a short pause, the semicolon and em-dash force a medium-length pause, and the colon and other end punctuation force a long pause.

And yes, I mean they “force” pauses. Ever try to read through a mark of punctuation? And that pause thing is why the em-dash follows a list that introduces a sentence but the colon follows a sentence that introduces a list.

The em dash (a medium pause) enables the reader to more quickly get to the reason for the list. In the other construction, the colon is fulfilling its role as end (long pause) punctuation. The longer pause builds drama.

Any gratuitous, unnecessary use of em dashes or any other punctuation, and any odd combination of marks (other than the interrobang) is distracting and annoying to most readers.

They’ll put the book aside and find something more enjoyable to do, like poking their eyes with a stick. And most of them won’t even know why they’re annoyed.

## **Today, and Writing**

I started the day with a very brief sojourn on Facebook. And email.

I did have one request for the folder/promo file I put together for each publication.

Then I remembered I covered that in *The Essentials of Digital Publishing*. But that part needed to be updated anyway.

So I wrote “A Fact Sheet Toward Efficiency in Epublishing” and posted it on the Free Stuff page. (You can get it free at <http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/A-Fact-Sheet-Toward-Efficiency-in-Epublishing.pdf>.)

It’s 6:30, time for a break. Then I’ll see whether I have anymore deck clearing to do or maybe start writing.

Well, still some to do on the website. Behind the scenes stuff. I save the .txt version of all pages in a folder. In case of a crash, I have everything I need to rebuild. So I’m doing that now.

Got finished with all of that finally, then went to the store.

Gearing up to writing. It's really cool, feeling the urge to write build in me.

I'm going to work on a friend's website for the rest of today, then begin my new challenge tomorrow.

See you then.

## Of Interest

If you're bored and a wordophile, you might check out Nate Hoffelder's "On Standard eBooks' 'Light Modernization'" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/06/28/standard-ebooks-light-modernization/>. The guy at Standard Ebooks commented to set some things straight.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1220 (670 Journal) + 550 Fact Sheet  
So total words for the day: 1220

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 17410  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 107390  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 445347

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 581 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [punctuation](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 6/30](#)

[June 30, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Yay! The last day of what turned out to be a major transition month for me. At least as far as life and websites go.

This morning I realized there's a glitch in my challenge plans.

The challenge is to write a short story every day "in public," meaning I'll post it scene by scene over at [hstanbrough.com](http://hstanbrough.com).

But sometimes a story grows into a novel. I usually recognize a budding novel at around the two-thirds point of a story. Last month, in only 8 stories, two also wanted to be novels.

That made me wonder, for a short time, whether maybe I should delay the postings. Maybe wait to begin posting a scene at a time until I'm sure the story will wrap as a short story.

Then I realized that's my conscious mind again, coming through a side door to try to shut down the process. Silly.

I still wrote 8 short stories last month. I was able to wrap them as stories, so there was no interruption in the process.

So I'll go with scene by scene in real time and let the chips plop where they wanna.

I'll also have to work out a schedule, a routine, as I go. The Hovel is out for now. Too hot. So we'll see what happens in that regard. That's another major change for me.

### **Today, and Writing**

I rose late, did Facebook and email, wrote the stuff above and started the water on the yard.

I cast about for awhile for story ideas, but nothing came to me. I was still searching old files and my brain when noon rolled around.

I guess the calendar matters more to me than I thought it did. Shrug. So I'll start the challenge tomorrow.

It's kind of funny, really. I wrote a book called *Writing Great Beginnings*, but I'm having trouble coming up with a beginning (an opening line). Go figure.

Anyway, I'll use the balance of today exercising my idea muscle, getting back into the routine of allowing story ideas to come to me.

Actually, I wrote fiction only 15 days this month and still exceeded 45,000 words of fiction for the month. Somehow I'm okay with that. (grin)

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

A great post if you're interested in how to plan for a challenge. See "Just Getting Ready For July" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/just-getting-ready-for-july/>.

If you're interested in Orwellian horror/sf come to life, check out "Netherlands Considers Euthanasia..." at <http://thefederalist.com/2017/06/30/netherlands-considers-euthanasia-healthy/>.

For yet another eye-opener re Amazon, see "Amazon Has a Fake Book Problem" at <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2017/06/03/amazon-has-a-fake-book-problem/>. (Thanks, Alison.)

Alison also introduced me to David Gaughran's Let's Get Digital website. Just remember to take any advice with a grain of salt: <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/start-here/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 430 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 430

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 45050  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 17850  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 107830  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 445787

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 582 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [David Gaughran](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 7/1**

[July 1, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Okay. The roller coaster continues.

Maybe I'll start the challenge today, and maybe I won't. I'll know by the end of the day.

Or maybe I need to adjust the challenge. I don't know. Again, I hope I'll know by the end of the day

Enjoying a visit with my youngest son, his wife, and three grandsons this morning.

### **Today, and Writing**

No writing today.

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via the Passive Guy, see "The Opening as Part of the Closing ... of the Deal" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/03/the-opening-as-part-of-the-closing-of-the-deal.html>. This is a really great article. You might also bookmark The Killzone Blog. I did.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 110 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 110

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 110  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 107940  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 445897

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 583 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 7/2](#)**

[July 2, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I always hate registering a zero for fiction writing for the first day of the month. But it is what it is.

I didn't clear the decks quite well enough to approach my much-touted WIP challenge in July. My wife's birthday and vacation are both this month, and my son recently moved to Arizona, so visits will ensue. I'll get back to the challenge sometime in the future. No rush.

For now I'm going to not think about challenges other than the ongoing novel-a-month thing and just get back to writing.

Yesterday, ideas were lining up outside my mental door and flinging themselves at it. I expect more of the same today.

I've also recognized something new about myself. I enjoy writing short stories, but I enjoy writing novels a lot more.

Even when I was writing short stories early last month, some small part of my subconscious was watching and hoping a novel would emerge.

I'm not sure what that means yet, but I suspect it will bode well for me. Stay tuned.

### **Topic: Writing Prompts**

I'm not sure this is really big enough for a whole topic. But the notion of it is big enough that it deserves the tag.

As I looked through some of the writing-prompt sites this morning (see "Of Interest"), a thought occurred.

Poets and Writers' weekly column "The Time Is Now" offers three prompts per week. They emphasize that one prompt is for poetry, one for fiction, and one for creative nonfiction.

I visited the site. As I scrolled down and read over some of the prompts, I got a great deal more inspiration as I read the paragraph beneath each prompt. So that's one thing. And I actually got more than one idea from most of the paragraphs.

I also got some great, impactful story titles from some of their titles and derived from the paragraphs under the titles.

But another, much bigger realization is that ANY of the prompts can be used for fiction. Or poetry or creative nonfiction, I suppose. And that makes complete sense.

I've written several short stories that were based on poems I wrote years ago. I've written at least two novels based on poems I wrote earlier as well.

You can check out "The Time Is Now" at <https://www.pw.org/writing-prompts-exercises/>.

As you browse the list of other websites in the article in “Of Interest,” you’ll find more neat stuff.

## Today, and Writing

Nothing again today.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Via The Passive Voice, see “Self-Publishing Does Not Have to Cost You Anything at <http://www.indiesunlimited.com/2017/06/26/it-self-publishing-does-not-have-to-cost-you-anything/>. Amen.

Also via The Passive Voice, see “6 Websites with Great Writing Prompts” at <https://medium.com/personal-growth/6-websites-with-great-writing-prompts-1c35288ef91a/>. There’s actually more than writing prompt sites. Check out this one.

Have I said lately how much DWS amazes me? Check out “Novel One: Day One” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-one-day-one/>.

If you have books available through Smashwords, visit <https://www.smashwords.com/dashboard/sitewidePromos> to enroll your books in their annual July Summer/Winter Sale. You know. If you want to.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 490 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 490

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 600  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 107940  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 446387

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 584 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 7/3](#)

[July 3, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Happy July 4th tomorrow. More importantly, happy Independence Day.

Well, I'm officially in a slump right now. (I know. Duh!)

I wrote four openings today, and I wasn't excited about any of them from the first word to the last. Every one of them dwindled and died, and what's worse, I didn't care. I'm not counting the words.

I know better than to think I don't want to write anymore or I don't have anymore stories to tell or any silliness like that.

But I am definitely in a slump. Maybe this is the "writer's crash" Dean talks about now and then. Maybe I'll email and ask him. (grin)

I suppose there's a chance some of it is due to my miserable attempt at a challenge last month. But I'd like to think it isn't.

I suspect partly it's all the changes in the past six months. That's when they started, with me going to pick up my grandson on Christmas Eve.

But in the past couple of months the difficulties have snowballed, stacking one atop the other, and there have been a lot of them.

Not that I'm complaining or making excuses. After all, I either implemented or was the direct catalyst for them:

- the onset of really hot weather, which keeps me from writing outside most of the time;
- swapping out the desk and writing surfaces in my office;
- losing (temporarily) my writing space in the Hovel (GAWD I put a lot of words through the 'puter out there);
- all the stuff going on with my vehicles;
- and then major changes like having Bryan with me for 6 months and him being gone to Job Corps now;
- my youngest son starting over again up in Flagstaff;
- some family turmoil in New Mexico; and so on.

Just a lot of life stuff stacked up on my mind and time.

So the upshot is this: I'll write fiction again when I'm ready to write fiction again. At the moment, I'm just not.

My subconscious has its stupid little arms crossed over its chest. A few minutes ago it did that thing where it pinched its forefinger and its thumb together, drew them across its tightly sealed lips, and made like it was tossing away the key.

In the interim, I'll keep this Journal going and I'll keep coming up with Topics that I hope will help in your own writing. I'll also continue copyediting at a special rate for anyone who's reading this.

First readers are wonderful, and everyone should have a good one. But the first reader's job is to look for consistency issues, places where they're confused, wrong words and misspellings. That's it.

A good copyeditor does all that plus addresses punctuation, tense shifts, pacing and paragraphing issues, story flow, etc. All without changing your authorial voice or the story itself.

If anyone's interested, check the Copyediting tab on my main website. Your price will be lower than the price stated on the website.

### **Topic: 750 Words**

Anyone who's interested in writing challenges or productivity might look into the website <http://750words.com>.

If you're interested in learning what really goes on time-wise when you sit down to write, it will be good for that too.

You all know I'm a big believer in keeping track of numbers because it helps in my productivity. This innovative little site measures all sorts of stuff. It even keeps track of all the time you are NOT writing when you think you're writing. (grin)

But I mentioned writing challenges specifically because this site encourages you to write 750 words.

That's important for several reasons. That number of words is about three pages, about an hour of work and — in some fast-paced genres — about one scene (or chapter). How cool is that?

Especially if you're considering writing short stories or novels “in public” and posting a scene per day or per week or per hour, this might be a real boon. They have a 30-day free trial. After that, if I remember right, it costs you \$5 per month to subscribe.

### **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out at 3 after a LOT of sleep. Apparently catching up.

As I mentioned above, I'm in a slump. At a time when most writers are coming out of a summertime slump, I seem to have entered into one.

I'll be back, maybe in a big way. For now, perhaps I'm in chrysalis stage or something. Not that I wanna be a butterfly. I don't. Unless I'm a butterfly with, like, a machinegun and a few grenades. I'm lining up targets as we speak.

Anyway, I might snap out of it tomorrow, or it might be a week from now, or a month. Shrug. I dunno. But I will snap out of it.

See you tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Not a lot around the web today.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 780 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 780

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1380  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 109210  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 447167

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 585 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 7/4](#)**

[July 4, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

In addition to being Independence Day, today is the birth date of the most important person in the world to me.

My wife, Mona Gay Griffith Stanbrough (who much prefers to remain anonymous), was born on this date roughly 39 years ago. (grin) Happy birthday, sweetheart.

Wow. Yesterday, not five minutes after I posted this Journal, I ran across this quote from The Passive Voice:

“Sometimes it’s important to work for that pot of gold. But other times it’s essential to take time off and to make sure that your most important decision in the day simply consists of choosing which color to slide down on the rainbow.” ~ Douglas Pagels

I’ll take it.

I only mentioned the slump on here in the first place because this is supposed to be a candid look at my life as a writer. So the “bad” along with the good.

Anyway, thanks to everyone who commented via the site or emails.

One suggested it’s all right to take a “hiatus.” Another thought I should probably “shake it off” and get on about my business. A few others simply encouraged me to keep at it.

I really do appreciate any concern, but I’m not worried at all. I’m sure this will all work its way out in the wash.

Re the term I used (slump), probably it’s a matter of personal definition. To me, a hiatus is a vacation, something we plan. “Slump” is a term I stole from the baseball world. The guy still has all the mechanics in place, but he finds himself unable to deliver.

During this slump, I’ll continue to think like a writer. I’ll read, I’ll look at cover photos, and I’ll write down the opening lines of narrative and dialogue that pop into my head.

I’ll come up with ideas and write openings. If one takes off, the slump will end. Until then, it won’t. But I’m okay with that.

At least I’m still writing every day, if only in this Journal. (grin)

### **Today, and Writing**

Posting this early, then taking a hiatus from my slump today to enjoy the day with the birthday girl. (grin)

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Pretty sure during this month DWS is going to lay out his day and report on progress on his challenge each day. Worth following even when I don’t mention him here. You never know what

little phrase or sentence he'll write that will plant exactly the seed you need.  
<http://deanwesleysmith.com>.

Linda Maye Adams continues to progress on her own challenge, posting one scene per day at  
<http://lindamayeadams.com>.

My friend Christopher Ridge is taking on a challenge this month too, but I've forgotten the URL of his website. Chris? Add your website URL to your signature at the bottom of your emails and email me. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 460 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 460

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1840  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 109670  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 447627

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 586 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 176

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#),  
[Non-Writing Day](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 7/5](#)

[July 5, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

If you like good westerns, two of my books are currently in the Guns of the West Bundle. Dean Wesley Smith also has two books in this bundle, plus there are books by 5 other writers.

This is an excellent opportunity to get 9 amazing tales of the wild west for one low price. Visit <https://bundlerabbit.com/b/guns-west/>.

Okay, I've mentioned a time or two a couple of other writers who currently have ongoing "writing in public" challenges.

To watch their challenges unfold and support their efforts, visit these websites:

Linda Maye Adams at <http://lindamayeadams.com/>.

Christopher Ridge at <https://creaturecritter.blogspot.com/>.

### **Topic: The Value of Openings**

For a long time I've preached DWS' statement that to write a story opening all you need is a character with a problem in a setting. And the problem doesn't have to be "the" problem of the story. Just something to get you started writing.

That holds true.

More often than not, the opening takes off. And the next thing you know, you're in the midst of a story. The subconscious is at play and all is right in the world.

My own lack of production recently emanates from the fact that I hadn't (until today) written any openings. I allowed other priorities to creep in.

Like everyone, sometimes I need a jump start. A few days ago I found one.

Sometimes the significance of something isn't in what's said, but in how it's said.

This excerpt from James Scott Bell's "The Opening as Part of the Closing..." struck me hard:

INSET[The opening page and, indeed, the opening paragraph (and even further, if you can do it, the opening line) should be about a disturbance to that character's ordinary world. Why? Because the reader doesn't know who the character is yet. So what's the quickest way to get them interested? Trouble.

INSET(Note that a disturbance doesn't have to be "big" like a car chase, ghost, or awakening in a hospital room. Just something that causes at least a ripple of portent in the character's life.)

Mr. Bell, an accomplished thriller writer, echoed DWS' take. He just said it in a different way.

So just in case you haven't read it, here's an encore chance. Read the entire post at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/03/the-opening-as-part-of-the-closing-of-the-deal.html>.

As I often recommend, I also suggest reading the comments that follow the post.

### **Today, and Writing**

No writing today. Just editing. It's coming, though.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Just as a matter of interest, you might check out <https://www.toddbrison.com/>. There's free stuff for joining his newsletter. I found one gem in about ten minutes of reading.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 440 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 440

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2280  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 110110  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 448067

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 587 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Christopher Ridge](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [Tod Brison](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 7/6](#)

[July 6, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

### **Topic: On Original Thought**

Know what? Anyone who wants to be a writer should strive, every day, to have at least one original thought. On politics, religion, social hot buttons, or whatever.

To become a successful writer — by which I mean a writer who turns out work regularly and that work is regularly sold and read — the writer should strive ALL day every day to have original thoughts.

If you're mimicking the sound bites that pass for news and social repartée — well, good for you. But chances are, you won't be successful, or not as successful as you could be.

So strive to have original thoughts. Then put them in your writing.

Don't utter them aloud unless you're among like-minded friends. Or maybe even then.

Really, there are no "like-minded" friends. If the collective of humanity had to be described by only one phrase, it would be "herd mentality." If by one word, it would be "cliché."

The cliché — well, you all know what a cliché is. And the herd mentality is an ugly, puke-grey-green-with-yellow-streaks-and-blotchy-pink-splotches communicable and highly contagious disease. It issues forth into the collective from an individual desire for acceptance.

See? Now that's an original thought. It's somewhat repulsive, but it's also enticing. But I'll bet you're still reading.

Probably you're thinking 'Welp, Harvey's off on another rant.' To accompany that, you're either grinning and wondering whether I'm about to write something with which you'll agree.

Or you're frowning a little and wondering whether what I'm about to write will be worth a counter argument on your part.

So you're either about to have a little party in your mind or you're girding your loins, so to speak, for battle.

But you're wrong. That isn't what this is about at all.

I actually have zero interest in causing you to think a certain way, to abide by a certain philosophy.

My only interest is that you be successful. That you experience for yourself a series of one-off thoughts that nobody else who has ever lived on this planet has experienced.

And who knows? Maybe that's an even better definition of success in general than the one I offered earlier.

### **Today, and Writing**

Probably no writing today. Striving to finish a copyedit of a novel today.

I actually wrote a little today, but just another opening that didn't work. So I'm not counting it. (grin)

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

From Digital Book World via The Passive Voice, see “8 Top Publishing Lessons Authors Need To Know” at <http://www.digitalbookworld.com/2017/8-top-publishing-lessons-authors-need-to-know/>. (Be careful not to swallow this article whole.)

DWS continues to impress with his current challenge. <http://deanwesleymith.com>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 450 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 450

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2730  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 110560  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 448517

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 588 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Digital Book World](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 7/7](#)

[July 7, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Long post today. Sorry about that. But I think you’ll like most of it.

I’ve been a bit remiss in not mentioning another bundle that contains one of DWS’ SF books. The Sci-Fi July Fever Fun bundle is on sale at <https://bundlerabbit.com/b/sci-fi-july/>. I’m not in this one, but if you enjoy great SF, it’s bound to please.

Topic: “Real” Books vs. Ebooks

On my Facebook pages, I recently announced the BundleRabbit bundle (Guns of the West) that includes two of my books, two of DWS' books, and one each by five other writers. (You can see it at <https://bundlerabbit.com/b/guns-west/>.)

I've had a great response thus far, and I know at least 20 people have bought the bundle as a result of my letting them know it was available.

I hope the old "80-20" rule holds true in this case. (grin) And if you're one of those who has already plopped down \$2.99 (no tax) of your hard-earned cash for the bundle, thank you.

But this morning, I checked Facebook to find this question and comment:

"Can't I buy the actual books? I don't like reading on line. I like to hold the real books in my hand."

This question/comment is flawed on at least three levels, which I find amazing in our current age of technology.

This is like saying you'd rather watch a "real" film in a theater for \$15 a pop instead of buying it on DVD for \$5 or \$6.

"But the movie is the same on DVD or in the theater," detractors say.

Yes. It is.

And the ebook is the same as the paper book. Every word.

Okay, so here is my response to the three flaws in the question/comment:

**One, ebooks ARE "actual books."** Every word of every story or novel is included in both ebook and paper editions. The assertion that a paper edition is "real" intimates that the ebook edition is not, and that's an insult to the author.

Additionally, the ebook edition often contains little extras that are not available in paper editions (just as the DVD of a film often does). In my ebooks, I include those extras as a special Thank You for not insulting me and for being wise with your money.

**Two, you don't have to read ebooks "on line."** To continue the analogy with film, this is like saying "I don't like to watch movies on my TV."

You can read ebooks on your phone unless it's the kind that's permanently tethered to the wall. You can also read them in .mobi (Kindle), .epub (Apple, B&N and others), or .pdf formats on dedicated e-readers or tablets made by numerous manufacturers.

If you don't want to spend the money to buy a dedicated e-reader (I don't blame you), you can download a free app for your phone or your tablet or your computer and read them on that. You

can find links to a few free e-readers on my website under the Readers' Resources tab in the left sidebar.

But with current novel prices at around \$16 and up for paper books and \$5 for ebooks, a dedicated e-reader pays for itself pretty quickly.

***Three, it really isn't that difficult*** to find out whether a title is available in both paper and ebook. Simply key a title or author that interests you into any search engine (or Amazon or Barnes & Noble) and see what pops up in paper and ebook editions.

Identical titles are most often displayed alongside each other, which I particularly like as a writer and as a proponent of ebooks because it gives the reader an immediate price comparison.

If you key in "Harvey Stanbrough The Right Cut" for example, the first four entries are Amazon Kindle, Amazon paper edition, Smashwords (ebook only but with a link to the paper edition) and a single entry for Barnes & Noble.

Then the listings continue with Amazon UK, Amazon Japan, etc.

At B&N, you DO have to click one more time (See All Formats and Editions) to learn that the book is available in both ebook (\$6.99) and paper (\$15.99).

And that's just for The Right Cut, the last book in the Wes Crowley Series.

You can also buy the entire 10-novel series in paper for around \$150, or you can buy all 10 novels in one big volume (but still with all 10 covers plus the cover for the compilation) in ebook for \$20.

***As an added bonus***, if you're going on vacation and you don't want to limit your reading choices, you can carry an extra bag with several of your wanna-read-someday paperbacks, or you can simply slip your e-reader (or phone) into your bag and carry them all that way. I prefer less weight.

***Finally, Support Your Favorite Authors.***

Strictly as an example, if you buy the ebook version of The Right Cut, I'll earn 70% of the purchase price. You'll spend \$5.99, and I'll get \$4.19.

But if you buy the paper version for \$16.99, I'll earn about \$2 per sale. Yes, that's two dollars. It's also very bad math from a standpoint of personal economics.

(Yes, writers who are dedicated to publishing only paper editions, I can earn more per sale if I want to order a stack of them myself, then schlep them around in the bed of my pickup or sell them at book signings, etc. But I'd really rather be writing, wouldn't you?)

So the upshot is, the reader spends a lot more per book for the paper edition, and the author gets a lot less. As Yakov Smirnov used to say, What a country, eh?

Ebooks are here, folks. They aren't going away. And they're a boon to readers, not something we writers do to annoy you.

Chances are you already have the ability to read ebooks in your smart phone or on the tablet you carry with you pretty much everywhere you go. The app is free and the SAME STORIES cost a lot less. What in the world is the downside here?

Please, dive on into the 21st century and let's get back to things that actually matter, like writing more stories.

Oh, and if any of you writers out there are not publishing your works as ebooks yet, feel free to ask me anything you want. I'll be happy to help.

### **Today, and Writing**

Today I didn't write. I know. Massive shock. But I did delve deeper into my own private stock of maladies and figure out what's wrong.

If my writing had a physical body, it would have started shutting down back when I moved my big desk out to storage and switched everything around. Only I didn't recognize the symptoms.

Ever since then, confusion has piled on confusion. In addition to my "writer self" dying, I had the thing with Bryan and I'm worried about a couple of uncles in NM (my only remaining links to my dad), and and and. Life stuff.

As a result, I've been so overwhelmed that I haven't been able even to clearly see the problem until this morning. I mean the personal writing problem, aside from all the life stuff. (Can't do anything about the life stuff but ride it to a standstill.)

Basically, I've been in a kind of mourning for the routine I used to have. I think I've been sort of hoping something would happen to enable a new routine. But that isn't what I really wanted, so it didn't happen. Duh.

Epiphany: What I wanted was the old routine back.

I had (and have) a writing 'puter. But I also had a writing PLACE. The Hovel. Almost everything I've written for the past year or so has gone through my fingers in the Hovel. Then I switched everything around and my previously well-oiled machine ground to a rusty, whining, shuddering, grinched-up halt.

So today I worked hard for about three hours in 100+ degree weather to set things right. Now the massive (too tall to write on) desk that was in the Hovel is in the open storage bay next door. My small writing desk is back in the Hovel. And I will be too, tomorrow morning. (grin)

On top of that, I just ordered a portable evaporative cooler to cool the Hovel. It'll be here on July 12.

So finally, once I gave the problem the time and focus it needed, everything is back on track.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Linda Maye Adams has become a resource similar to The Passive Voice, The Digital Reader, et al. See her "Adventures Around the Web..." at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/07/07/this-week-around-the-web-july-2-8-2017/>. Some good stuff there.

See "10 Viral Strategies" at <http://www.toddbrisson.com/10ViralStrategies/>. Some good stuff there too. Of course, you'll have to translate some of it to your purpose, but....

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1410 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1410

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4140  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 111970  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 449927

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 589 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#), [Tod Brisson](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 7/8](#)

[July 8, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Basically just a placeholder post today.

The Hovel's back in shape. I'll be moving out there to write pretty soon, though probably not today. It's Saturday, so....

Maybe I'll do some cleaning out there, get it ready.

Be glad when this dam breaks.

In the meantime, I have a couple other personal adjustments to make too. I won't bore you with details on those. Just habits to break and habits to assume.

Oh, about yesterday's topic. Hey, if you prefer reading books in the paper edition, good. Enjoy. I was only trying to dispel some longstanding misconceptions.

### **Today, and Writing**

Nada today beyond this little bit of stuff. I'm gonna go ahead and file this.

See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Nada.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 120 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 120

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4260  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 112090  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 450047

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 590 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 7/9](#)**

[July 9, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

Doing very little thus far this morning but relaxing my way into the day.

And did very little the rest of the day so far too. Puttered around outside, a little yard work, a little more on the Hovel, some automotive stuff.

The highlight was a trip to the store for tea and locking gas caps. (Hey. There's a title for you. "Tea and Locking Gas Caps.)

## Today, and Writing

Nothing today. Unless a plane lands on my house tonight and I'm in it (plane or house) I'll be writing fiction tomorrow. Probably all day.

See you then.

## Of Interest

From yesterday, see Dean's "Novel One: Day Seven...Finished" at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/novel-one-day-seven-finished/>. Go on and read today's post too. (grin)

Via The Passive Voice, see Kris Rusch's "Business Musings: Define Your Target Audience: The Intermediate Stages" at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/07/05/business-musings-define-your-target-audience-the-intermediate-stages-brandingdiscoverability/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 140 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 140

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 337957  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4400  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 112230  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 450187

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 591 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 7/10](#)**

[July 10, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

This is important, so it goes up front.

Just in case you happen across “How To Easily Proofread And Edit Your Own eBook” (by The Digital Reader), IMHO there’s only one piece of valid advice in the whole article: Read Your Work Aloud.

Everything else there either lets someone else into your work or won’t work.

### **Topic: What a Writer Needs, Post-Story**

You need a good first reader. By “good” I mean someone who enjoys your work, but someone who will also point out four things: misspellings, wrong words, inconsistencies, and any place where he or she feels “kicked out” of the story or otherwise confused.

A good first reader also is very seldom a writer. You don’t want opinions on “what I would have done.” From a first reader, you want only what I listed above. Nothing else.

If you read your work aloud (and allow yourself to touch the mss here and there as you do so) you’re being your own first reader.

After that, trust yourself and publish it.

If something’s still twingeing that little voice in your head about the story, you might also send it to a good copyeditor. In this case, by “good” I mean knowledgeable but non-intrusive. (Using a copyeditor is an especially good idea if you don’t have a good first reader.)

But avoid “story” editors and “developmental” editors and “critique groups” etc. literally like you would avoid the plague. Seriously. Don’t let anyone (especially other writers) into your work.

Strictly FYI (this is not an advertisement), I am also a copyeditor. You can see what I do at <http://harveystanbrough.com/copyediting/>. If I can help, email me.

\* \* \*

Well, I have edits coming in. I just sent one out a couple days ago. I received one this morning, I have a promise for another, and I'm kind of assuming a third.

That's okay. In fact, it's good. It's helping me refine my schedule. Or maybe start a schedule again.

One, I need to climb back up on Heinlein's Rules. I put myself out there as an HR "adherent" but I haven't been adhering lately even to Rule 1: You Must Write. My plan is for that to change today, with or without the "in public" part. Actually, I've been writing a bit. More on that below.

When I have an edit, I'll work on that from the time I get up until my wife heads off to work. Then a transition break, then writing fiction.

When I finish anything during the day, I'll create a cover, promo doc etc. and publish it. Then, if there's time left in the day, I'll return to the edit.

### **Today, and Writing**

This morning I did the usual email and Facebook stuff. That will change in coming days too when I have an edit in the in-box. Then I'll do the email/FB stuff during breaks.

So starting an edit way late at 6 a.m., then on to writing at around 9 a.m.

I started writing at 10. Wrote what I thought was a good opening, but it fizzled.

That's happened a couple of times in the past couple of days. I get through the opening and at some point the story just doesn't seem to matter to me anymore.

Don't be concerned. I'm just whining. I'll get over it.

I really need to figure this out.

Anyway, I wrote the words in those openings, so I'm counting them. I've gone through and revised the numbers on the last two posts to reflect those openings and numbers.

I'll keep plugging. Maybe something will take soon.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

If you're bent that way, check out The Somnium Project at <https://somniumproject.wordpress.com/>. "Somnium" has been called the first-ever science fiction story.

If you're a verbivore, check out "More Than 600 New Words, Phrases, and Senses..." at <http://www.infodocket.com/2017/06/30/600-new-words-phrases-and-senses-added-to-oxford-english-dictionary-june-2017-update/>. Scroll down on that page for the New Words List and other interesting links.

**Fiction Words: 1070**

Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1720

**Writing of OPENING for "Graham's Road" (yes, Linda Maye, from your sign)**

Day 1..... 1070 words. Total words to date..... 1070 (fizzled)

*(All of the numbers below are revised to reflect totals from 8, 9, and 10 July.)*

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5050  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 112880  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 455725

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 592 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 7/11](#)**

[July 11, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I started the day a little after 3 with a soft rain falling. Very nice.

As I posted on FB, I was sitting under the carport on a folding chair between my Tacoma and my wife's Avalon. I had a lapboard on my lap, my 'puter on it, a mug of coffee on the hood of the pickup, and a passably good cigar. And I listened to the rain pattering on the tin (these days, aluminum) roof. I was in hebben.

Great start to the day.

The landlord (and friend) is supposed to come over sometime this morning to inspect the swamp cooler on the roof. Sounds like the bearings are going out. So I'll work on the edit this morning straight through until he's finished and gone. Or maybe even longer.

### **Today, and Writing**

No fiction writing today. Back to it tomorrow maybe.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Check out Dean's "Writing A Novel From a Cover" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/writing-a-novel-from-a-cover/>.

If you're following his progress on his challenge, there's a separate post for that just below the "Novel from a Cover" post.

If you want what's (to me) a tongue-in-cheek look at how NOT to do something, check out "Pantsing Meets Plotting..." at <https://theverbs.com/pantsing-meets-plotting-a-roadmap-to-finishing-your-book-5aa1187fca65/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 210 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 210

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5260  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 113090  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 455935

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 593 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 7/12](#)**

[July 12, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

Sorry. Just not much to talk about today, and I almost forgot to even file this report. (grin) So kind of a placeholder post today.

## Today, and Writing

I worked on the edit today off and on. No fiction writing, but several ideas popping into my mind through the day. That's a good sign.

I think part of the problem is that I've been looking for ideas. A friend helped solve that problem earlier this afternoon when he tossed out a very vague, very general idea.

I have an idea that's what I'm gonna go with for my novel for this month. I know it'll make a novel, I know it'll write fairly quickly (so I'll get my novel in for July), and it might even lead to a series.

Back tomorrow. See you then.

## Of Interest

Some good comments on Dean's "Writing A Novel From a Cover" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/writing-a-novel-from-a-cover/>.

In Dean's "Novel Two: Day Four" there's a segment titled "A Point on Rest" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-two-day-four/>. I recommend reading it.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 180 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 180

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5440  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 113270  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 456115

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 594 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 7/13**

[July 13, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Wow. Again today I almost forgot to even start this Journal entry, much less post it. Not sure what's up with that.

I carried my new portable swamp cooler out to the Hovel, added water and fired it up. The thing works. It cooled the Hovel from around 94 down to 80 in about 15 minutes. Very comfortable.

I have a very good topic for you that I stumbled across during the current edit. I started the Journal entry too late to include it today, but I'll put it in here soon.

### **Today, and Writing**

Today I'm pressing through on an edit. The story, even though it isn't in my favorite genre, is very good. And the storyteller is very gooder, so there isn't really a down side. (grin)

My own writing is still in the back of my mind. I'm not panicked at all. I know it'll kick in when it's ready to kick in. So I just keep running ideas through my head, writing down the ones that strike me as really interesting.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

More comments on Dean's "Writing A Novel From a Cover" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/writing-a-novel-from-a-cover/#comments/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 200

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5640  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 113470  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 456315

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 595 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 7/14](#)

[July 14, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Probably another full day of editing in my camp today. Then that will be behind me and I'll turn my hand back to fiction.

### **Topic: POV—It Belongs to the Character, Not the Writer**

This is massively important.

Summed into one sentence, Everything in every setting in your story or novel must be described through the POV character's senses and flavored with the POV character's opinions of the various aspects of that setting.

The POV character's description of a setting enables the reader to see (hear, smell, taste, feel) it. The POV character's OPINION of that setting brings it to life.

Combined, the POV character's description of the setting and his opinions of that setting ground the reader in your story.

When the writer intrudes, inserting something himself rather than filtering it through the POV character, the passage often feels external to the story.

That's because it is. It's boring, uninteresting, and most often called an info dump. Most often, writers make such insertions to educate the reader, bring in back story, etc.

And every time they do, it's unnecessary. Every time, that passage can be deleted without adversely affecting the story.

This is a master's level difference in narration that took a long while (and a few hundred thousand words of fiction writing) to sink in for me, especially that "opinion" part.

I still practice it, and the most-often heard comment I get on my stories is, "I felt like I was there with the character."

To make it easier, here are a couple of examples. The setting in both is a private library in a mansion in which the owner occasionally smokes a pipe. In an actual story, there would be more to it, but I think these will suffice as basic examples.

### ***POV Character 1***

The door squealed on its hinges as it opened. A couch and two wingback chairs came into view, both upholstered in a dank, forbidding, dark-brown leather. A bear skin rug glared menacingly up at me. Dark wooden shelves covered every wall from floor to ceiling. They were tight, and crammed full of books.

The dim, recessed lighting coupled with the stench of tobacco smoke only enhanced my impending sense of doom. The poor sap probably died just to escape the necessity of ever again entering this room.

### ***POV Character 2***

The door swung open easily, the hinges announcing me as if to invite me in. A couch and two wingback chairs came into view, both upholstered in a warm, chocolate brown. The shelves beyond were impressive, and economically spaced to house a voluminous collection of books.

The room was subtly, quietly lit with recessed lighting and aromatic, sweetly scented with a hint of black cherry pipe smoke. This must have been the decedent's favorite room in the house.

Both POV characters provide the same description of the setting, but each has a very different opinion of the aspects of that setting.

I hope this helps.

### **Today, and Writing**

I knew going in there would be no writing today unless a story insisted. I won't finish the edit today either, but I'll finish it tomorrow.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice and from the Better Novel Project, see “How to Write a Fight Scene (in 11 Steps)” at <http://www.betternovelproject.com/blog/fight-scene/>. I was happy to see that apparently I’ve been doing it right for awhile now. (grin)

From Linda Maye Adams, several interesting items in her Around the Web post at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/07/14/this-week-around-the-web-july-9-14-2017/>, including one on an attractive looking course for writers. It costs less than many books, so I spent the \$22. I’ll report later. UPDATE: I checked it out. It seems term-ridden. Not really of much use to me, but I encourage you to at least check out the courses. Maybe they’ll be right for you.

Via The Digital Reader, Bookbaby just published the results of a survey on self-publishing. You have to give them your contact information to download it at <https://www.bookbaby.com/free-guide/official-self-publishing-survey-results/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 650

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6290  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 114120  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 456965

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 596 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 7/15](#)

[July 15, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A realization dawned on me this morning. I’m the kind who always needs an adversary. More often than not, the adversary is a time-siphoning situation, not a person.

One of my goals is to write at least one novel or novella per month this calendar year, and 15 on the year.

I've whiled away half of July already. I still have to write a novel for this month to meet the "one per month" part of the goal.

Beginning tomorrow, there are only 15 days left in this month. On several of those days I'll be on vacation with my wife, visiting elderly family members in New Mexico.

I fully intend to meet my goal this month anyway. (grin) And this isn't pie in the sky or expecting to "fail to success." I'm not panicked in the slightest. Odd.

### **Today, and Writing**

No writing again today. Finished the edit, then an enjoyable lunch and shopping with my wife.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

If you want to learn to design and brand fantasy covers, check "One Time Branding Fantasy Covers Workshop" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/one-time-branding-fantasy-covers-workshop/>.

I had to laugh when I read "Use Your Thesaurus with Caution" as reported by The Passive Voice. The first sentence — are you ready? — is "As writers, words are our friends." Huh. I didn't even know writers WERE words. Yeah, you couldn't pay me to read the rest of it. But if you want to, the "Read More" link goes to <https://litworldinterviews.com/2016/10/27/use-your-thesaurus-with-caution/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 250 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 250

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6540  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 114370  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 457215

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 597 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 7/16**

[July 16, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Wow. Absolutely nothing today.

Tell you what. If I don't break out of this whatever-I'm-in fairly soon — if I feel I don't have much to offer you here — this Daily Journal might well begin appearing in your inbox with less frequency.

No reason to keep sending it every day just to keep a streak alive when I have nothing to say.

### **Today, and Writing**

Nada. Primarily a day off and watching a little baseball.

I should be back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Just as a heads-up, see “Scammers Break The Kindle Store” at <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2017/07/15/scammers-break-the-kindle-store/> (From Let's Get Digital via The Passive Voice).

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 90 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 90

Writing of

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 4888  
Total fiction words for the year..... 342845  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6630  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 114460  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 457305

The Daily Journal blog streak.....	598 days
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas).....	7 novels or novellas
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	25
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 7/17**

[July 17, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

For those of you following the saga of Bryan, I finally heard from him. He posted on Facebook yesterday.

That worried me initially because I know he isn't allowed a computer at Job Corps. So I immediately wondered whether he was still there, etc.

I commented on his post "Bryan! You're online? How're you doing?"

And this morning he responded with "Yeah, I'm online. My roommate gave me one of his old phones so that's how I've been online. As far as job corps it's been going great. I love it here."

Whew! (grin) So there you have it.

\*\*\*

My friend Christopher Ridge commented on yesterday's post. I also received a few comments via email, all helpful. Thanks, everyone.

The conscious mind definitely has something to do with my current slump, as it seems it always does. I'll shake it off soon.

When I'm writing, I get excited about passing along what I know. So until I'm writing again, chances are these Journal entries will be a bit sparse, but I plan to keep posting anyway. Maybe a tidbit here or there will help someone else in some way.

**Topic: Story Starters Revisited**

All you need to begin a story is a character with a problem in a setting. That's it. Everybody knows that by now.

Most often when I start a story, I start with a stark opening sentence. I like to grab the reader's attention from the first word.

Then, to *ground* the reader — to pull the reader down into the story — I describe the setting through the character's physical senses and opinions of that setting.

Then I just keep typing.

I'm not writing the story. I'm only recording it. The character is writing it. I feel fortunate that the characters allow me to run along with them.

That mindset enables me to be down in the story with the characters, experiencing it with them, rather than on a pedestal somewhere directing them.

My problem at the moment is trying to come up with that good, stark opening sentence I mentioned above. Usually they just occur to me. But did you read the first sentence of this paragraph? Lately I've been "trying" to come up with one.

As I've mentioned to others, any time you're "trying" to do something, you're invoking the conscious mind. When you're "trying," you're thinking.

And thinking, where the act of writing is concerned, is never a good thing.

So for now I'm just gonna fuggiddaboutit.

## **Today, and Writing**

Okay, I moved out to the Hovel at around 11.

After pecking about for awhile, I started working with Graham's Road, an opening I wrote back on the 10th.

With a couple of trips up to the house to get more water for the portable cooler and more tea for myself, I had a fairly good day. At least I'm writing again.

No idea where this story's going. At present it has TWO major conflicts. One is a dead body on a beach and the other is a return to life (I think) of the police chief's dead wife. And no, her body isn't the one on the beach. (grin)

## **Of Interest**

Just because the guy's amazing, see Dean's "Novel Two: Day Nine: Finished" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-two-day-nine-finished/>.

From BizzaroWorld, “Photographer Broke Due to Copyright Lawsuit by Monkey” via The Passive Guy at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/07/learn-a-language-but-not-a-human-one/>. (He gives you a link to the rest of the article, but his take is priceless.)

**Fiction Words: 3012**

Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3592

**Writing of Graham’s Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Total fiction words for the month..... 7900

Total fiction words for the year..... 345857

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7210

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 115040

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 460897

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 599 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 7/18](#)**

[July 18, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

If you aren’t distributing through Draft2Digital.com (D2D) yet, here’s another reason to do so.

I received an email this morning saying D2D has partnered with Findaway Voices to provide audio books starting, actually, today.

To read about this innovation, visit <https://draft2digital.com/blog/d2d-partners-with-findaway-voices-to-provide-an-alternative-to-acx-starting-7182017/>.

Of special note, if you use Findaway Voices via D2D, the former even waives their normal \$49 admin fee. Worth checking out. Best of all, it gives readers one more way to find your work, and it gives you one more trickling stream of income.

## Today, and Writing

I did little or nothing but reading and researching the stuff in “of Interest” below during the first few hours of the day.

I did get a pretty decent photo of the thumbnail moon early this morning and post it to Facebook. You can see that on my page at <https://www.facebook.com/harvey.stanbrough/>. Worth the effort if you like pictures of Miss Luna.

Went to the grocery at around 7. Then back to check Facebook, email, etc. Mowed part of the yard (the tall part) and didn't get to the Hovel until after noon.

Man, this story is teaching me what Dean means when he says a novel is “twisted.” Whew!

A pretty good day of writing, though I didn't hit my daily goal. Just got started too late. But I'll take it.

## Of Interest

Via The Digital Reader, see “Neo: A Word Processor for Authors” at <http://www.hughhowey.com/neo-a-word-processor-for-authors/>. Even though Neo is a dream for now, there are some gems in the article and in the comments.

If you're looking for a distraction-free text editor, check out “7 Distraction-Free Writing Environments for Authors” at <https://www.thebookdesigner.com/2011/07/7-distraction-free-writing-environments-for-authors/>.

For those of you with WordPress websites, also via The Digital Reader, see “Four things I learned at WordCamp DC” at <http://valiantchickendigital.com/blog/four-things-learned-wordcamp-dc/>.

See Dean's “Novel Three: Day One” at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/novel-three-day-one/>.

I haven't fully understood it yet, but take a look at “Digital marketing scales...” from Mike Shatzkin via The Passive Voice at <http://www.idealog.com/blog/digital-marketing-scales-create-new-opportunities-capable-publishers/>.

## Fiction Words: 2675

Nonfiction Words: 320 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2995

## Writing of Graham's Road (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Total fiction words for the month..... 10575  
Total fiction words for the year..... 348532  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7530  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 115360  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 463892

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 600 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Draft2Digital](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Book Designer](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 7/19](#)

[July 19, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Hemingway has long been my major influence in my writing. The man just has a way with terse sentences, regardless of their length.

I need to read some of his stuff. I thought I had most of his works, so I checked. I have his Complete Short Stories: The Finca Vigia Edition in both paper and ebook, and I've read it through several times.

I also have a few of his novels. A few. My library was sorely lacking in that regard.

Yesterday I did a quick inventory, then sat down and ordered *The Old Man and the Sea*, *To Have and Have Not*, *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *Green Hills of Africa*.

Yeah, it was THAT lacking.

I wanted them all in Kindle, but that was not to be. TradPubs jack their ebook prices so high (with practically zero overhead) that it's MUCH less expensive to buy paper. So I bought paper.

For beautiful, poetic prose I call upon Isabel Allende. (Octavio Paz and Gabriel Garcia Márquez are close seconds, but nothing makes music like Allende's prose.)

But for terse, tight, attention-grabbing, non-lulling stuff, I always go back to Hemingway. Everybody else whose work I like at all comes in at a medium to distant second. James Lee Burke is right up there too.

## Today, and Writing

Got out to the Hovel a little earlier today. The story keeps sticking, probably because of the two major plot lines that are running through it. (grin)

But it keeps moving forward, albeit in bits and spurts, so I'll take it.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See Dean's "Novel Three: Day Two," a really good post, at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/novel-three-day-two/>. (Note too that he has a new bundle out, a really good one if you're an SF binge reader. I'm a little annoyed that he chose not to promote the Guns of the West bundle.)

From his post, I encourage you to browse The Prolific Writer at <http://www.theprolificwriter.net/>. Some gems, some not so good things. You decide. I also added this as a link to Writers' Resources over on the big site.

If you'd like to see a great author website, check out Chris Fox Writes at <http://www.chrisfoxwrites.com/>.

See "In Praise of the Alphasmart Neo" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2015/11/13/in-praise-of-the-alphasmart-neo/>. (But this is exactly why I have a dedicated writing computer. You don't HAVE to connect to the Internet.)

## Fiction Words: 2181

Nonfiction Words: 400 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2581

## Writing of Graham's Road (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Total fiction words for the month..... 12756

Total fiction words for the year..... 350713

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7930

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 115760

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 466473

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 601 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	25
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Chris Fox](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Prolific Writer](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 7/20](#)

[July 20, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I'm so excited about this first bit I can barely breathe. Truly a drop-the-mic moment.

Via The Digital Reader (Thanks, Nate!) you can now download and read — FREE — a huge archive of Amazing Stories magazines. They are available in several formats, and both Kindle and PDF downloaded quickly for me.

If you like SF, this is a treasure trove. If you want to study masterful writers, this is an atomic treasure trove.

(And please, if you think you have to want to write SF to learn from masterful SF writers, you shouldn't have access to sharp objects.)

To take advantage of this incredible opportunity, visit Open Culture at <http://www.openculture.com/2017/07/a-huge-archive-of-amazing-stories-the-worlds-oldest-longest-running-science-fiction-magazine-since-1926.html>.

\*\*\*

In response to Dean's recent comment that he tossed out about 3,000 words on his current WIP, a writer said he'd started a few ideas but they soon ran out of steam, that they didn't interest him.

That seemed really familiar to me. That's exactly what happened to me earlier this month. So, he said, he set them all aside.

He mentioned that in addition to the "character with a problem in a setting" starter, he now relies on something called Storymatic for ideas (see "Of Interest" below).

The guy went to his Storymatic deck of cards, drew two or three, and started writing. (This reminds me of Dean's penchant for crashing two half-titles together to begin a story.)

I mention this only because I wonder what he'll do with the story openings he's already written.

When I finally started writing again, I just went back to the openings I wrote earlier this month, opened one, and made up my mind to finish it. Basically, ever since then, my mantra has been “write the next sentence.”

The story itself interests me somewhat, but I’m still not excited about it. I don’t look forward to getting back to it.

So I’ll be interested to see how this turns out.

I’m a little conflicted. I like adhering to Heinlein’s Rules, and Rule 2 is “You must finish what you write.” I’m certain that isn’t a hard, fast rule so much as a stringent guideline.

But I have a feeling the more times you start and then abandon a story, the easier it gets for the conscious mind to creep in and find a reason to abandon the next one.

That’s the main reason I’m still writing my WIP. That and the bonafide fact that I can’t possibly know what might excite some reader.

I use all the techniques I’ve learned, but beyond that I let the chips fall where they may.

### **Today, and Writing**

I moved out to the Hovel early at around 7:30. Did some cycling to get back into the story, and by 9 I’d written only about 1000 words.

I have a feeling this isn’t one of those novels in which things suddenly break loose and it runs. At least not until it nears the end.

Until then, probably I’ll spend a lot of time piecing together a patchwork of scenes. I’ll have to remind myself to trust my subconscious even when it seems to want to write something that isn’t apparently pertinent.

An incredible day of writing for me, mostly in 15 and 20 minute snippets with a couple of hour-long sessions tossed in.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you’re one who has trouble coming up with ideas, consider Storymatic. You can read about it at <https://thestorymatic.com/products/the-storymatic-classic/>.

### **Fiction Words: 4913**

Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 5493

## Writing of Graham's Road (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070  
Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082  
Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757  
Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938  
Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Total fiction words for the month..... 17669  
Total fiction words for the year..... 355626  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8510  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 116340  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 471966

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 602 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Heinlein's Rules](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 7/21](#)

[July 21, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### Hey Folks,

Nothing much to talk about today. I should be back in a day or two with a topic or three.

Oh, I do have a book in a new bundle. The Dystopia Bundle at BundleRabbit. You can get 11 great stories (so the curator says) for only \$3.99. A good value no matter how you cut it.

For details, please check <https://bundlerabbit.com/b/alpha-one/>.

### Today, and Writing

Got out to the Hovel a little later than I did yesterday. That, combined with a strange necessity to do very little, slowed the pace of my writing and today's output.

The novel continues to move at a pace it has chosen, and seems loathe to be speeded along. I had hoped to finish it before my wife and I take vacation (Monday), but apparently it will be a working vacation for me. If you can call this work.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

If you ever feel time crunched, read the comments on Dean's Novel Three: Day Three at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-three-day-three/#comments>. He outlines a quick way to get a handle on it.

### **Fiction Words: 2543**

Nonfiction Words: 150 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2693

### **Writing of Graham's Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Total fiction words for the month..... 20212

Total fiction words for the year..... 358169

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8660

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 116490

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 474659

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 603 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Saturday, 7/22](#)**

[July 22, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Just a placeholder today. My little girl doesn't feel well, so Dad's hanging around the house, staying close. Some things just take priority. The baby asks so little and she's so precious to me.

### **Today, and Writing**

Nada. Nonwriting day

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Nothing that I found.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 50 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 50

## Writing of Graham's Road (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070  
Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082  
Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757  
Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938  
Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851  
Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 20212  
Total fiction words for the year..... 358169  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8710  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 116540  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 474709

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 604 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 7/23](#)

[July 23, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### Hey Folks,

Well, my kitten is all right. I won't go into details, but my wife and I considered putting off our trip (with nonrefundable hotel stays already paid for) to stay here with her. Thanks to my bride for considering doing that. (She brought the subject up.)

I'm always torn when I (or we) leave. It's better for Bit and the other two babies to stay here in familiar surroundings. But it's always difficult on me, being away from her for any length of

time. I've never been quite selfish enough to take her with me, but I've been on the verge pretty much every time. (grin)

So anyway, we're on the road sometime tomorrow morning.

Because you never know what the Internet will do in a strange place, and because my schedule will be all over the place time-wise, I'll spend part of today pre-posting a few Journal entries as placeholders.

Then if I'm able and if I have anything relevant to say, I'll update each of those pre-posts each day before it posts.

One of the two major plot points in the WIP novel is resolved, mostly, as far as I know, but I have no idea where the end is in this book. So I also plan to write two or three hours per day while we're gone.

I don't want to take for granted that I "might" be able to finish it in only the few days after we get back. (grin)

### **Topic: A Little More on Cycling**

Or maybe on different versions of cycling.

I've mentioned that before I start writing for the day, I usually go back about 1000 words and start reading, allowing myself to touch the manuscript as I go.

I do this with the subconscious, reading strictly for pleasure, but with my fingers on the keyboard. When something needs to be added, I add it.

A few times recently, I've talked with other writers about cycling. They outlined what they do and how, and so on. It's usually something similar.

In the introduction to the library edition of *A Farewell to Arms*, Ernest Hemingway wrote that before he began each day's writing, he read through *the entire novel* up to that point, allowing himself to touch it as he did so.

So even he was cycling, if he kept his conscious mind still during those sessions and allowed only his subconscious to touch the work. Except he cycled through the entire thing each day until it was finished.

I just thought that was interesting.

### **Today, and Writing**

Moved out to the Hovel around 8 after all the stuff above and preparing and pre-posting the Journal for the next few days.

I decided for this one I'd try Hemingway's method, at least for today.

So I started reading at the beginning, allowing myself to touch the manuscript as I read through it.

By noon, including four or five interruptions as I moved from Hovel to house to outside desk and back in, I'd completed the read-through of the first 16,100 words.

That brought me up to the beginning of the last chapter I wrote day before yesterday. In that time, I added around 600 words.

I was glad I conducted this little experiment, but I won't repeat it for this book. (That is, I won't read from the beginning again.) From here on out, I'll begin the writing day by reading over what I wrote the day before, then go from there.

So for now, a quick lunch. Then I'll begin reading at Chapter 19. At the end of that, I'll begin writing new stuff again.

Well, I got through the next chapter, then ran out of steam. (grin)

I hope to add more tomorrow but that will depend on how tired I am from the trip.

Anyway, back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Check Dean's "Novel Three: Day Six" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-three-day-six/>. An excerpt: "When you don't know where the story is going, have the characters talk about how they don't know what to do next."

## **Fiction Words: 1207**

Nonfiction Words: 650 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1857

## **Writing of Graham's Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601

Total fiction words for the month..... 21419

Total fiction words for the year..... 359376

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9360  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 117190  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 476566

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 605 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 7/24](#)**

[July 24, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

On the road today, our first travel day. It's only about six hours, but six hours these days is what ten or twelve used to be.

I'll add to this if I'm able and have something relevant to say.

### **Topic: A Few Thoughts on Characters**

It's funny, in a way, how we (humans) — especially writers, with characters running around in our heads — often tend to think of other humans in one-dimensional terms.

Not long ago, a friend asked whether I appreciated beauty as expressed in my photos while I was still in the Marine Corps.

My response was “of course,” though I had less time available to express such appreciation back then. I wrote while I was doing the USMC thing too.

I keep waiting for someone to ask whether, during that time, I was as compassionate (read “wimpy”) concerning little creatures. Again the answer would be yes.

Several years ago, toward the end of a poetry reading I presented at a large writers' conference, an attendee commented that I “seem more a biker than a poet.” (I was dressed in jeans, a t-shirt and an open black leather jacket.)

Over the years, I've received similar comments in which the person commenting juxtaposed myself as a writer or poet vs. myself as my job while I was in the Marine Corps.

Finally one day I hit upon what I consider to be a universal truth. It's a truth to keep in mind as you're allowing your characters to develop.

What we Do (our vocation and/or our avocation) is not necessarily who we Are.

When others focus on what we do, they see us hard, uncaring creatures. Characters in this guise become one-dimensional, or flat. Stereotypes.

As writers, we initially introduce characters (just as "real" humans are introduced at parties) by what they do. Ms. Smith is a banker. Ms. Randolph is an entrepreneur. Mr. Billingsley is a lawyer. Or a plumber. Or a mechanic. Or a writer.

All of those stereotypes come with a set of assumptions. They enable the reader to "recognize" the character immediately. To that end, stereotypes are not only valid, but necessary.

But after that, you have to let the reader know who the character Is. Not just what he does, but other aspects of his life.

When the focus shifts to who we (or characters) are — and most of us keep most aspects of that hidden away — we quickly become multidimensional. And both we and characters quickly become more interesting. More real.

This is easy to do with characters, at least for me as a fiction writer. I never do a "character sketch" or whatever they call it. Never have that I can remember.

I don't want to impress on a character what I want him or her to be. I want them to simply be who they are, as they reveal as the story goes along.

## **Today, and Writing**

I added another 800 words before we hit the road. Out of time for today, so I'm just gonna count what I wrote this morning.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Check Dean's site. I recommend "Novel Three: Day Seven" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-three-day-seven/>. A lot of little "how it goes" writing stuff.

Fiction Words: 0816

Nonfiction Words: 540 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1356

**Writing of Graham's Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070  
Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082  
Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757  
Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938  
Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851  
Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394  
Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601  
Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417

Total fiction words for the month..... 22235  
Total fiction words for the year..... 360192  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9900  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 117730  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 477922

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 606 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 7/25](#)

[July 25, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Yesterday on the trip over here, a line in a famous song touched me. I casually said, “That could be my next novel.”

My wife said it probably should be.

I won’t divulge here what the line is, but later, in the hotel room while checking email, I happened across this from The Passive Voice:

“Nothing is original” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/07/nothing-is-original/>.

Nothing is original. Steal from anywhere that resonates with inspiration or fuels your imagination. Devour old films, new films, music, books, paintings, photographs, poems, dreams, random conversations, architecture, bridges, street signs, trees, clouds, bodies of water, light and shadows. Select only things to steal from that speak directly to your soul. If you do this, your work (and theft) will be authentic. Authenticity is invaluable; originality is nonexistent. — Jim Jarmusch

That last sentence is pure gold: “Authenticity is invaluable; originality is nonexistent.” Wow.

## Today, and Writing

I wrote a little this morning, mostly a result of cycling. No time to elaborate.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See “How to Judge a Book by Its Cover” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/07/how-to-judge-a-book-by-its-cover/>. Passive Guy links to the full article, but the value is in seeing his comments after the excerpt.

Fiction Words: 0869

Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1069

## Writing of Graham’s Road (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601

Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417

Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286

Total fiction words for the month..... 23104

Total fiction words for the year..... 361061

Total nonfiction words for the month... 10100

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 117930

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 478991

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 607 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#)[Leave a comment](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 7/26](#)

[July 26, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

Had a very nice email last night and this morning from a reader and writer about a story I wrote.

Frankly, I don't remember the story, though I recognized the title.

She wrote with a question, but was also kind enough to say the story had "amazing detail" and was "an amazing example of pacing." Who knew? It was a great compliment and a total score. (grin)

Anyway, we'll visit two more uncles today, then are considering having supper with another before heading back home. We miss our 4-legged babies.

We're also considering staying one more night since the hotel is already booked and paid for. (grin) I'll update this with the firm plan later in the day.

## **Today, and Writing**

I started the day early, still cycling through to add a few bits of essential information (tweaking) a character discovered about the dead body from the first chapter. That might be all of the writing today, as it's been the past two days.

Well, I ended up doing nothing but a little cycling today, clarifying details and cleaning up a twist in the story. I'll be glad to get back to my routine.

I still feel like I'll wrap up this novel in time.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Nothing I could find.

## **Fiction Words: 503**

Nonfiction Words: 210 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 713

## **Writing of Graham's Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601

Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417  
Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286  
Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789

Total fiction words for the month..... 23607  
Total fiction words for the year..... 361564  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10310  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 118140  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 479704

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 608 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 7/27](#)**

[July 27, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

If you're into Orwellian stuff, it's on the increase around us pretty much day by day. For one more than excellent example of DoubleSpeak, see today's "Of Interest."

### **Today, and Writing**

Just a travel day today. I got up really late (for me) so no writing even for an hour or so this morning. There's a chance I could write after we get home, but I'll just call this a non-writing day.

IF I'm home early enough to write and IF I write, I'll update this before it actually posts. Otherwise, back tomorrow.

Nope. No writing today. Too pooped. See you tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you still use the airlines, see "New TSA Rules Require Separate Screenings for Your iPad, Kindle, Kobo, and Other Tablets and eReaders" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/07/26/new-tsa-rules-require-separate-screenings-ipad-kindle-kobo-tablets-ereaders/>.

Dean got a great start on his fourth novel for the month. See “Novel Four: Day One” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-four-day-one/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 130 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 130

### **Writing of Graham’s Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070  
Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082  
Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757  
Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938  
Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851  
Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394  
Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601  
Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417  
Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286  
Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789

Total fiction words for the month..... 23607  
Total fiction words for the year..... 361564  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10440  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 118270  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 479834

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 609 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

## **[The Journal, Friday, 7/28](#)**

[July 28, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I get a lot of questions that I can answer, in general, with this one sentence:

“In storytelling, no single aspect is more important than the ability to pull the reader into the story and keep him there.”

I’m hoping to teach an intensive on how exactly to do that in the near future. The intensive will be geared for no more than 8 attendees. Two writers are already signed up.

I'll cover

- Openings,
- Hooks,
- Grounding the Reader in the Story,
- Physical and Emotional Cliffhangers, and
- Pacing.

Given time, I'll talk a little about Endings as well.

The intensive will begin at 10 a.m. and run through about 4 p.m. It will be in St. David, Arizona. The cost will be \$100.

After spending a few hours wrangling with writers via email (grin), I'm letting the 2 writers who are already signed up pick the date for the intensive.

I'll pass along the firm date as soon as they let me know. Then if at least 4 writers sign on, the class will make.

I can't promise I'll do this again, maybe ever. So if you're within driving distance and you're interested, let me know.

### **Today, and Writing**

Got up early (on time, for me) and put together the beginnings of the intensive I'm planning to teach. Information above.

Today is the third to the last vacation day for Mona, so whatever she wants to do is the priority. But I'll write at least a little today. (grin)

Opened the story at 8:30 a.m. Went to Sierra Vista on a shopping trip at 9 a.m. (grin)

Back at the story after a long session of email, and realized today will be another cycling, cleaning, straightening day on the story. Sigh. A character came up with a new twist, and of course it has to be worked in through the whole book.

But I'm determined this will be the last day for that. Beginning tomorrow I'll be powering through the rest of the story to the end.

Well, determined or not, I'll have one more partial day of cycling. This thing is really twisted.

So tomorrow will be cycling and writing.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see “Your Book Needs These 6 Psychological Ingredients” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/07/your-book-needs-these-6-psychological-ingredients/>. He links from there to the full article.

DWS talks on a podcast about being a prolific writer. Check it out at <https://www.theprolificwriter.net/episode-33-dean-wesley-smith-on-the-myths-of-writing-and-publishing/>.

If you’re a writer of SF or Fantasy, see Nate Hoffelder’s post on a prestigious new fan-based award at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/07/27/voting-fan-choice-dragon-awards-ends-28-august/>.

You can find more information at <http://awards.dragoncon.org/faq/candidate-faq/>.

### **Fiction Words: 761**

Nonfiction Words: 410 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1171

### **Writing of Graham’s Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601

Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417

Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286

Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789

Day 10... 0761 words. Total words to date..... 20550

Total fiction words for the month..... 24368

Total fiction words for the year..... 362325

Total nonfiction words for the month... 10850

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 118680

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 481005

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 610 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 7/29](#)

[July 29, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, the good news is, the intensive will go. We have four hearty souls signed up. There are four slots left. If anyone else wants in and you're local, email me. (Please don't fly in, etc. No need. If this goes as well as I expect, I'll put it on audio later and make it available for sale to the public at something of a discount.)

\*\*\*

I went to bed and read for about an hour last night (Raymond Chandler stuff, of Philip Marlowe fame). Then some moron got his vehicle stuck on the dirt road that leads to the highway.

He revved and revved and revved and revved etc. ad nauseam because, apparently, that's all he knew to do. When that surprisingly didn't automatically levitate him out of the mud, he laid on his horn several times.

Someone eventually pulled the guy out, but only after the kid (I assume) wore the rubber off all four tires and stressed his engine trying to throw mud from here to Deming, New Mexico.

This is in the midst of a fairly heavy rain during which we got almost a half-inch in about an hour.

In the midst of the same rain, the city fathers or mothers or whatever of St. David decided it would be the perfect night to set off July 4th fireworks. Yeah. Twenty-four days late, at around 8 p.m. in a driving rain.

Of course, all of that got me out of bed. I was annoyed. So here I am. Finally to bed around 11.

### **Today, and Writing**

Got up a little late this morning. Mona had to drive back to Sierra Vista but I opted to stay here. Did a little of what all guys do when we're left to our own devices — yard work — then came in to cool off.

Around 11 I started back on the novel. One more major mess to straighten out from a new twist the characters tossed at me while I was on the road.

But I'm also in the area where the novel will end. Probably another 6000 to 8000 words or so.

It dawns on me, this will be either my 26th novel or my 5th novella. Weird.

I worked through the final (so far) big twist. It took a couple of hours, but it worked out much more quickly and smoothly than I expected. That was a relief. Finally I got to write some brand new stuff. (grin)

But not a lot. Eyes gave out.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Nothing today.

### **Fiction Words: 653**

Nonfiction Words: 430 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1083

### **Writing of Graham's Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601

Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417

Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286

Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789

Day 10... 0761 words. Total words to date..... 20550

Day 11... 0653 words. Total words to date..... 21203

Total fiction words for the month..... 25021

Total fiction words for the year..... 362978

Total nonfiction words for the month... 11280

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 119110

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 482008

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 611 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 7/30](#)**

[July 30, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

Cool. I woke this morning to a request to include yet another of my books, Rise of a Warrior, in a bundle at BundleRabbit. Not only is it a good stand-alone novel, but it's also the first book in the Wes Crowley series. Uh, yeah. I'll do that. (grin)

If you don't have your work listed with BundleRabbit yet, why not? Check it out at <http://bundlerabbit.com>. The account is free, and every time your story or book is bundled, you gain access to new readers.

And yes, you can upload short stories and collections as well as novellas and novels. Just do it already.

\*\*\*

Still a few slots open for the writing intensive. As a reminder, it's on Wednesday, 16 August, here in beautiful downtown St. David.

\*\*\*

I actually sacked out early last night and rose early this morning. Feels good to be back on track. I spent the first couple of hours playing, looking at parlor-sized (3/4 sized) guitars online.

But I don't think I'm gonna buy one just yet. I still have stories to tell, and I really don't have time for more than one passionate pursuit.

## **Today, and Writing**

To the novel at 6. I'm getting anxious to have this one over and done. That string of three-digit word counts is bugging me.

Ran into another problem with the situation. I know the end is close, but I also don't have a clue where it is. Exciting but frustrating too.

I'm pretty sure now I won't wrap this one until tomorrow. I won't rush the ending either, but I don't think I'll need to anyway. As I said, it feels like I'm in the proximity.

Worked on it off and on during the day, mostly in 15 and 20 minute bits. Around noon I took a couple hours off to watch the Cubs play the Brewers. Then around 2:20 I headed out to the Hovel (first time since I've been back) to put in at least one solid session today.

Little girl's been really needy today, following me around and so on. Right now she's under the bed (thunder in the area) so I went to the Hovel.

I have to find a way to get to the Hovel more often. All day in those short bits, I wrote about 1700 words. In one hour and a half session in the Hovel, I wrote the rest. Wow. That's the power of having a place where your subconscious is trained to write.

I think I could have written more too, but I worked myself into a corner and ran out of time. I might need to rethink what time I post the Journal. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via Linda Adams on her Facebook page, you're cheating yourself of a great time if you don't read "Self Publishing Destroys the Universe at <https://medium.com/@kevintumlinson/self-publishing-destroys-the-universe-9b4cb0276518/>. It's a little long, but a ton of fun.

See Dean's "Novel Four: Day Four" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-four-day-four/>. Incredible. Here I am struggling to finish a single novel of only around 30,000 words (maybe) and he's about to finish his fourth 40,000+ word novel of the month.

I don't compare myself to Dean, but I do use him for inspiration and to realize what's possible. (grin)

### **Fiction Words: 3725**

Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4275

### **Writing of Graham's Road (short novel)**

Words brought forward..... 1070  
Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082  
Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757  
Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938  
Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851  
Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394  
Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601  
Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417  
Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286  
Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789  
Day 10... 0761 words. Total words to date..... 20550  
Day 11... 0653 words. Total words to date..... 21203  
Day 12... 3725 words. Total words to date..... 24928

Total fiction words for the month..... 25021

Total fiction words for the year..... 362978

Total nonfiction words for the month... 11280

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 119110  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 482008

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 612 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kevin Tumlinson](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 7/31](#)**

[July 31, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

The Last Day of July! Woohoo! Today I'll finish my 26th novel. With any luck, I'll begin the 27th. Well, I might wait until August 1 just to be honest about it.

**Today, and Writing**

Headed out to the Hovel at around 10. Struggling a little as I head for the end game on this one. The characters tossed up one more twist. Very weird.

So I wrote awhile, then cycled back through almost the whole book to make sure everything fit. Then I wrote some more, cycled back some more, and wrote some more.

Well, I found the end, but I didn't finish. Mea culpa. Guess I'm not as bulletproof as I thought. Tomorrow I will have missed one month in my goal to complete a novel every month. But I think I won't mourn too long. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Nothing today.

**Fiction Words: 4125**

Nonfiction Words: 150 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4275

**Writing of Graham's Road** (tentative title, novel or novella)

Words brought forward..... 1070  
Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082  
Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757  
Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938  
Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851  
Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394  
Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601  
Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417  
Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286  
Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789  
Day 10... 0761 words. Total words to date..... 20550  
Day 11... 0653 words. Total words to date..... 21203  
Day 12... 3725 words. Total words to date..... 24928  
Day 13... 4125 words. Total words to date..... 29053

Total fiction words for the month..... 25021  
Total fiction words for the year..... 362978  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11280  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 119110  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 482008

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 613 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 7 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 25  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 8/1](#)

[August 1, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, five are signed up for the writing intensive now. Three slots left, and one more would-be attendee is thinking about it.

Today I'll endeavor to finish my July novel. (grin) Whenever I finish, I'll have 8 novels or novellas at the beginning of the 8th month of the year.

With my annual goal of 15 novels or novellas on the year, I'm going to plan to write two novels per month for August, September and October. Absolutely no reason I shouldn't be able to do that.

During August also I'm prepping for and teaching the intensive, and I'll begin another online workshop with Dean to keep advancing my own skills. All in all, wow do I ever love this life.

\*\*\*

I've talked a lot about Draft2Digital, a distributor for ebooks. They've added Overdrive now to their distribution list, helping writers get into a boatload of libraries. Check it out at <https://draft2digital.com/blog/>.

## **Today, and Writing**

I started writing (inside) at about 8:45. By 9 I realized the last chapter I wrote yesterday was a false ending. And it was actually longer than the last chapter I wrote today. (grin) Go figure.

I ditched it.

I sat back for a minute, then put my fingers on the keyboard again. A little less than an hour later, I'd written 1118 words and the thing was done. And it's tight.

I'll take a break now, then start the next one.

Started writing again around noon. All I had was a mental image of two guys in a military truck in a foreign country in a driving rain watching something. The driver wanted to be there. The passenger did not.

A little over 1100 words in the first hour. Then I wanted a cigar so I packed up and headed for the Hovel. Turned on the swamp cooler out there, lit a cigar and hammered out another thousand words.

Then the squirrels who live in the wood and junk pile just outside the door of the Hovel started sounding off with a bark that sounds like birdsong.

I got up and went outside. I said, "Little Bit, are you out here?"

She came walking out from under the travel trailer we use as a spare bedroom. So now I have cat-alarm squirrels.

I packed up and headed back to the house.

At 2:50, I returned to the story.

I wrote 'til around 3:30, then called it. Good day.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Read Dean's "Novel Four: Finished. Challenge Made!" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-four-finished-challenge-made/>. Be sure to read the bold face stuff too below the post. That starts with "Total for Challenge."

Via The Passive Voice, see "The Power of the Unlikeable Protagonist" at <http://writerunboxed.com/2017/07/01/the-power-of-the-unlikeable-protagonist/>.

**Fiction Words: 3856**

Nonfiction Words: 460 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4316

**Writing of A Kindness** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2738 words. Total words to date..... 2738

**Writing of The Implications** (formerly tentatively titled Graham's Road)

362978

Words brought forward..... 1070

Day 1..... 3012 words. Total words to date..... 4082

Day 2..... 2675 words. Total words to date..... 6757

Day 3..... 2181 words. Total words to date..... 8938

Day 4..... 4913 words. Total words to date..... 13851

Day 5..... 2543 words. Total words to date..... 16394

Day 6..... 1207 words. Total words to date..... 17601

Day 7..... 0816 words. Total words to date..... 18417

Day 8..... 0869 words. Total words to date..... 19286

Day 9..... 0503 words. Total words to date..... 19789

Day 10... 0761 words. Total words to date..... 20550

Day 11... 0653 words. Total words to date..... 21203

Day 12... 3725 words. Total words to date..... 24928

Day 13... 4125 words. Total words to date..... 29053

Day 14... 1118 words. Total words to date..... 30171 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 3856

Total fiction words for the year..... 366834

Total nonfiction words for the month... 460

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 119570

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 486404

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 614 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Draft2Digital](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 8/2**

[August 2, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

There is a LOT of good information in “Of Interest” below. Be sure to check it out.

A couple of days ago I announced here (to my friends) that I had another request for one of my books for a bundle. It happened again yesterday after I filed the Journal for the day. Too cool!

And then today, I received requests to include three more of my books in bundles. WAY cool! (grin)

By February, I’ll have books in

- Dystopia (current, A Rough New World);
- Guns of the West (current, No Kind’a Time and “A Turning Point for Charlie Pilsen”);
- Cowpunchers and Gunfighters (August 15, Commanche Fire);
- Gumshoes (not sure of the date yet, Without a Clue);
- Remembering Warriors (January 1, Rise of a Warrior); and
- Frisky February (February 1, The Overall Effect of Them). I am STOKED!

So one more reason to be glad I’m writing what I want to write, and writing across genres.

If you aren’t in BundleRabbit yet, get there!

\*\*\*

Below in “Of Interest” is an article on Legal Myths. I recommend it. However, I disagree with the author re the need to register copyright.

I personally do not register my copyright with the copyright office. If I did, I probably would do so one year at a time.

I would bundle all my writing for 2016 (for example), title it “Works of Harvey Stanbrough, 2016” and register it for one fee. But I don’t even do that. I publish works soon after they’re finished, and the publication date should be ample proof.

### **Today, and Writing**

I worked a little on a handout for the upcoming Storytelling at Depth workshop. Still a couple of spots open.

Did some other stuff, a lot of online playing, etc. Around 10:30 I moved to the novel.

I didn't feel good about the opening I wrote yesterday, but I wasn't sure why. This morning I realized I'd started too late in the story.

So today I wrote a new opening, then cycled through the whole thing.

I was also interrupted a LOT today, but all of it was good interruptions.

Three times I was interrupted by curators requesting my books for inclusion in bundles at BundleRabbit. As an added bonus, one of my friend Alison Holt's books was ALSO requested for one of those bundles! And I think she only uploaded it today. How cool is that?

So not a big writing day today, but I feel back on track with the novel and good about everything else.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "5 Legal Myths That Writers Still Fall For, Debunked" at <https://www.bookworks.com/2017/04/legal-myths-debunked-writers-authors/>.

Wow. Check the comments at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-four-finished-challenge-made/#comments>. There are a lot of "congrats" but a few meaty ones too.

I'm not wild about the full title you'll find, but check these "10 Brutal Truths" at <http://thepowerofideas.ideapod.com/10-brutal-truths-life-will-help-get-shit-together/>. Not directly related to writing, but SO pertinent. Well done, other than the title.

Check Dean's "A New Day" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-new-day/>. Toward the bottom, he offers both an audio and a video of a podcast he just did. It's chock full of gems. I strongly recommend it. (I prefer the video.)

Finally, while I was watching the podcast above, I also stumbled across "Being Prolific as a Fiction Writer" at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MH1wz-YnFe0/>. Again, I strongly recommend it. A lot about the history of writing here.

## **Fiction Words: 1975**

Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2525

## **Writing of A Kindness** (tentative title, novel)

Day 1..... 2738 words. Total words to date..... 2738

Day 2..... 1975 words. Total words to date..... 4713

Total fiction words for the month..... 5831  
Total fiction words for the year..... 368809  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1010  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 120120  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 488929

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 615 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [BundleRabbit](#), [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 8/3](#)

[August 3, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, the curator giveth and the curator taketh away. One of the bundles my work was going to be in was deleted by the curator. I think maybe he scheduled it too soon (August 15). Anyway...

**Topic: Creating .epub and .mobi Files... Uh, No**

In “Of Interest” today, Nate Hoffelder (The Digital Reader) mentions that Amazon has released a Kindle Create file creation tool as an add-in for Microsoft Word.

He goes on awhile too about creating .epub files, for which there are various programs.

Maybe I’m missing something, but I just don’t understand why this would matter, ever, to a writer. Even when I was eformatting for other folks, I did all the formatting in Microsoft Word. I’ve never created a .mobi (Kindle) or .epub (everything else) file.

When I upload my MS Word document to Draft2Digital, D2D automatically generates a clean, validated .epub file and a clean .mobi (Kindle) file that I can use any way I like. In fact, that .epub file is the one I upload to BundleRabbit.

The fact that you can upload your .doc or .docx file to D2D is exactly why I wonder why ANYbody in this day and age would opt NOT to publish to ebooks as well as paper.

Yes, I DO understand that if you create your own .epub and .mobi files manually, you can control more of the formatting, etc. Like adding drop caps, etc.

But I also know that on most e-readers, final formatting is up to the reader. So all the hours the “writer” (turned “formatter”) spent formatting his .epub or .mobi file can be negated in half a heartbeat. Dropcaps gone. Orientation changed. Font faces and sizes changed.

Besides, I’d rather spend those hours writing. Or, you know, rolling a sheet of paper into a cone and poking myself in the eye.

If anyone out there knows what I’m missing (i.e., a good reason to spend time creating .epub and/or .mobi files), please let me know.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out a little early this morning. Even after doing the email and Facebook thing (and writing the above), I turned to the novel for the first session at 3:30 a.m.

Well, this is gonna be one of those books. I wrote most of a new chapter, then just stopped. There were a few interruptions, but I’m used to those. I can be interrupted, take a few minutes to an hour or longer off, and come right back to the novel and pick up as if I’d never left.

But not this morning. What I wrote this morning wasn’t right. Now, this isn’t me reading it and being critical. This is my subconscious, as I’m writing, saying I’m not getting the right words on the page. Or maybe not in the right order.

So I’ll move what I wrote this morning to the end, put it in the “Cuts” section, and make another run at it in a little while.

Nope. The whole time I’ve had in the back of my mind that this would be a novel. It isn’t. It’s about one event. It’s a short story.

Oh well.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See “The joys of volunteering for Distributed Proofreaders” at <https://teleread.org/2017/08/02/the-joys-of-volunteering-for-distributed-proofreaders/>. Just in case it’s your cuppa tea.

Via The Digital Reader, “Kindle Create Add-in for Microsoft Word Released” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/08/02/kindle-create-add-microsoft-word-released/>. Note that both tools are currently in Beta (testing) phase.

## **Fiction Words: 2389**

Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2969

## Writing of “Pancho & Lefty: An Alternate Ending” (short story)

Day 1..... 2738 words. Total words to date..... 2738  
Day 2..... 1975 words. Total words to date..... 4713  
Day 3..... 2389 words. Total words to date..... 7102 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 8220  
Total fiction words for the year..... 371198  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1590  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 120700  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 491898

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 616 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 8/4](#)

[August 4, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### Hey Folks,

Back in June when I was writing a short story every day, I had a few I wanted to turn into novels. I'm going to glance back over those today.

If I find something that runs with me, I'll write it.

If I don't, I'll start writing a short story every day again (beginning today) until I hit on an idea that wants to be a novel. (grin)

### TOPIC: ISBNs, Copyright, etc.

I'm astounded by the general lack of knowledge of writers about the writing business as evidenced by some of the questions I receive.

This morning a friend wrote to ask whether he could use the CreateSpace (hereafter, CS) ISBN if he had the book printed by someone else. (No. Every edition of a book has to have a separate ISBN.)

CS charges no upfront fees. The only fee is a per-book charge of around \$2 to \$3 per book, and that's your cost if you order copies of the book to sell yourself. Personally, I see no reason to even do that.

If you charge enough to put the book on Extended Distribution through CS, it will be listed through Ingram et al and offered for sale in all the various catalogs.

It will also show up in any Amazon (B&N, Kobo, etc.) search right alongside the ebook. And THAT'S the main reason I offer my books in paper. For the price comparison.

If you order a bunch of copies because you want to "hold your book in your hand," you're costing yourself money. If you have a venue where you can sell them yourself (speaking engagements, indie bookstores, etc.), you'll make a tidy profit.

But otherwise, for copies sold through Extended Distribution and normal channels, you'll make about \$2 in royalties (about 10%) per copy sold.

Your ebook, on the other hand, will earn you a whopping 70-80% of the list price, depending on the venue.

The paper edition of one of my books sells for \$15.99. For every paper copy that sells, I earn about \$2.

The ebook edition of the same book costs \$4.99, a much more attractive price. For every ebook copy that sells, I earn between \$3.50 and \$4.00.

In the same email, my friend asked whether he has to send a "hard copy" to the Library of Congress. He said "I know at one time all publishers, including self publishers had to do this."

Again, no. And no, they weren't. Nor do you need an LCCN (Library of Congress Catalogue Number).

The LCCN, which by my estimate 99.83652987% of novice authors/publishers fret over, doesn't even ensure that your work is in the actual Library of Congress.

Most novice writers, from what I've been able to discern, believe they either "have" to have an LCCN or that having one will somehow cause their work to be enshrined in the Library of Congress. Neither case is true.

Requesting and purchasing (yep, it costs money) an LCCN only ensures a listing in their catalogue, which again does absolutely nothing to benefit the author or the work.

For questions on copyright, see the US Copyright Office at <http://www.copyright.gov/>.

**Today, and Writing**

Got up late this morning (for me) at around 4 and spent the first couple hours doing nothing much. Normal email and FB and the topic above.

Didn't find a June story to run with, so I knocked out a couple thousand words on a new story. Breaking about 9 to do a little yard work (mowing) on the part that's dry.

Finished with the yard (it's probably an acre but mows like 5 acres) in a little over an hour. Now to finish the short story for today. Then I think I'm gonna take some time off to watch baseball. (grin)

Well, the game starts at 11. So I'll get a shower, watch the game and finish the story later today.

Well, I went back to the story for awhile, but it seems to want to be either a long short story or maybe a novella. We'll see.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Nada today.

### **Fiction Words: 3109**

Nonfiction Words: 680 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3789

### **Writing of "Untitled" (short story)**

Day 1..... 3109 words. Total words to date..... 3109

Total fiction words for the month..... 11329

Total fiction words for the year..... 374307

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2270

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 121380

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 495687

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 617 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Saturday, 8/5](#)**

[August 5, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

Well, not a lot going on today. One of my sons and his family are visiting, so the day will flow as it's supposed to.

## Today, and Writing

Rose early, finally started writing at around 5, got around 800 words done before visiting started. I'll get back to it later, depending on what the children decide to do.

Well, not gonna get anymore writing done today. I'm a little annoyed with myself that I wasn't able to find the end of the story today. Maybe tomorrow morning.

See you then.

## Of Interest

Nothing again that I saw unless you're interested in attending Dean's Master Business Workshop on the coast in October. Then check his site at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/smiths-monthly-issues/>.

Fiction Words: 802

Nonfiction Words: 130 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 932

## Writing of "Untitled" (short story)

Day 1..... 3109 words. Total words to date..... 3109

Day 2..... 802 words. Total words to date..... 3911

Total fiction words for the month..... 12131

Total fiction words for the year..... 375109

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2400

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 121510

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 496619

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 618 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 8/6](#)**

[August 6, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

Not sure what the day will hold, but at least I got some writing done and finished the story.

## Today, and Writing

I rose way early, a little before 2, so the girls could spend some time outside before the kids and grandkids get up. (My babies spend all their time under my bed when anyone's visiting.)

I started writing at 4. Did a lot of cycling back to add in small details (verisimilitude, that) and wrote a little over 1400 words to finish the story. Probably no more writing today, and that's fine.

After the visit I'll watch some baseball.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

At Dean's place, of particular interest, there's still room in all of the online workshops for August. I can't recommend these enough, folks. In fact, I'm enrolled in one this month. Details to follow. See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/store-and-auction/>.

## Fiction Words: 1450

Nonfiction Words: 150 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1600

## Writing of "Going Home" (short story)

Day 1..... 3109 words. Total words to date..... 3109  
Day 2..... 0802 words. Total words to date..... 3911  
Day 3..... 1450 words. Total words to date..... 5361 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2550  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 121660  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 498219

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 619 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 8/7**

[August 7, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

A little under the weather today. Nothing serious, just blah. Not sure how much writing I'll get done, if any. Feels like a day of doing zip.

I added my most recent novel, a whodunit mystery, to the website. You can see it at <http://harveystanbrough.com/the-implications/>.

### **Topic: Ebook Editors (actually, formatting programs)**

This stuff was going to go into "Of Interest" but it's too important. Especially for those who are new to ebook publishing or thinking about ebook publishing.

If you fit either of those categories, or if you are frustrated with your current formatting process or software, here are a few articles I strongly recommend you read.

**One:** "How to Use Reedsy's Book Editor to Format Ebooks and Print for Free" at <https://selfpublishingadvice.org/how-to-use-reedsys-book-editor-to-format-ebooks-and-print/>.

I'm not wild about the "'for' free" appellation, but the article itself is pretty good. I won't be using Reedsy myself because

1. It's browser based. There's no program to download and I'm more of a want-it-on-my-computer kind of guy.
2. I'm happy with MS Word for my formatting. But I've been at it a long while so it's easy-peasy.

**Two:** In light of my second note above, here's a link to my free "The Essentials of Digital Publishing," which explains in detail how to format your Word .doc for submission to Draft2Digital, Smashwords, et al (who then convert your .doc to .epub, .mobi and .pdf): <http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/DPubV2X.pdf>. I sold a bunch of copies for \$10, and this is free. Just sayin'.

**Three:** For another article on using MS Word as a formatting platform, see "Book Production Advice: How to Format an Ebook using Microsoft Word" at <https://selfpublishingadvice.org/book-production-advice-how-to-format-an-ebook-using-microsoft-word/>. I've read it. It's pretty good, but only for formatting ebooks.

**Four:** If you're a Mac user, I recommend Vellum as I've heard nothing but great things about it. It's not available for PCs, but you can read "Production: Vellum as a Formatting Tool for Print" at <https://selfpublishingadvice.org/vellum-for-print/>.

**Five:** Finally, if you'd like a simple but thorough guide into the ins and outs of Microsoft Word, check out my free blog series "Microsoft Word for Writers" at <http://harveystanbrough.com/microsoft-word-for-writers/>. Nothing I hate worse than receiving a manuscript for editing and seeing that the writer still used the Tab bar or the space bar to indent the first line of paragraphs. Ugh.

## **Today, and Writing**

Rolled out way early again. Not sure why, and I didn't feel well. I thought I might start another story, but if I wrote something today it would be just to put words on a page. So calling today a non-writing day.

Went to the grocery and the post office, did a load of laundry, read a little, watched some TV. Stuff like that.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See the stuff in the Topic above.

Via The Passive Voice, see "Note to All Creatives: Marketing is Your Job" at <https://medium.com/the-mission/note-to-all-creatives-marketing-is-your-job-6c4adecc38bf/>.

Also, an article about one part of the decline of humanity (in my opinion). Like cursive writing, doing math without calculators, and dictionaries beginning to insist that "imply" and "infer" are interchangeable, there inevitably comes a time when it's easier to change the technology than to teach skills to those who use it. See "The End of Typing: The Internet's Next Billion Users Want Video and Voice" at <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-end-of-typing-the-internets-next-billion-users-will-use-video-and-voice-1502116070/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 500 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 500

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3050

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 122160  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 498719

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 620 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Eformatting](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Indie Publishing](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 8/7](#)**

[August 8, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I got a good night's rest last night. Still not feeling up to par, but a little better maybe.

I decided to offer the ebook edition of *The Rise of a Warrior* to users of Facebook (and you) free of charge. You can read a description of the book at <http://harveystanbrough.com/the-rise-of-a-warrior/>.

*The Rise of a Warrior* is a stand-alone book, but it's also chronologically the first book of the Wes Crowley series. All you have to do is email me to let me know whether you want Kindle, .epub or .pdf.

Thus far (about 6 hours into the offer) I've had one email from one guy who took me up on it. (grin) If anybody out there wants it, let me know.

This is a promo thing I'm doing. I'll keep the offer open for probably a week.

\*\*\*

Started a new online workshop with DWS this morning. As is usual, I learned something even in the introductory week. The course hasn't yet paid for itself but it probably will by the end of next week's session.

I'm being intentionally vague about this, but after I've finished the workshop I'll tell you which one it was and critique it here. As is the case with most of his craft workshops, I expect to learn things I can use across the genres.

**Today, and Writing**

I rose at my normal time and wheedled away the entire morning. Still not feeling fully up to speed, so I haven't pressed anything. In fact, I read quite a bit this morning, a nonfiction titled "I Hear You Paint Houses."

The book is based on interviews with a man who claims to have been complicit in the disappearance of Jimmy Hoffa. He was also one of Hoffa's two closest friends.

The book is incredibly detailed, with many facts about the man's personal experiences from childhood up through World War II (thus far). So I guess I could say I spent the morning doing research. (grin)

Finally, a little after noon, I put down my Kindle and came to write this stuff and then maybe write a little fiction.

No, I tweaked the header on my website, then the header on my HarveyStanbrough.com Facebook page. Simplified the text. An hour and a half later, I decided to make this a nonwriting day and maybe read some more.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Of possible interest, see "Adobe Spark" courtesy of The Passive Guy at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/08/adobe-spark/>. I'm thinking this might be a handy way to create book covers for some of you who want to give it a shot. There's a direct link to try Spark (it's free) at the bottom of his post.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 460 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 460

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3510  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 122620  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 499179

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 620 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

# The Journal, Wednesday, 8/9

[August 9, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I guess I'm taking a full-blown hiatus for a week or so. No writing today.

No worries and no reason for concern. I think I'm just a little tired. Doing a lot of non-writing things right now, mixed in with a lot of reading, sitting and nothing.

I think I'm gonna slack off on The Journal a bit too. It had served its purpose on this end awhile back, and I've heard from some of you that it's been a boon on that end.

I'll keep it going, but maybe not every day. The "streak" aspect of it has become less important. Maybe it'll become just The Journal or something instead of The Daily Journal. (grin)

I'm also thinking of letting the other URL expire, the URL where it's physically located now. I think that's supposed to happen in April. The Journal seems awfully lonely over there.

So if I do that, I might move this back over to the main site if I decide not to post it every day. Maybe I'll go once a week or something and post it in between regular posts.

Anyway, if I do move The Journal again, I'll be sure to announce it here for those of you who subscribe via RSS.

I'll keep up the word counts and all that, just in case some of you get something from that other than frustration and annoyance.

## **Of Interest**

I figured this one was coming. See "WRITING INTO THE DARK: A New Online Workshop" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/writing-into-the-dark-a-new-online-workshop/>. (You can also buy the book. It's a lot less expensive.)

And if any of you enjoy reading fantasy, see "I Curated THE UNIVERSE BETWEEN Bundle" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/i-curated-the-universe-between-bundle/>. I'm not personally into fantasy, but bundles are always a great value.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 290 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 290

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3800  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 122910  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 499469

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 621 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 8/10](#)**

[August 10, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I don't remember whether I've mentioned this before, but if anyone would like to read "The Fiction Factory" (being the Experience of a Writer who, for Twenty-two Years, has kept a Story-mill Grinding Successfully) by John Milton Edwards, send me an email and I'll send you a PDF copy. Very interesting stuff. Chock full of gems.

Part of my recent problem ("problem" is too harsh a word) is that my brain is trying to shut down to allow for the new knowledge I'll absorb during the workshop I'm currently taking from Dean.

Of course, that's absurd. Nothing I've already learned and made my own through application of my fingertips on the keyboard will be replaced or changed. I'll grow a bit in understanding, but that's all.

Nothing he says supplants anything he's said before. Much he says enhances what's gone before, but nothing detracts. I think that's why I've taken so many of his workshops (10 at this point) and listened to so many of his lectures.

If you've never taken a DWS workshop, and if you'd like to try a free one, I still have the URLs for all six weeks of his Originality workshop (he offers it free on YouTube). Email me and I'll send the whole list. Forty videos in all, probably 7 – 10 minutes each. Please be sure to remind me it's the Originality video.

Speaking of workshops, I now have 6 hearty souls signed up for Wednesday, 16 August. (That's next week!) The latest addition was someone I've never met or talked with. A friend referred him. Anyway, if you're local/regional and you want in, there are only a couple of slots left.

If the thing goes even nearly as well as I think it will, I've already decided to do it again, probably in October. That session will be on a Saturday. I have a particular writer in mind. I'll let her pick the Saturday, then announce it.

Well, for the past several weeks I've been trying to adapt to my old writing space (The Hovel). I pumped a lot of words through my laptop out there.

I couldn't quite make it all work out, and finding a nest of wood scorpions out there a couple days ago put a cap on it for me.

What I need is a space, not necessarily *that* space. This morning, just about the time it got too hot for physical labor, I carried my small desk from The Hovel up to my office. It fit.

My cat has more surface to walk and lounge on, so she's happy, and it's comfortable for me. I can switch from prepping workshops, email etc. on this computer to writing on Hal by simply backing up a foot or so and turning right.

I don't even have to say I'll see how it goes. It felt right as soon as I put the little desk in place. So The Hovel is once again the storage shed.

I did buy a portable swamp cooler to use out there not long ago. But I'll transfer it to the camping trailer we use as a spare bedroom for guests. It's all good.

I'll spend the balance of today putting together some things for the upcoming workshop. I've decided to write a nonfiction book based on the upcoming workshop. I'll write it first, then deliver the workshop(s), then revise and publish the book sometime probably next year.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, see "7 Ways to Support Your Favorite Authors" at <http://bookriot.com/2017/08/09/ways-to-support-author/>.

Some good comments on "WRITING INTO THE DARK: A New Online Workshop" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/writing-into-the-dark-a-new-online-workshop/#comments/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 1880 (580, Journal; 1300, Storytelling with Depth)

So total words for the day: 1880

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5680  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 124790  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 501349

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 622 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 8/11**

[August 11, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I did pretty much nothing writing related today other than working on the handout for the upcoming intensive. Did a lot of stuff outside and around the office.

Man, I'd forgotten how difficult it is to put on one of these things and prepare for it. (grin) But it's all good.

For one thing, I decided to scrap the nonfiction book idea for now. That will come after the seminar(s) is over, if at all. Right now I just wanna teach a good class.

Today I did a lot of back-and-forth stuff, going from the handout I'm preparing to various stories and novels for examples, and so on. Time-consuming stuff.

### **Of Interest**

See Linda Maye Adams' "Adventures around the web August 5-9, 2017" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/08/11/adventures-around-the-web-august-5-9-2017/>. Lot of good stuff there. Take the article on Legal Myths with a grain of salt. I commented on that one in the Journal a few days ago.

For fun, via The Digital Reader, check out "I'm a Google Manufacturing Robot and I Believe..." at <https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/im-a-google-manufacturing-robot-and-i-believe-humans-are-biologically-unfit-to-have-jobs-in-tech/>. Pretty funny.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: XXXX (170, Journal; 1000, Handout)  
So total words for the day: 1170

Writing of “” ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6850  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 125960  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 502519

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 623 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 179

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 8/12**

[August 12, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I know at least part of today will include a trip to Sierra Vista. I hope part of the trip will include lunch. (grin)

This morning after my routine, I designed two covers, created two promo docs, then published two short stories to D2D and Amazon, then uploaded them to BundleRabbit.

Finally I added the covers and universal buy links to the Short Fiction page on my website. I took a moment to do some multiplication. Goodness. I have 181 short stories now.

Went to SV around 10 and got back a little after 1. I'll work a little more on the handout today, then call it a day.

Kind'a silly keeping count of what I write for the handout too. I'll stop that. If I do the book later, I'll count it then.

**Of Interest**

See the comments on “Running Through A Novel” at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/running-through-a-novel/#comments/>.

Via The Passive Voice, see “Aggressive Growth (Branding/Discoverability)” at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/08/09/business-musings-expand-your-target-audience-3-aggressive-growth-brandingdiscoverability/>.

Via Pronoun (the distributor) see “Which Social Media Channel Sells The Most Books?” at <https://theverbs.com/which-social-media-channel-sells-the-most-books-69d0cd838748/>.  
Interesting.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 180 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 180

Writing of “” ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7030  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 126140  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 502699

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 624 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Pronoun](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 8/13](#)

[August 13, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. I’ve done absolutely nothing today re writing. Not even on the handout for the upcoming seminar. Nada.

Went to the grocery, then out to lunch, then back to the house to try to watch a ball game. But I have DirecTV so it’s blacked out when a game is being played within 10,000 miles of my house. So I watched a few episodes of Forensic Files instead.

Then I came in here to post this.

So nothing today, just a placeholder. Back at it tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See Dean's site. He's talking about online workshops again.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 100 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 100

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7130  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 126240  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 502799

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 625 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 8/14](#)

[August 14, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I know at least one writer who still does extensive research before writing.

That said, most of us use the hunt-and-peck method.

In the midst of a story (sometimes a sentence) we pop online for a moment, do some quick research on the type of tree the hero is leaning against, which months a particular river flows, etc. Then we pop back into the story, add what we learned and move on.

Most often, that search is accomplished on Google or Bing or one of the other popular search engines.

For us, now there are a lot more resources. Check out “Of Interest” below.

\*\*\*

If you know me at all, you know I’m dead-set against exclusivity in book selling — specifically, distributing only through Amazon.

For yet another take on why, see “The Only Rule Amazon Truly Cares About” at <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2017/08/12/the-only-rule-amazon-truly-cares-about/> (via The Digital Reader and David Gaughran).

\*\*\*

I spent some time going back over the first session of the workshop I’m taking with Dean. Didn’t find what I was looking for.

Also read the first few pages of the James Patterson novel *Private*. I hoped to be impressed. My intention was to be impressed so I’d want to go back through it later and learn from him.

But I wasn’t impressed. A few years ago I said I thought he wasn’t a very good writer but he’s a masterful marketer. I thought I’d give his work another shot, but my experience today only bolstered that negative opinion.

On the upside, it was unimpressive enough that it made me think more highly of my own work. So there’s that. (grin)

Finished the handout for Wednesday’s seminar. Also got some laundry done, used the string trimmer on some unruly grass alongside the carport, etc.

## **Of Interest**

For those of you who like reading about other writers’ process, see “Business Musings: The Third 2017 Process Blog” at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/08/02/business-musings-the-third-2017-process-blog/>.

Via The Passive Voice, see “The state of ebooks: Anti-DRM sentiments...” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/08/the-state-of-ebooks-anti-drm-sentiments-at-worldcon-75/>.

Via The Digital Reader and Paul Biba, check out “Ten search engines for researchers that go beyond Google” at <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/blog/ten-search-engines-for-researchers-that-go-beyond-google-11-jul-2013/>.

Additionally, be sure to see these “more well-known search engines and databases” at <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/blog/ten-search-engines-for-researchers-that-go-beyond-google-11-jul-2013#/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 370

Writing of “” ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7500  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 126610  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 503169

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 626 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 8/15**

[August 15, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Via The Digital Reader, The Huffington Post (whom I would never and am not now promoting) published an article titled “The 4 Great Myths of Book Publishing.”

You can read the full article at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-4-great-myths-of-book-publishing\\_us\\_5988e9ebe4b08a4c247f252d/](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-4-great-myths-of-book-publishing_us_5988e9ebe4b08a4c247f252d/), but I’ll save you the trouble.

There are actually a lot more myths about traditional publishing than four, but we’ll go with the ones they list.

According to the article, the myths are that a traditional publisher will

1. aggressively promote your book to the widest possible readership,
2. ensure your book gets on the shelves of all the nation’s bookstores,

3. print your book's text in exactly the way you conceive and arrange it, and
4. provide you with a sizable monetary advance.

Of course, the article goes on to say no, they won't. Because No, They Won't.

The "remedy" the author of the article recommends for points 1, 2, and 4 (3 is just silly) is to do it yourself. But still use a traditional publisher.

So let me get this straight:

According to the author of the article, you should develop your own promotion plan, promote your book aggressively yourself to ensure more people order it in bookstores, "be flexible" regarding layout, and "be grateful if you're offered any advance at all."

So in addition to writing the book in the first place, you have to do everything else too. Okay, I'm good with that.

But in return for your effort, you should still give ALL RIGHTS FOR THE LIFE OF THE COPYRIGHT to the traditional publisher and receive around 12% of the net royalties for as long as they decide to sell your book.

Oh, and if you also have an agent, he/she gets 15% of that 12%.

Uhhhhh, no.

This is it, folks. This truly is your forehead slapping moment. Please don't pass it up.

If you have to do all that anyway, Publish It Yourself and pocket 100% of the net royalties.

And MOST importantly, Keep Your Copyright (your property) for the rest of your life plus 70 years.

You STILL have to develop your own promotion plan, aggressively promote your book, and you can do the layout yourself (or pay to have it done — see <https://covertoupload.com/>).

Of course, you'll have to forego receiving an advance you wouldn't have gotten anyway. Darn it. Oh, and somewhere, some village idio— er, agent — will go a little hungry. But so what?

Copyright is property, folks. Your property.

Don't give it away, and don't sell out for a pittance.

\*\*\*

I got up a little late this morning, looking forward to the second session of the workshop I'm taking with Dean.

Then I checked my email and was slapped around by the article referenced above. I wrote the post above, then posted it to the main site to go live next Tuesday.

Now to immerse myself in the workshop. Ahhhhh.

Well, I fully expected to write fiction today, but I didn't. I have the seminar tomorrow, so that will be a long day. So today I took a day off just to read and enjoy.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Via The Passive Voice, see "The definitive guide to SEO for authors" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/08/the-definitive-guide-to-seo-for-authors/>. This is something at which I need to get a LOT better.

Via The Digital Reader, see "6 places to find free and discounted ebooks" at <https://www.cnet.com/how-to/6-places-to-find-free-and-discounted-ebooks/>. I list this one only so you can check to see whether your books are listed illegally.

See "WVG Publishing Bought a Bookstore" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/wvg-publishing-bought-a-bookstore/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 590 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 590

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8090  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 127200  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 503759

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 627 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 8/16**

August 16, 2017 by Harvey

**Hey Folks,**

I'll be off to teach my workshop this morning at around 9, so I'll post this early. Looking very forward to seeing some old friends again, and making one new friend. I'm also looking forward to seeing how the workshop goes. (grin)

**UPDATE:** Well, I forgot to post it early. The workshop went even better than I expected. I'm psyched. (grin)

As a reminder, in the workshop, I'll cover Hooks, Openings, Grounding the Reader in the Story, Physical and Emotional Cliffhangers, Pacing and Endings.

At the end of the workshop, I'll also talk a bit about Process. There will be some discussion of the conscious vs. the subconscious mind (their roles), trusting the subconscious, cycling and some other stuff.

I'll off this workshop one more time, on a Saturday, probably in September or October. The room holds only maybe ten people max, and I currently have six who are interested.

I'll announce the specific date here later.

Back to writing tomorrow!

\*\*\*

If anybody else out there is hyper-interested in mob stuff, check out "I Heard You Paint Houses" by Charles Brandt. Absolutely excellent.

This is about real gangsters and real life, not the droopy-pants wannabe "gangsta" brats roaming around being annoying.

Specifically, if you want to learn what really happened to Hoffa and JFK, buy the book. This stuff isn't opinion or conjecture.

I don't read a lot of nonfiction that isn't about writing, but "I Heard You Paint Houses" was excellent both as a research resource and to satisfy my morbid curiosity.

**Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, If you're still using Smashwords, see "Smashwords Introduces "Special Deals"- Automated Merchandising of Onsale Ebooks" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/08/smashwords-introduces-special-deals.html>.

(For Bonnie ) via The Passive Guy, “Why Note-Taking by Hand Is Better for Your Brain” at <http://www.intellectualtakeout.org/article/why-note-taking-hand-better-your-brain/>. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 310 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 310

Writing of “” ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581  
Total fiction words for the year..... 376559  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8400  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 127510  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 504069

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 628 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#), [Workshop](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 8/17](#)**

[August 17, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

The workshop yesterday was SUCH a blast! Everybody was on time, attentive, and hungry to learn. What can be better than that?

I’ll definitely do this one again in a month or two, but on a Saturday. Mostly so some of those who wanted to attend this time but couldn’t can do so.

I think of this as a “master’s level” workshop. It was a lot of things I’ve learned and made my own through hundreds of thousands of words of practice in stories and novels over the past almost 3 years. I’m thrilled to be able to pass along some of that.

\*\*\*

I planned to write today. I did write an opening, but it didn’t work so I tossed it out. Then I thought (it was early) I’d go out and mow the yard while it was cool.

Mower wouldn't start.

I began reminiscing about my days as a fairly good shade-tree mechanic.

I had an old '64 Ford Falcon back then. Some days I fixed it at night so I could drive it to work the next morning, then fixed it at lunch so I could drive it home after work.

Hmm. Guess I wasn't all that good or I wouldn't have had to keep fixing it.

The poor thing was held together with spit and bailing wire. It had a brake cable off a bicycle for a throttle cable.

So anyway, I started "fixing" the lawn mower.

Now it's almost 1:30, and I just got it back into good enough shape to take it to a lawnmower repair guy. Sigh.

Frustrating day. I'm gonna call it and go read.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, an extremely important post: See "5 Ways a Book Cover Could Hurt Sales — And How to Fix It" at <https://insights.bookbub.com/ways-book-cover-hurt-sales-fix/>. Not kidding. Go read this.

Via The Digital Reader, "Kindle Unlimited Funding Pool Grew in July 2017 as the Per-Page Rate Dropped" (and, ahem, writers are abandoning Kindle Unlimited as a result) at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/08/16/kindle-unlimited-funding-pool-grew-july-2017-per-page-rate-dropped/>.

If your head is a little off, via The Passive (?) Voice, see "What if Tarantino Made Spaghetti and Meatballs?" (film) at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/08/what-if-tarantino-made-spaghetti-and-meatballs/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 370

Writing of "" ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 13581

Total fiction words for the year..... 376559

Total nonfiction words for the month... 8770  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 127880  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 504439

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 629 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#),  
[The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 8/18**

[August 18, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Much of what follows is me thinking aloud. If you get something of value from it, good. But mostly it's me using you as a sounding board. Sorry about that.

Wow. I've been at this literary stuff a very long time. And the marketing stuff. Both in-person, glad-handing bookstore managers and sitting for hours at book signings and all that, and the much less costly and smarter electronic marketing.

In fact, after I did some basic math I finally gave up (by and large) on book signings, etc. unless I happened to be speaking at a conference at the same time. From then through now, it's all been electronic marketing.

The cornerstone of electronic marketing is a personal website. Even Kris Rusch's book on Discoverability tells you so (see <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00NCJL9AG/>).

I've had a personal website since websites were first a thing, around 1991. I've done and continue to do everything else in her book. Yet I'm not a million-seller. You know, yet. (grin)

In a moment of epiphany yesterday, I finally realized what I'm doing wrong.

In the early days, I was a successful (meaning well-nominated) poet and an instructor and an editor. I scribbled a little fiction now and then, but I didn't become a fiction writer until April 2014 and a novelist until October 2014.

Today I'm still an instructor, a little, and a copyeditor, sometimes, but mostly I'm a fiction writer.

Yet as a holdover from the old days, I'm still devoting my website mostly to other writers. Not readers. Writers. And that's what I'm doing wrong.

If there's one truism that stands the test of time, it's that (with very few exceptions) Writers don't want to buy your fiction. They want you to buy THEIR fiction.

I've said as much to several writers over the years, yet I managed somehow to miss the point myself. Sigh.

If I toted 10 copies of every novel and nonfiction book I've written to the next meeting of the regional writers' group, chances are I'd leave with a small stack of cash, zero nonfiction books, and 260 novels.

Okay, so how do I change my main website from one that's geared primarily to sell my nonfiction books on writing and my back-burner services as a copy editor to one that actively engages readers who might want to buy my fiction?

I mean, almost all of my fiction is displayed on the main site, but what do I blog about? Nonfiction, how-to-write stuff.

That's where the epiphany came in. A Writer doesn't blog about writing techniques. A Writer blogs about his writing. His stories. His novels. His characters.

He also engages the readers.

Maybe he writes a short story every day for a month. Maybe he offers to let them write alternative endings. Maybe he asks them what crime/puzzle/mystery the characters should solve next.

Maybe he starts his own electronic magazine with one original novel and several short stories in each issue. (I know, it's been done. But so what?)

So I have to give this some thought (he said, just as if he needed something else to do).

First and foremost, it only makes sense that I turn harveystanbrough.com into an author's website. So that's a given. After all, that's the name I write under most of the time. The only question is how.

I also have hstanbrough.com and hestanbrough.com. And I need new covers for most of my nonfiction books (on writing). So maybe as part of the rebranding of that series, I'll change the nonfiction author's name to H. Stanbrough.

Then maybe I'll switch all the "instructor" stuff over to hstanbrough.com. (Yeah, that was gonna be the writing-in-public site but if I do that, it would be better to post it over on the main site.)

The only question re that site would be whether to move this Journal over there too. I like that it's running every day. I like the streak. But streaks have to break eventually, and really, I don't post writing-specific advice all that often, do I?

Maybe I'll just move it over to the main site and revamp it to appeal more to R-E-A-D-E-R-S than writers. I dunno. (shrug)

But back to the main site for a moment: what exactly do readers want from an author's website?

Any ideas out there? Especially from those of you who have writer-websites? Do you blog about your stories and characters?

One thing I know for sure. It won't be a site where the only blog post is to announce a new release.

Got a little bit of writing done today. Not much. Now that I'm in the same room with my business computer though, I took the internet off my writing 'puter again. Maybe that'll help.

Sure be glad when this funk breaks loose. Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "Seven Ways to Bring Characters Together" at <https://mythcreants.com/blog/seven-ways-to-bring-characters-together/>.

Via Linda Maye Adams, see Joanna Penn and Jerry Jenkins on "Writing Christian Fiction and Success Over a Long Career" at <https://www.thecreativepenn.com/2017/08/14/writing-christian-fiction-long-career-jerry-b-jenkins/>.

## **Fiction Words: 1205**

Nonfiction Words: 840 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2045

## **Writing of "Untitled PI Story" ()**

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205

Total fiction words for the month..... 14786

Total fiction words for the year..... 377764

Total nonfiction words for the month... 9610

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 128720

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 506484

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 630 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 8/19](#)

[August 19, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I have a couple of nonfiction projects to knock out this morning and then a friend coming for a visit this afternoon and evening. So not sure how much writing I'll get done today, if any.

The story I was working on, I love the concept, but I might have to restart it yet again. Maybe not. Maybe I'll just read back and find what went sour.

My goal of writing a novel this month is fading fast. (grin) Then again, that's what goals are for. And I'm in some sort of weird transition phase right now. Weird because I'm not even sure what I'm transitioning from or to.

### **Topic: Take Your Time**

A friend emailed today to tell me he was going to "work on" getting a younger gent he knows to come to my upcoming seminar. I told him not to worry about it. The thing is, if he has to "convince" the guy to take a chance, the guy isn't ready.

If I knew the guy, I'd tell him myself, "Hey, take your time. When you're ready, you'll get it. But in the meantime, practice."

At which point, I have zero doubt, he'd look at me as if I have two heads. And that's okay too.

The thing is, even for those of us for whom storytelling comes fairly easily, it takes around a million words of PRACTICE before we actually "get it."

And by "practice" I mean putting new words on the page, not hovering over what we've already written. If you're hovering, you're spinning your wheels. If you don't think so, that's okay. Someday you'll know.

Rewriting and self-editing and "polishing" and any other conscious-mind activity is a Complete Waste Of Time, and it will actually harm your work. Likewise, letting anyone else into your work-in-progress will harm your work. Just sayin'.

You don't have to agree. It's okay. Someday you will. (grin)

But back to that million words of practice — that’s from the time we start writing fiction “seriously,” not from the time we start breathing.

Thinking about the young man again, not everyone is ready to step out of the comfort zone of applying the same tired clichés they’ve heard about writing all their lives.

As an aside, that comfort zone is another function of the conscious mind. As long as you keep doing what you’ve proven time and again won’t work, you won’t publish anything and make yourself a target for criticism. It’s much easier to just keep following the same old “kill all your darlings” nonsense.

As a result, anyone who has new knowledge to offer — and somehow that’s especially someone who has successfully applied that knowledge for 20 or 30 or 100 novels or short stories — is immediately suspect.

And I really do understand. I was somewhat suspicious of DWS and a few others when I first turned my mind seriously to writing fiction a little over three years ago.

The one main premise I bought into (because it made so much sense) was that “practice” was a necessity. It’s Heinlein’s Rules all over again: write, publish, write some more.

And thank goodness I bought into that much. Somewhere along the way, the rest of it started to make sense and I managed to “get it.” Now, with over 180 short stories, 4 novellas, 26 novels and a writing work ethic, I finally feel comfortable enough to teach writing techniques.

Techniques that do not appeal to that conscious-mind comfort zone.

I’m grateful for every single person who takes a chance and attends my seminars. And I’m happy for them because I know the value of what they’ve received.

But even of those who attend, not everyone is ready — yet — to do the work. Not all of them are ready yet to apply what I teach them, and to practice it incessantly until they “get it.”

But at least the knowledge will be there when they ARE ready. It will surface as a moment of epiphany.

All they have to do is keep writing.

And the young man? He’ll get it when he’s ready, or he’ll find something else he enjoys doing as much as we enjoy writing.

\*\*\*

I’m really not sure how, nor am I sure my untitled fiction will go anywhere, but I got a couple free hours to add to it today. So there’s that.

## Of Interest

Over at Dean's place, actually from yesterday, read "Read Kris's New Blog Post" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/read-kris-new-blog-post/>.

Somehow or other, my main blog made the cut over at [https://faithfictionfriends.blogspot.com/2017/08/saturday-good-reads\\_19.html](https://faithfictionfriends.blogspot.com/2017/08/saturday-good-reads_19.html). I always find it weird when someone's heard of me before I've heard of them.

### **Fiction Words: 1856**

Nonfiction Words: 780 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2636

Writing of "Untitled" ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205

Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642

Total fiction words for the year..... 379620

Total nonfiction words for the month... 10390

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 129500

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 509120

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 631 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 8/20**

[August 20, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I had to smile at Dean's post. See <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-non-event/>.

A few days ago he was annoyed, expecting a deluge of tourists in his little town to see the eclipse:

From "A Fun First Day" on August 16, "Now if we can just survive this stupid eclipse, we will be fine. Shadow goes right smack over the top of us as it makes landfall. The actual center is

about two miles from the new store. No telling what will happen here with that many people trying to cram into a 60 mile wide area. We just don't have the roads for it."

I understand the annoyance. He and others had just rushed around for a few days getting his three stores ready for the deluge of tourists. But it's still funny. (grin)

\*\*\*

Today I'll be working with my friend, showing him how to create book covers with the Serif PagePlus program. Probably no writing today.

Nope, no fiction writing. Back tomorrow.

Quite often I find myself wanting to respond with a Raymond Chandler to some people. This Raymond Chandler quote: "I don't mind if you don't like my manners. They're pretty bad. I grieve over them during the long winter evenings."

## Of Interest

See Kris Rusch's "Business Musings: My Day in Negotiation" at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/08/16/business-musings-my-day-in-negotiation/>. This is a great post, and I didn't fall asleep because of business-apnea even one time. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 230 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 230

Writing of "Untitled" ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10620  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 129730  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 509350

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 632 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Monday, 8/21**

[August 21, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Had a great visit on Saturday night with a dear friend. Cigars puffed, movies discussed, philosophy slathered. Then a good session on Sunday morning on how to use the very intuitive Serif PagePlus to create book covers.

\*\*\*

If your books are offered for sale on Amazon, please read “Amazon Author Central: A Primer” at <http://www.indiesunlimited.com/2017/08/13/amazon-author-central-a-primer/>.

I read it and there was a lot there that I didn’t know. For one thing, Amazon doesn’t automatically update your author page with new books when you publish more work. On my author page, only 33 books were listed. That was most of my nonfiction and a few short stories.

To put this in perspective, I have around 250 publications on Amazon. So I spent some time clicking Add This Book this morning. It still isn’t fully up to date (pen names are a whole other ball of tacos) but most of my books are there now.

Anyway, they also give you a dedicated Author Page URL where readers can find all of your books in one place. For example, mine is at <https://www.amazon.com/author/harveystanbrough/>.

As a result of my foray into Amazon Author Pages, I also decided (for various reasons) to kill off one of my personas. Raymond L. Severeid is no more. The SF novel Terminus Loop is now a product of Harvey Stanbrough at D2D, Amazon, Smashwords and BundleRabbit.

What a time-consuming PITA that was. But in time, I’ll also replace at least the ebook version of all my other novels too, moving them from a pen name to my own name.

### **Topic: On Bad Advice**

Goodness knows there are a ton of bad sources of misinformation for writers out there, so I’m doing my little bit to counteract that.

On my website, in the blogroll on the right sidebar and in Writers’ Resources on the left sidebar, I list valid sources of information for writers.

Those resources don't get a place on my website until I've checked them out. I don't have to agree with everything they say, but I won't post a link to advice that, if it's accepted, will actually harm a writer's work.

This morning I removed one of those links. I won't mention the link specifically here because I don't want to call attention to it.

The one I removed is now saying writers not only need to have their work professionally edited, but "I'll go further and say you need several editors, at least for the first book – a developmental editor for the structure of the book, and a copy-editor for the line detail and cleanup."

I was stunned to see that advice coming from that source. So my endorsement ended.

I agree that you need at least a good First Reader. Preferably one who is not also a writer. That person is someone who likes your work, and who is willing to read it and give you feedback. The feedback, however, is limited to

hard inconsistencies that you didn't catch (name spellings, clothing, etc.) and

places in the story where something caused the reader to stop reading for whatever reason.

That's it.

I also agree that a good copyeditor (this is a paid service) is worth his or her weight in gold. A good copyeditor can save you a ton of embarrassment over typos, punctuation, etc.

What you DON'T want is ANYONE who wants to change your work in any way. Hence, a "developmental" editor, whatever that is.

Think about that for a moment. Why in the world would you ever think ANYone else could possibly know YOUR story better than you do?

A "book doctor" or "developmental editor" is someone who will do their level best to make your work look as if they wrote it.

If someone who's much farther along the writing/publishing road than you are says your writing is "thin" or "slow" and offers techniques you can use to add depth or improve pacing, consider those techniques with an eye toward applying them.

But if anyone, especially for money, says "write it like this," RUN.

As a famous writer (I think it was Samuel Clemens) once said, There is no greater urge in the world than the urge of a writer to change another writer's work.

Just sayin'.

\*\*\*

Wow. I really thought today would be a full writing day. Instead it's another nonwriting day. I actually ran out of time.

I got up at 3:30 this morning, looked up a moment ago and the day was gone. My day was taken up primarily with frustration. If I don't hear the words "solar eclipse" again for 360 years, it will still be too soon.

Other than that, though, at least I got to help a couple writers so it wasn't all bad.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See Dean's "How to Run a Bookstore in 2017" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/how-to-run-a-bookstore-in-2017/>. This is a great post on business in general and there are tips for writers if you just read them.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 820 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 820

Writing of "Untitled" ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11440  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 130550  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 510170

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 632 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 8/22](#)**

[August 22, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Yesterday, in response to my topic On Bad Advice, I got a very good comment. Be sure to check it out at <http://hestanbrough.com/the-journal-monday-821/#comments/>.

**Topic: How to Choose a First Reader**

I mentioned first readers yesterday, almost in passing. Today I want to cover the topic a little more thoroughly.

The perfect first reader, first of all, is not a writer.

She (to avoid the he-she fiasco) is an avid reader, one who consumes novels like most people consume air and water.

She is also someone who either has read and already likes your work or wants to read your work. In other words, if you write across several genres, but if your first reader only likes SF, send that reader only your SF stories.

I mentioned yesterday that a first reader shouldn't be paid, or should be paid only with the opportunity to read your work free. (Send her a free copy after publication.)

IF you choose to pay a first reader for her time, settle on a per-word amount up front. This might be one cent for every ten words (so 1/10 cent per word) or 1/4 cent per word. Up to you.

BUT, impress on the first reader that you want blunt honesty. Her job isn't to make you feel good. The first reader's only purpose is to point out flaws in your story.

To that end, she should keep a notepad close at hand. This can be electronic or paper and a pen.

Then she should Just Read. She isn't "looking for" anything except to be entertained by your story.

That is to say, like all readers everywhere, she will read with the subconscious mind engaged. This is a natural state when we read for pleasure. It isn't something she will have to think about or do intentionally.

Then, when anything in the story "jumps out" at her, she should note it and return to the story.

If you've mailed a paper manuscript to the first reader, she can make a few notes in the margin.

If she's reading on her phone or e-reader, she can pinpoint the problem area on her notepad with a short series of three or four verbatim words copied from the manuscript. (This is so you can

type those three or four words into your Word Find & Replace function and find the problem area much more quickly.)

Then she states the inconsistency or other issue: “John was wearing a blue jacket when he entered the bank. It was brown a few minutes later on the sidewalk.”

Or “I can’t be sure why, but something about this passage confused me. It pulled me out of the story.”

I usually tell my first reader to ignore sentence structure and punctuation and paragraphing. That’s because, sadly, most people only “know” what they’ve learned in English class about those factors.

That being said, even with specific directions to ignore those things, my first reader probably will note sentence structure or punctuation or paragraphing issues if they interrupt the story for her. And that’s a good thing.

If a wrong-word usage pops out at the first reader, she should note it. If a misspelling pops out, she should note it. (But if you ran a spell check, any misspelling should be an inadvertent wrong-word usage.)

And so on.

A good first reader will point out anything that “pops out” at her during the reading.

Then your job, when you get the input back from your first reader, is to consider each point she makes.

But you only “fix” what you agree with. Then you publish the thing and move on to the next story. (grin)

\*\*\*

Now that my own spiel is ended, I’m going to listen to J. Daniel Sawyer’s take on what first readers should look for at <http://everydaynovelist.com/2017/08/20/questions-339-dear-first-reader/>. I suggest you do the same.

(Note: He said pretty much what I said above, but he said it in a different way and included what we DON’T want from a first reader. Again, I suggest you listen to the podcast. It’s only about 6 minutes long.)

## **Today and Writing**

I rolled out a little late this morning, then spent most of my time on the stuff above this. Now I’m moving back inside to listen to the third session of my workshop with Dean.

That went well enough. The one thing I don't like about these online workshops is that I have to wait a week between installments. Maybe if I write Dean and promise not to turn in any of the weekly assignments, he'll let me view them all right now. (grin)

I prefer those that have been moved to "classic" because they're half the price, plus you can view them all in one day if you want. You can't send in the exercises, but you can still do them for yourself if you want to.

I spent most of the rest of the day reading for pleasure.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you enjoy podcasts, check out J. Daniel Sawyer's recent take on the topic I discussed yesterday (developmental editors) at <http://everydaynovelist.com/2017/08/19/questions-338-developmental-editors/>.

He says a couple of things with which I disagree, but the disagreement is more superficial than substantial, so I'll leave it alone.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 880

Writing of "Untitled" ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12320  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 131430  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 511050

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 633 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 8/23**

[August 23, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

Well, yesterday (on Dean's recommendation) I read the first 300+ pages of Patterson's "Along Came a Spider." I think it's the first of his Alex Cross series. This morning I read the last 130 pages.

It held my attention, but it wasn't particularly well written. Several annoying "little" things kept me from being able to become deeply involved in the story. Things that involuntarily jump out at the reader like a really bad spelling error.

He did use some of the pacing "tricks" I recently taught in a seminar, but surprisingly few of the grounding techniques.

Of course, Patterson's true expertise is in marketing, and this book was a #1 Bestseller. Go figure.

\*\*\*

Around 10 a.m. I realized I hadn't seen my kitten for an hour or so. She isn't the sort to wander off, but I'm hoping that's exactly what she did. It's after 1 p.m. and I can't find her.

This might be the last blog post for awhile.

Thank you in advance for any kind thoughts, but I'm not seeking comments, so please don't. Just letting you know.

I'm going to post this, then start the search again.m

*UPDATE: I finally found my little heart just shy of 3 p.m. She was under my bed when I got back from my fifth trip to search for her. When the time comes, I sure hope I go before she does. I'm pretty sure I can't handle it.*

I realize I could as easily just delete all the stuff above this, but you want it warts and all, right? There y'go.

Whew. Now I should be back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Just for fun, see Dean's "A Very Long Challenge" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/over-four-years/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 200

Writing of “Untitled” ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12520  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 131630  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 511250

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 634 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 8/24](#)

[August 24, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I’m back.

A company called ReDigi is attempting to get an appeals court to let them resell “used” ebooks. Nonsense, in my opinion. And the way ReDigi wants to do it would cut the publisher and author out of any royalties. So double nonsense.

Nothing in an ebook can ever become degraded. There are no physical pages to be underlined and highlighted and dog-eared, etc.

According to current law (see <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/08/23/ruling-redigi-case-cant-re-open-door-used-ebook-market-door-never-closed/>) an ebook can’t be sold as “used” but the seller can sell the media on which it is stored.

(There’s another link on the linked article above that explains in greater detail.)

To me, “media” means the device. Of course, lawyers can and will twist that word into whatever shape they want it to take.

So I could sell or give away my Kindle Paperwhite with the ebooks I have stored on it left in place. But I can’t collect a royalty on those ebooks, and that’s what’s at stake in the ReDigi appeal.

I hope ReDigi fails miserably, as any thief should.

\*\*\*

To begin the day, I read again. I didn’t want to start anything long, so I read (again) Hemingway’s “The Old Man and the Sea.”

If I live another hundred years, I will never write anything so filled with depth, so ironic and so beautiful.

And on the tail of that thought, this appropriate quote from the book: “Now is no time to think of what you do not have. Think of what you can do with what there is.”

Excellent advice for writers, don’t you think?

No fiction writing today either, but big new changes coming soon in that regard.

### **Of Interest**

If you want to learn how to write “talk tough” characters, see “How to Talk Tough” at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/08/how-to-talk-tough.html>.

I also enjoyed “The Ingredients of a Great Series Character” at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/08/the-ingredients-of-a-great-series-character.html>.

Oddly enough, both entries above are by the same author, James Scott Bell. Mr. Bell blogs at The Kill Zone once a week. I’ll be checking in on him if I can remember.

I am avidly against censorship. If you are too, take a look at “Confirmed: B&N Terminating Nook Press Accounts for Publishing Erotica” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/08/23/bn-terminating-nook-press-accounts-publishing-erotica/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 380 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 380

Writing of “Untitled” ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12900  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 132010  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 511630

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 635 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, 8/25](#)**

[August 25, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, we take our fame where we find it, don't we? As I posted to Facebook this morning,

Hey, who knew I was still so unpopular along the gulf coast of Texas? I mean it was only the one night of drunken debauchery, pillaging, etc. In the Corps I was "Taz." Now I'm upgraded to a hurricane? And anyway, shouldn't that be a himmicane?

\*\*\*

I started the day by adding universal links to each of my collection covers on my 10-story and 5-story collection pages on my website.

Each of my novels has its own page but that seemed like a lot of work. To do the same thing for my collections I would have had to create 29 new pages on my website.

So now prospective readers can click the cover of a collection to go to a universal link where they will see a larger cover image, a description of the book, and all the venues where it's carried.

Y'gotta love Draft2Digital and their universal links. (grin) If you aren't distributing through D2D yet, that's one great reason to start. You can even add links to the universal link for places where D2D doesn't distribute.

Wrapped all of that up before 10. But in the process, I discovered I had three collections I hadn't even displayed on those pages yet. So now everything's up.

\*\*\*

I spent much of the rest of the day changing my two Nicolas Z Porter novels over to Harvey Stanbrough (covers and manuscripts) and uploading them to Smashwords, D2D, Amazon and BundleRabbit.

In the midst of that a major storm hit, so interrupted the process a few times. We got a little over a half-inch of rain in about twenty minutes. The attendant lightning lasted for a few hours.

Then I spent the rest of the day reading. Big things coming. Back tomorrow.

### Of Interest

I love writing about the time period of the Spanish Civil War. Via The Passive Voice, don't miss this short video: <https://youtu.be/NcrzjPbrMw/>.

In case you might get something from it that I obviously missed, see "Why a Party is a Perfect Literary Device" at <http://lithub.com/why-a-party-is-a-perfect-literary-device/>.

And I loved to see these "9 Reasons Why We All Need Accessible Ebooks" at <http://www.digitalbookworld.com/2017/9-reasons-why-we-all-need-accessible-ebooks/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 380 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 380

Writing of "Untitled" ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13280  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 132390  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 512010

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 636 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## The Journal, Saturday, 8/26

[August 26, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, a Saturday. The sun is still a couple hours from coming up as I write this. I've done my daily rounds of the Internet, made my usual stops.

If you enjoy a bit of history along with really great photos and some personal insights, check Linda Maye Adams' blog at <http://lindamayeadams.com/2017/08/26/a-veteranwriter-looks-at-history-leesylvania-state-park/>.

Over the past few days I've started several bits of fiction. Each time I let them go. I'm not sure whether they weren't working or it was just that I wasn't in the mood. Probably the latter.

I mean, you don't have to be in the "mood" to write. You just have to write the next sentence. I didn't.

Pretty sure when I first backslid off Heinlein's Rules was back when I decided it was no longer important to have a daily word count goal. That's the only thing I can figure.

Also I crave writing novels. So lately when something "feels" like it's going to be a short story, I tend to let it go.

I can feel something welling up, something about to break loose. But recently I've been waiting for it rather than sitting down and making it happen.

So there are a few things I need to change.

I already blew my novel-a-month goal when I missed finishing the last one (in July) by one day. So that goal is broken.

But my annual goal to write fifteen novels or novellas this calendar year remains. To do that, I just have to break down what's left to do, divide it by the number of months/days and get busy.

To reach 15 major fiction works for the year, I have to write 7 more novels or novellas. So if I go with 40,000 words per novel as a base, that means I have to write 280,000 words in just those novels.

So that's only 70,000 words per month for the remaining 4 months or 2300 words per day for 122 days. And if I hit my previous daily word count of 3000 words per day, in that 122 days I'll

reach 366,000 words, more than enough for the 20 short stories I'd also like to write by the end of the year (see below).

Completely within reach. That will also give me a new daily word count goal. Duh.

I mentioned short stories above. I would like to reach over 200 short stories published by the end of the year. I'm currently still 19 away. (Twenty to cross it into 201, which is the real goal.)

Thing is, writing short stories often leads to writing novels, so maybe I should start with short stories anyway. Doesn't matter, I suppose. The point is to start somewhere, and then keep going. Just write the next sentence.

My wife mentioned last night that this slump started about the time we got back from our trip to New Mexico to visit a few elderly uncles. One (he's only 10 years older than I) is on his way out with the big C, and I didn't even know he was ill. I file that in the Damn category.

I have some beginner's knowledge of how the human psyche works, that it most often operates independently of its host's willpower, what we desire, etc. So all of that slump stuff probably is a consideration. But it's also an excuse, not a reason.

So onward.

### **Topic: On Word Count Goals**

In case you didn't read it, James Scott Bell talked about his "secret" of success as a prolific writer recently at the Kill Zone blog. Or maybe in one of his short YouTube videos.

Anyway, the secret, he says, is to have a word count goal. Same thing I used to say. Having a daily word count goal drives me to the computer when nothing else will. That's how it helps me.

Mr. Bell doesn't set a daily goal because, he says, when he misses it he beats himself up. (That's one problem I don't have, thankfully.)

He sets a weekly goal, then divides it by six to get his daily goal. (Wait for it.)

He feels no pressure re the daily goal, though, because life happens. If he misses his daily goal, he knows he can still reach his weekly goal by making up the words he missed on another day.

Sounds like a good approach to me.

Oh, and he divides by six (not seven) because he takes one day off per week to recharge his batteries.

So there you have it, for whatever it's worth.

### **Today and Writing**

Philosophical Dud of the Day: I guess it's all right that I continue calling myself a writer. I do write every day, even if it isn't always fiction.

Neat sidestep, isn't it? (grin)

I dropped the "Untitled" whatever it was below. Frankly, I got so wrapped around the wheel "thinking" (oh oh) about it that I paralyzed myself. Critical mind. Easy to do.

So I'm starting fresh. Again.

Around 9:45, off to Sierra Vista to shop for stuff. We'll see what the rest of the day holds when we get back.

Got back late and then a storm started moving in, so I'm gonna post this. Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Today I'm referring to the Kill Zone blog again. PLEASE don't take everything you read there for gospel. Like any advice from anywhere, take what feels right to you and ignore the rest.

See Dean's "The Value of a Paperback" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-value-of-a-paperback/>.

See James Scott Bell's "Baloney Advice Writers Should Ignore" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2012/10/baloney-advice-writers-should-ignore.html>. Notice this is from 2012. The guy is a fount of information if you just spend a little time reading. You can find all of Bell's posts at <https://killzoneblog.com/author/jimbell>.

You might also browse Joe Moore's posts at <https://killzoneblog.com/author/admin/>.

ALSO SEE "Writing a Novel They Can't Put Down" at <http://knockoutfiction.teachable.com/p/novel/>. This is a course in novel writing (from James Scott Bell), and most impressively, you have lifetime access to the materials. I'll probably take this one myself. After I read one or two of his novels. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 990 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 990

Writing of ()

Day 1..... 1205 words. Total words to date..... 1205  
Day 2..... 1856 words. Total words to date..... 3061  
Day 3..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 133390  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 513000

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 637 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 8/27**

[August 27, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

### **Topic: Following Up on DWS' "The Value of a Paperback"**

Yesterday Dean explained in his post why indie authors should publish to paper as well as ebook. He made some good points. (If you didn't read it and would like to, click <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-value-of-a-paperback/>.)

It's always good to have your books available to more people in more ways. Got it. But there are other considerations too, both positive and negative.

On the positive side, when the reader comes across one of my titles on Amazon, B&N, et al, if I have both paper and ebooks editions out, the reader sees both editions side by side.

When I shop for books, I buy the least expensive, paper or ebook. If the ebook costs \$12.99 but I can get a clean (unmarked) used paperback for \$2.99, paper it is.

But yesterday, I bought a James Scott Bell novel. The ebook was \$2.99 (for a thriller!) and the cost of the paper edition was something with four digits in it. I bought the ebook.

So I'll freely admit, my main reason for publishing to paper is so the reader will see the price comparison. My hope is that it will drive ebook prices. Why? Because I make more money per ebook sale than per paper sale. More on that shortly.

Some folks prefer paper. I get that, and I've experienced sales of my paper editions too, but not very many.

Which leads to the negative aspect, at least for me. It costs me right at \$100 per book (cover design and interior layout) to publish my books to paper.

Of course, it costs either money or time to publish the ebook edition too. But since I'm using myself as the example, I'll just tell you now, I'm happy with most of my ebook covers and my own eformatting. And the cost is negligible at the worst.

I get my cover pics via subscription (so the cost is around 55 cents per photo), I can create a cover in about five minutes with Serif PagePlus, and I take care of the eformatting in about two minutes. So really I incur practically zero cost when I publish to ebook.

But back to paper editions. Let's do some math.

I spend \$100 for a cover and interior layout for a print edition. (I use and strongly recommend <https://covertoupload.com/>.)

I earn a little over \$2 per sale of a paper book, which is priced around \$15. So around a 13% royalty.

The same book in Kindle, Nook, iBook etc. costs the reader only \$5, yet I earn \$3.50 per sale. When one of my nonfiction titles sells for \$10, I earn \$7 per sale. And again, I don't have to include cover and formatting costs in that.

Still, I do like that price-comparison thing when the reader sees the paper version right alongside the ebook version in a sales venue.

Currently, about half my novels (13 or 14, I think) are available in both paper and ebook. A few of my 10-story collections are available in both editions too.

So I'll continue to put my books in paper, I guess. But I'll pay to have another cover and layout done only as the money is readily available.

Hope this helps some of you.

### **Today and Writing**

It's still very early in the day. The sun has its hand on its chin, and it's considering dawning out here in southeast Arizona. Previous to this, I made my Internet rounds, then wrote the stuff above.

I can't foretell the future, but more than likely I won't write fiction today. I plan to spend the day reading James Scott Bell's novel. I'm excited about it.

I read only the first few (gripping) pages yesterday. If the story continues the way I think it will, I'll be purchasing his course, which I mentioned in this Journal yesterday. And I'll probably buy the rest of this particular series as well. In ebook.

**UPDATE:** Well, I had high hopes for Mr. Bell's work. I really did. But his book, which was tagged as a thriller, definitely is not a thriller. It isn't even suspenseful.

In the first twenty pages, I found the writing thin and the excitement promised by the opening non-existent.

Note that I was not consciously looking for these things. Their lack popped out at me. As I read I was unable to visualize the characters or much of the setting. Hence "thin" writing. And this is his most recent release, so it should also be his most advanced writing.

If there's one thing you have to have in a thriller, it's excitement. So my search for a good thriller writer and instruction continues. Sigh.

Now I've downloaded and am reading *Any Means Necessary* (a Luke Stone Thriller-Book #1) by Jack Mars. The author name has me wondering whether it's a pen name. Anyway, I'm only a little way into it, but it seems good.

If you're interested, and if you read ebooks, the Kindle version is free right now at <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B019BILG2W/>. Not that Jack Mars also offers courses, but I can learn from his writing.

If I enjoy the book, I'll read it again to study his technique. And probably order the rest of the series.

## Of Interest

Dean added a second post about why he believes indie authors should publish to paper as well as ebooks. (Caution: he's being classically DWS.) You can see it at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/paperback-vs-ebook-dont-care/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 900 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 900

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 134280  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 513900

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 638 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	26
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	181

Categories [Daily Journal](#)Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 8/28](#)

[August 28, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, this is too important for “Of Interest.” It’s more like “Please Don’t Miss This.” And please don’t just scan the headlines. There are a lot of gems in the text.

I’m not overstating when I say these guys do what Dean Wesley Smith does to help writers, but they take it a step (or several steps) farther.

But whereas DWS teaches writing techniques, these guys teach how to get to your writing and how to build your audience. What to do after you’ve written. But there’s nothing dry and boring here.

Via The Digital Reader, see “10 Steps to Making a Living as a Self-Published Fiction Author” at <https://sterlingandstone.net/make-living-self-published-fiction-author/>.

*Note:* The guy occasionally drops the F bomb. Even if that bothers you, I recommend you find a way to ignore it and read this article.

This might be the most important on-topic article you ever read. It offers a TON of great information. I’ll be reading it at least a couple more times. And yes, I’ll download their guide.

Again, the necessary disclaimer. I do not agree with everything these guys say. Use what works for you and discard the rest.

### **Today and Writing**

After making my rounds on the Internet, I wrote the stuff above and “Of Interest.” Now I’m turning my attention to the Indie Publishing Pack I downloaded from the “10 Steps” article.

I’m still in a period of “rest,” I guess. I’ve done little today other than this stuff, a few household chores and some reading of both fiction and nonfiction. Frankly, it’s a little weird.

I’ve been reading a lot fiction lately hoping it will interest me at least enough that I’ll want to go back and study it and learn from it. To my surprise, most of the time I’m finding that my own stuff is better than the books I’m reading. And I’m not bragging here. I’m complaining.

I might have to give up and go back to reading only Hemingway and Chandler and Burke.

## Of Interest

AFTER you've read the "10 Steps" above, I recommend checking out Fiction Unboxed at <https://sterlingandstone.net/fictionunboxed/>.

Also see "Smashwords, libraries, and the [new] culture of authorship" at <http://www.noshelfrequired.com/smashwords-libraries-and-the-new-culture-of-authorship/>.

For those who might want SF ideas, see the shocking (to me) "Universities and museums join in effort to 'scan all vertebrates'" at <https://techcrunch.com/2017/08/24/universities-and-museums-join-in-effort-to-scan-all-vertebrates/>. Just include humans in "all vertebrates" and see what happens.

In case Nate listed something that might interest you (but didn't interest me), I suggest visiting <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/08/28/>. Sign up for his newsletter, even. That's where I get a lot of this stuff.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 430 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 430

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15600  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 134710  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 514330

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 639 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 8/29**

[August 29, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

In the interest of “fair and balanced reporting,” via The Digital Reader check out David Gaughran’s “The Visibility Gambit” at <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2017/08/28/the-visibility-gambit/>. Spoiler Alert: This is in favor of going with Amazon KDP Select, but be sure to read the comments too. Hey, whatever works for you.

To learn more about KDP Select (this feeds Kindle Unlimited) and determine whether it’s right for you, visit [https://kdp.amazon.com/en\\_US/](https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/).

Be sure to also read

[https://kdp.amazon.com/en\\_US/help/topic/A6KILDRNSCOBA?ref\\_=kdp\\_KDPS\\_faq/](https://kdp.amazon.com/en_US/help/topic/A6KILDRNSCOBA?ref_=kdp_KDPS_faq/) and then click the link for KDP Terms and Conditions and read that.

I decided today to take a chance, though really it isn’t much of a risk on my part. I took down every Wes Crowley publication (10 novels plus The Wes Crowley Saga Parts 1 & 2 plus one short story) from both Smashwords and D2D.

In about a week, when I know those books have had time to clear all the vendors to whom Smashwords and D2D distributes, I’ll add them all to Amazon’s KDP Select.

I also changed the buy links on my website for those books to only Amazon.

Yep, I’m gonna give exclusivity a shot. I figure it’ll be a good test, given that western-genre fiction is about the worst selling anyway.

I know my (dismal) sales numbers from all the other venues, and I can still do double-digit math, so the comparison should be revealing in one way or another. Either a lot more sales through KDP Select or not.

## Topic: Writing to Market

DWS always says fervently “Don’t write to market!” I’ve always followed that advice and simply wrote whatever came out of my subconscious next. It’s a little like shooting at a flea thirty yards away with a twelve-gauge loaded with birdshot.

But the guys I referred you to yesterday say writing to market isn’t necessarily a bad thing IF it’s in a genre you want to write anyway. To me, that makes sense.

I’ve written a lot of westerns. I have 10 novels, a 10-novel box set, two 5-novel sets, a novella and a slew of short stories. So if reader interest ever swings back to westerns, I’m pretty well positioned.

I’ve written several SF books and stories. But SF (either fiction or fantasy) is at the lower selling end of the market too.

But I also enjoy writing psychological suspense stuff. In that, I'm including mysteries, crime fiction and thrillers. And that's where "writing to market" comes into play.

Those sub-genres — especially mystery — are selling near the top of the market.

So I'm gonna bend my mind in that direction for awhile. I have a few ideas for a psychological suspense series main character. Now all I have to do is be patient as I work through this time-off period and then write.

The point of all this — if you want to write to market, and if it's in a genre you enjoy writing, go for it.

### **Today and Writing**

Wrote all the stuff above, looked for my online workshop but the password isn't up yet (see "Of Interest").

I'll finish reading *To Have and Have Not* (Hemingway) this morning, then check for the workshop again, then do something else.

Well, as you might have imagined, I read for the rest of the day other than checking to see whether the password for this week's installment of the online workshop is up yet. It wasn't.

It will be wonderful to write stories again when that time comes. It's coming soon. I can feel it. But not yet.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

DWS is going through some sort of personal stuff. He said it's not a big deal (see <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-issues/>) but this is the first time I've seen him NOT post even the passwords for the online workshops in time. So something's up. If you pray, you might send a few his way.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 640 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 640

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16240

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 135350  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 514970

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 640 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [David Gaughran](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 8/30](#)**

[August 30, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a lot to talk about today.

I started the day a little late. Still catching up on my sleep, I guess.

I made my rounds of the Internet. DWS is back, mostly. I listened to the vids from Week 4 of my current workshop and enjoyed it. A lot of meat there. I guess maybe there was a lot of meat in Weeks 2 and 3 as well, but I wasn't as interested in those. It would depend on where your interests lie.

I also received a link to my FREE copy of "Write. Publish. Repeat Conversations" (videos on Udemy) in which the guys I told you about a couple of days ago share a ton of information.

If you haven't done so yet, see "10 Steps to Making a Living as a Self-Published Fiction Author" at <https://sterlingandstone.net/make-living-self-published-fiction-author/>. That's where the "Write. Publish etc." stuff above came from.

They probably will try to upsell you on some things, but it isn't high-pressure stuff and they're offering a wealth of information free.

In the past three days I've read To Have and Have Not and The Sun Also Rises. But I'm about read out. Or maybe rested out. I want to get back to my version of work.

It seems today is mostly gone already. I'll read a little more, probably some noir PI stuff, and call it a day.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, see “The Truth Behind Popular Copyright Myths” at <http://writerunboxed.com/2017/06/26/the-truth-behind-popular-copyright-myths/>. The bottom line is Learn Copyright Law.

If you run a WordPress website and need something else to worry about for the future, see “WordPress is about to have its New Coke moment” at <http://valiantchickendigital.com/blog/wordpress-new-coke-moment/>.

For more stuff, see “Morning Coffee – 30 August 2017” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/08/30/morning-coffee-30-august-2017/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 300

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16540  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 135650  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 515270

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 641 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 8/31](#)

[August 31, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Before the sun is up, I already know today will be another day of learning/reading for me. For one thing, irrationally, I’ve become attached to the beginning and ending of months. Go figure.

Frankly, I’m glad August is almost gone. From a writing standpoint, it’s been a traumatic month for me. I probably could have pulled myself out of it any number of times, but I didn’t, so. And

in a way, I feel as if I've been holding myself back, sort of waiting. Anyway, I'm glad it's almost gone.

\*\*\*

We're in an age in which companies and service providers, instead of assuming we consumers know what we want, assume our lack of intelligence. They assume what we want is for someone else to do everything for us.

This is an assumption that repeatedly ticks me off. It's part of the natural progression of the dumbing down of America. We're all being slowly integrated into Sheeple Nation.

Today's companies strive continually to "improve" their products to make them less complicated and more user friendly. Only they don't. What they're actually doing is wresting control away from end users.

They believe we don't care. And if we do care, we'll, they'll never know it or be bothered by it. Ever try to reach a human at one of those corporations?

With every so-called improvement comes less functionality and less personal choice over the functionality that remains.

As an easy example, just look at Microsoft. Both their Windows platform and their applications (Microsoft Office et al) even update automatically now. And they add updates whether or not you want or need them. All of that takes up space and memory in your computer.

And now WordPress is at it again with their impending "improvement" via the forthcoming WordPress 5.0 Gutenberg. I'm leery to say the least.

I'm not a "drag and drop" kind of website builder. I was annoyed when WordPress forced the "customizer" on us, and I'm even more annoyed now. Basically, I just want to continue blogging and working with my website as I have since about 1998.

In short, I want other people's hands (the hell) off my website.

According to The Digital Reader, I have about a year before Gutenberg will land with both feet on my abdomen. So this morning, I keyed "blogging platforms" into a search engine, and I've been reading about them ever since.

I looked through sixteen (16!) comparisons of WordPress with other blogging platforms, and all of them fell short.

So I might just have to put up with yet another learning curve to learn how to use something I didn't want in the first place. MAN I hate suppositories.

\*\*\*

Today's quote, a snippet of conversation between Brett and Jake in *The Sun Also Rises*. Brett begins:

"You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch."

"Yes."

"It's sort of what we have instead of God."

Wow.

\*\*\*

Okay, anyway, time to wake myself the hell up and become goal-oriented again. For me, now, the year is four months long. Here are my new goals for the rest of this calendar year:

**1. Write at least one short story per week**, with the first to be finished by Sunday, Sept 3. (I'll try to squeeze in two more somewhere to make 20 by year's end and push my story count to 201 published short stories. Stories may be derived from as-yet unwritten novels.)

I might change my mind, but I don't think I'll do any of these "in public." I will see that my donors get a copy of each one, though, as it's published.

**2. Write two novels each** in September, October, November and December. (This will bring me to 16. If I fail by one, I'll still have 15 on the year.)

**3. 21,000 weekly word count** (the base is 3000 WPD but the goal is weekly to make it more flexible)

If I pull off the weekly word count goal, I will add at least 366,000 words of fiction to my numbers below and finish the year at something over 745,600 words.

This is silly, really. Especially if you consider that 3,000 words per day isn't all that difficult, yet it will look like quite a feat. I'll write almost as much fiction in only 4 months as I wrote in the first 8 months. Ridiculous, isn't it?

But whatever it takes.

Now I'm gonna post this before I lose my nerve. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

For those of you who prefer stylishly formatted ebooks and use D2D, see "Draft2Digital Introduces Professional-Quality eBook Templates" at <https://draft2digital.com/blog/draft2digital-introduces-professional-quality-ebook-templates/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 750 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 750

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16642  
Total fiction words for the year..... 379620  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 17290  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 16400  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 516020

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 642 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenge](#), [Goals](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 9/1**

[September 1, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Welp, happy Labor Day. Time for me to get to laboring again. (grin)

### ***More Adjustments***

Getting three hours per day to write (and writing during that time) shouldn't be a problem even if it's in snippets on some days. But it would be better if the time were blocked off.

With the coming cooler weather, I can walk a little later in the day, so that helps. As long as the temp isn't over about 85 I'm good for a couple of miles.

My previous early rising seems to work out fairly well, so I'll probably stick with that. Now I need to get in the mindset of writing the first two or three sessions in that early space.

### **Today and Writing**

Rolled out a little late at 4 this morning. I realized last night I'm going to have to try to use my time a little better.

I piddled around this morning with the usual Internet stuff and a game or two of Spider solitaire.

Left for my walk around 7:20 and was done with that before 8.

Welp, around 9 I sat down and started writing. Took about 400 words to find the opening scene. Then I knocked out what will be the first chapter, then stopped for lunch around 11.

The 400 words will now come in Chapter 2 or (probably) 3.

Man, am I rusty or what? (grin) But that's all right. When words are flowing onto the page at any speed, it's difficult to think anything's wrong.

Between 9 and 11 I also put the water on the back yard, then moved it about an hour later. I started a load of laundry, moved it to the dryer and started a second small load.

By the way, my wife does a lot of that stuff too, but she works elsewhere five days a week, so I'd rather she wouldn't have to do so much when she's home. So when I say I'm doing laundry, etc. that's why.

More laundry, more writing, and barely remembered to check my email for stuff for the "Of Interest" section below. The second one, despite the title, is more about book covers than about websites.

I was hoping, honestly, to get a lot more writing done today what with the weekend coming up. What's more, what I've written today might be "just" a short story but it might also be a novel start. We'll see.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Strictly for a good chuckle, see "7 key things I've learnt from a year of blogging" at <http://www.martynfiction.com/blogging-2/7-key-things-blogging/>. He was at it for a whole year? And he published two books and 50 blog posts? And no results? I am amazed. (grin)

To more serious stuff, via The Passive Voice see "The Typographic Details Behind Typewolf's Favorite Sites of August 2017" at <https://www.typewolf.com/blog/favorite-sites-of-august-2017/>.

Fiction Words: 3212

Nonfiction Words: 480 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3692

## **Writing of "Salvatore" (fiction)**

Day 1..... 3212 words. Total words to date..... 3212

Total fiction words for the month..... 3212  
Total fiction words for the year..... 382832  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 480  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 136880  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 519712

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 643 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## The Journal, Saturday, 9/2

September 2, 2017 by Harvey

### Hey Folks,

Well, the story I started yesterday will definitely be a short story, though longer than my usual short story. My short stories are usually around 3,000 words. This one will come in probably at around 5,000 or 6,000.

It might also expand into a novel, but right now it's about one event. So a short story.

\*\*\*

Finally checked Dean's site (it's not quite noon here) and I am stymied. See "Short Story Finished" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/short-story-finished/>. Uncanny. Some of the parallels between his writing world and mine are just eerie at the moment.

He wrote "only 25,000 words of fiction" in August due to life intervening. I wrote not quite 17,000.

He decided to make September 1 "a new start." I did the same thing. He doesn't track his numbers like I do, but it wouldn't surprise me to learn he wrote 3212 words of fiction on his story to finish it.

Of course, he had a banner month in July. I haven't had a 100,000-word month this year. But I probably will if I make my goals for the rest of the year.

### Today and Writing

I planned to get up at 2 or 3 this morning. I figure on weekends I want to get up a little earlier than I have been recently so I can get some writing done before the world comes to life.

I rolled out at 3:30. There wasn't a lot of email or FB stuff, so I still got some writing done on the story early.

When I realized "Salvatore" was going to be a short story I moved a couple things around in it. My rust is really showing. I cycled back through the whole thing, moved a few things around and added a lot that I missed in the initial writing.

Took a break for a shopping trip to pick up a lot of odds and ends that don't make it onto the weekly list.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Just the thing about Dean above.

Fiction Words: 3869

Nonfiction Words: 340 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4209

## **Writing of "Salvatore" (working title, short story)**

Day 1..... 3212 words. Total words to date..... 3212

Day 2..... 3869 words. Total words to date..... 7081 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 7081

Total fiction words for the year..... 386701

Total nonfiction words for the month... 820

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 137220

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 523921

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 644 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 181

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 9/3**

September 3, 2017 by Harvey

## **Hey Folks,**

I read the story I just finished to my wife yesterday, but she didn't quite get the ending. I said, "Would it help if I had mentioned perfume" in a particular place in the story? She said it would. That was the one clue that was missing.

This was an interesting story for me. It appears to be very convoluted, but really there are only two major scenes.

And you can tell I've been reading a lot of Hemingway recently. This story is very detailed and very strange. (grin)

So I added the bit about perfume this morning. Actually, 18 words in three sentences, and I think it's finished. And just in time. Today is Sunday.

The alternative was to write a brief prologue to show the crime that's revealed at the end of the story, but I think it would give away too much. Very fine line to walk.

Still, just to be sure it works I bundled it off to my first reader, Kenneth, to see what he thinks of it. We'll see what he says.

## **Today and Writing**

I rolled out on time this morning at 3. But I didn't feel like doing a lot, so I made my way slowly through my rounds on the Internet.

Then, an hour or so into the day, I added a few sentences (and fragments) to "Salvatore" (working title), ran a spell check and sent it off to my first reader.

Now I'm back to doing nothing for a little while.

I didn't really feel well through the morning. My wife and I walked a 3.6 mile circuit. Then I got a shower and wrote a little, but I didn't really feel into it. So back to doing nothing.

Around 11 I was thinking of calling this a non-writing day and starting fresh tomorrow.

Around noon a line popped into my head. I happened to be close to my computer at the moment, so I opened a Word doc and wrote an opening scene. Very pastoral in an upper middle-class neighborhood.

Around 12:40 something traumatic happened (in the story). So I wrote a cliffhanger and put Chapter 2 below it. Then I went to make myself some lunch. There might be nothing better in the world than tangy macaroni salad and cottage cheese on the same plate.

So the nonwriting day will end up as a writing day after all, though I can't be sure how much writing.

But the opening is there and the cliffhanger is there and a second character, who is also affected by the trauma, is there. And the story wants to run, so I only have to write the next sentence. Then write the next sentence.

Oh, I heard back from the first reader, and I am stoked. He wrote, "Good story. The characters are believable and it flows well. It is also demanding of the reader's attention (maybe not the best descriptor, but it is too aggressive to be called merely compelling). Not something that will allow one (me?) to read only part and put aside to finish later. I enjoyed the mystery of it."

Yeah. And this is a guy who wouldn't lie to save himself. I like it. By the way, the title of that one now is "The Tarp."

So a little after 1, lunch is over and back to the story.

Calling it a day a little early. I haven't felt good all day. My new WIP is a very interesting thing, very deep psychologically (I love that stuff), and it's flowing.

I read the first two chapters aloud to my wife and touched it here and there as I read.

Tomorrow morning I'll begin by reading back over everything up to this point and then writing more. I'm not worried about the light day because, as I said, this one's really flowing.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Especially if you aren't in BundleRabbit yet, or if you enjoy DWS' fiction, see "Bundles in BundleRabbit.com" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/bundles-in-bundlerabbit-com/>. And remember, I have a couple of works in the Guns of the West bundle right along with him. (grin)

## **Fiction Words: 1781**

Nonfiction Words: 660 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2441

## **Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781

Total fiction words for the month..... 8862

Total fiction words for the year..... 388482

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1480

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 137880

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 526362

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 645 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	26
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#)Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## The Journal, Monday, 9/4

September 4, 2017 by Harvey

### Hey Folks,

I told my wife last night I needed to get back in the office and publish “The Tarp.” I didn’t. So after most of my Internet stuff this morning, I did that.

I’m rusty there too, so it took a little longer than usual. Anyway, I’ll be emailing it to donors shortly.

Actually, I ended up emailing the last three stories to donors. I might have sent the first two before, but I don’t think so.

I sent them “Going Home,” a war story about a sniper who encounters some unusual circumstances; “Pancho and Lefty: An Alternate Ending,” a story based on the popular song by Willie Nelson and Merle Haggard but with a more redeeming ending for Lefty; and “The Tarp,” a story about a wise guy with too much on his plate.

Description and psychological suspense play large roles in all of those stories. They were written within a month of each other, yet oddly, they illustrate an improvement in my writing. I think. Then again, what do I know? (grin)

I was going to write a short topic on resetting goals, but I decided to just mention DWS’ post in “Of Interest” today.

The gist is this: There’s a third of the year left. It’s a great time to revisit your goals.

If you’re on track, great. Pat yourself on the back and keep plugging.

If you aren’t, there’s nothing wrong with setting new goals and starting fresh.

Even getting there isn’t as good as striving to get there. (grin)

### Today and Writing

Rolled out a little before 3, did the Internet stuff, then realized I forgot to upload my story to D2D, Amazon and BundleRabbit last night. So I did that.

Then back to the Internet for awhile, then here to write this. Now it's a little after 5.

Out for a walk around 7. Only a couple of miles but a good start to the day.

Well, I had a feeling maybe I should've taken a day off walking. But I was thinking just a lie surely 2 miles wouldn't hurt anything and I'd feel better through the day because of it.

Turns out I should've taken a day off walking. (grin) Making the adjustment is difficult for me. Realize, only a year ago I was walking every day, and sometimes up to 12 miles in a day.

But my back didn't like what I did to it yesterday. It started yelling at me just after the 1 mile mark.

Not sure what else I'll do today. Some lounging for sure, and I hope some writing but even my desk chair isn't comfortable right now.

Still, I have a good story waiting for me. I'll get back to it when I can.

Well, we had a trip to the store and back. Then lunch with part of a ball game.

I read over what I wrote yesterday and added a few hundred words, but nothing big. I won't count this as a writing day. I'll include the little bit I did today in tomorrow's numbers.

See you then.

## **Of Interest**

See Dean's "Time of Great Forgetting" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/time-of-great-forgetting-2/>.

Via Linda Maye Adams on Facebook, see "A Curated List of Creative Writing Competitions, Contests and Awards" at <https://www.dystopianstories.com/writing-competitions-contests/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 550

## **Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781

Day 2..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 8862

Total fiction words for the year..... 388482

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2030

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 138430  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 526912

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 646 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#)Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Goals](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## The Journal, Tuesday, 9/5

September 5, 2017 by Harvey

### Hey Folks,

I rolled out a little early today. I spent the first half-hour or so on a little bit of Internet stuff. Then I listened to Week 5 of my online workshop with DWS.

The main topic this week was the primary reason I took this workshop, especially when combined with the main topic in Week 4. So I went back and reviewed a couple of videos from Week 4 as well and enhanced my notes for Week 5.

The topics in Weeks 1 – 3 weren't really of interest to me, but I listened to them anyway because Dean often drops useful little gems as he moves among topics.

Next Tuesday will be the final week, so I'll report then on this workshop. It's the Mystery workshop, by the way, so I took it partly to learn new things and partly to verify that I was on the right track with some things I was already doing.

### Topic: New Goals

I have been feeling pressured — pressure is not a good thing — ever since I reset my goals for the last four months of the year.

So I'm going to reset them again. Goals exist to serve me, not the other way around.

It's important to me to write Every Day. That's more important to me than numbers.

I'm convinced that some of the stories that have died over the past several months did so because I was away from them for a day or two or twelve.

It's difficult at best to get back into a storyline after an absence. It's much easier to just drop it and start something new.

So my “big” new goal is to write Every Day.

To that end, and to make it more realistic, I’m going to reduce my word count goal. Drastically.

Because frankly, with my current goal of 3,000 words per day, if I have only a half-hour or an hour or even two free in a given day, it’s much easier to throw in the towel and just skip it. (That pressure I mentioned earlier.) And then I feel like crap because I had a nonwriting day.

And that is not good.

So I’m going to try a version of James Scott Bell’s weekly goal. I’m going to shoot for 7,000 words per week. That’s only 1000 words a day for 7 days. One hour per day. I might write more than that, but I don’t want to write less than that.

If I find (as I hope) that I’m regularly exceeding that goal, well good. Then I’ll adjust it again later. Or not. Maybe I’ll just roll with it.

Now, if I write only 7,000 words per week for the rest of this year, I won’t reach 16 novels and novellas by year’s end. But so what? I already have 26 novels and 4 novellas. And over 180 short stories.

So I’m good with that. Right now I just want to get back to where I feel like a professional writer, by which I mean a person who sits down and writes every day.

Will I take a day off? In emergencies, yes. And maybe even in a time of no emergencies if I’ve just finished a work. Maybe I’ll take a day off before I start another one.

But in the meantime, I’ll plug along, putting down at least 1000 words per day of fiction.

I’m already sighing with relief. And of course, I’ll still be reporting my numbers below every day.

Now, at least a couple of you felt intimidated in the past. A couple of folks felt I was putting up numbers too big to “compete” with, although it was never meant to be a competition.

So if this method works for you too, and I truly hope it does, feel free to steal it from me the same way I stole it from James Scott Bell. Who, by the way, is in “Of Interest” below.

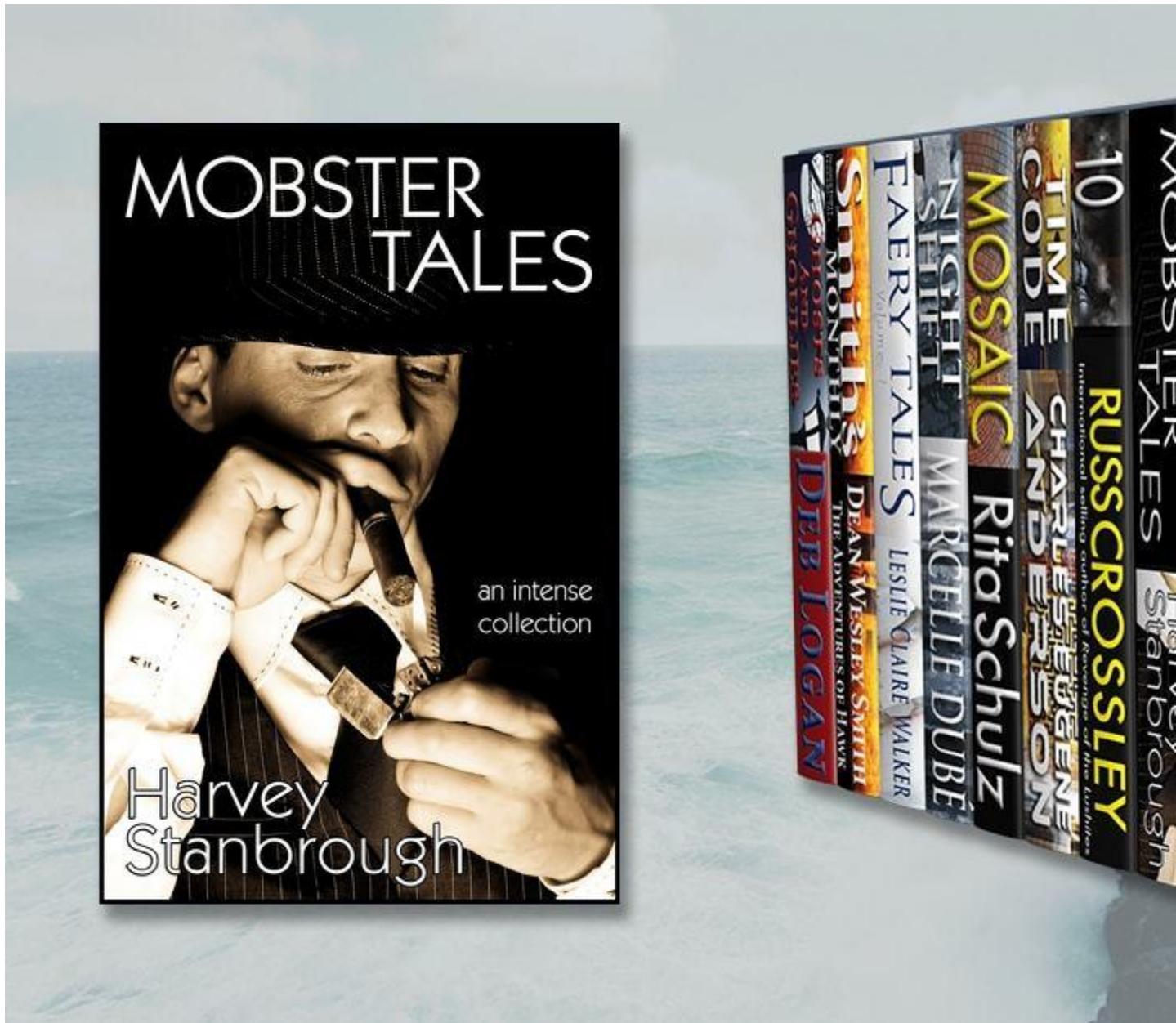
\*\*\*

This WIP is a truly twisted piece of work. And I don’t mean that in a good way, like convoluted. I mean twisted as in bizarre, ugly, misshapen. Something that might be described as “slouching” toward some holy site. That kind of twisted.

So I'm gonna give it its head and see what happens. (grin)

\*\*\*

I'm very pleased to report I have a new bundle out. My short story collection Mobster Tales is one of eleven ebooks (I think they're all collections) in the Another Time, Another Place bundle. Here's the graphic. It should also be a link. \$2.99 for eleven ebooks folks. (If it doesn't link, go to <http://bundlerabbit.com/b/another-time-another-place/>.)



Back to my twisted WIP for awhile.

Pretty good day today. I'll take it.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Wow. See Dean's "A Matter of Perspective" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-matter-of-perspective/>.

In The Kill Zone blog, see "Two Writing Mind Tricks to Get You Rolling" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/09/two-writing-mind-tricks-to-get-you-rolling.html>. (I can't even tell you how much I'm going to take this guy's advice.)

Some good stuff in The Passive Voice today. See <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2678**

Nonfiction Words: 830 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3508

### **Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781

Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459

Total fiction words for the month..... 11540

Total fiction words for the year..... 391160

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2860

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 139260

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 530420

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 647 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 9/6](#)**

[September 6, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Now I know what the kids mean when they write OMG.

Via The Passive Voice from yesterday, there was this wonderful gem:

“What begins as a raindrop on our heads turns into a cloudburst of rain. If we deny its messages, it becomes a thunderstorm. Still not listening? Look out for a hurricane, a tornado and an accompanying tsunami.”

Are you kidding me? Talk about mixing metaphors. And even mixing them WITHIN a metaphor. This is supposed to be a serious post about what might happen if we “fail or refuse to learn the lessons we are supposed to learn.”

What I saw:

“a cloudburst of rain” — um, as opposed to a cloudburst of what?  
And then somehow a thunderstorm is bigger than a cloudburst.  
And then a tornado is bigger than a hurricane, and is accompanied by a tsunami. Really?

She might at least have substituted “waterspout” for “tornado” to keep things in the same family. And then maybe made the waterspout smaller than the hurricane. And then done away with the tsunami.

Or at least begin with a gentle ripple that grows to a wave that increases to whatever’s bigger than a wave and then to a tsunami.

I guess I was in a bad mood or something. I actually signed up for Medium (it’s required if you want to view the original post) just so I could leave a comment. And that was, “I laughed so hard at this. Either the first or fourth sentence might be a really good submission to the Bulwer-Lytton contest.”

TPG was silent on this one too, surprisingly, so I also left the comment on his site where he links to the original.

If you want a good chuckle, or if you want to see what *not* to aspire to as a writer, see the original post at <https://medium.com/@literacychampion/you-create-your-own-lessons-378948ad87a8/>.

Seriously, OMG. I thought about turning this into a contest to see who could find more category mistakes and/or silly similes and messed-up metaphors. Woof.

\*\*\*

Rolled out a little late (by plan). My wife bought me a recliner (my first ever), and it’s due to arrive late this afternoon or early evening. I wanted to make sure I’m still awake and coherent when it gets here. (grin)

Today begins my new very low-pressure goals. I'm still feeling a sense of relief. It doesn't mean I can't or won't write 3,000+ words in a day. It just means I don't have to. It feels so good to actually relax my way into the day.

Of course, I don't want to slip too far the other way either. There will be a period of adjustment.

\*\*\*

I finally started reading over what I've written on the novel at around 9, allowing myself to touch it on the way through.

I did notice I'm more prone to cycling more often now that I know I have time. I write what's flowing at the moment, then run back over it, allowing myself to touch it.

Played an on-again, off-again game of Catch The Umbrella each time the wind came up while I was outside. One of those days when there's almost no wind, and then a sudden gust.

And then around 10:30, I went inside to turn on the swamp cooler. I noticed the temp in the house was actually climbing. I put my hand up in front of a vent and felt warm air.

So I went outside, put a nozzle on the hose and sprayed the pads on the swamp cooler (it's on the roof) from the ground. Went back inside to check, and sure enough the air coming out of the vents was cooler.

Got the ladder out, went up on the roof thinking (hoping) I just needed to unclog the spider, but the pump is out. So I came back inside, emailed to ask my wife to pick up a new pump on her way home.

All of that took a little over 2 and a half hours.

If I still had my big word count to worry about, I'd have called the day at that point. As it was, I went back to the novel.

Dean's been saying for years he doesn't do word counts for fiction. He just figures out what he wants to do, then determines the number of hours he has to spend in the chair to do it. I have to admit, I like it.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Ooh! Check the comments on "A Matter of Perspective" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-matter-of-perspective/#comments/>.

## **Fiction Words: 1142**

Nonfiction Words: 760 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1902

## **Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781

Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459

Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601

Total fiction words for the month..... 12682

Total fiction words for the year..... 392302

Total nonfiction words for the month... 3620

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 140020

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 532322

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 648 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 9/7](#)**

[September 7, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Rolled out a little early at 2:20. My recliner came in yesterday. And it's So Big my feet dangle when I'm sitting in it. Makes me feel like I'm five again. The seat is too deep too, front to back. (We ordered it online.)

And honestly, in hindsight I also wish both my wife and I could sit on it at the same time. That's how sappy I am.

(This thing would fit my friend Robert Sadler just about perfectly. But, you know, he's in Dallas holding down the southeastern front.)

So this morning I told my wife I'm going to take it back. While I'm at the store (tomorrow morning), after they credit my account, I'll look around. Best case scenario: I'll see one I like, I'll give them my money again, load up the new one and bring it back.

So covering the recliner with protective quilts (we have kittens), making the appropriate phone calls and all that stuff took up a lot of the morning. Then I wrote a lot of the stuff on this edition of the Journal. Then I went to the novel.

Onward.

I started writing at around 10:30. Added around 1200 words and took a break.

Around noon-thirty I went back to the novel again. I'm at a bit of a sticking point, but I think I've figured it out. I think this will be the first novel I've written that's broken down into Parts. I've pretty well finished Part 1: The Murder. (grin) Each part, I think, will be like starting a new story.

Got quite a bit done. I'm happy with it.

### **Topic: On Priorities, Goals, et Cetera Ad Nauseam**

You guys are probably tired to the bone of hearing me talk about word counts and goals and all that. Just one more (for now) and I'll shut up.

Most of this year has been a transition period for me. Some, frankly, is a result of aging and getting used to all that aging entails for me personally, with my experiences, health, etc.

But most of my transitions have had to do with my writing.

The number of transitions might seem unusual, given that I've only been really writing, by which I mean devoting myself to writing, for 3 years.

But if you consider the number of long and short Quality stories (quality was and remains paramount) that I've written and published during that 3 years, maybe all the transitions make a little more sense. Basically I just speeded up the process.

Even when I was writing "fast," I strived always to write the best story I was able to write. Not the best story I could write "at speed," but the best story I could write, period. Without that provision, nothing else matters, and that remains key.

In my own fiction, the more evident growth during the past three years was in the quality of Setting Description (through the POV character's senses and opinions, not mine) and in the quality Pacing, a key element in engaging the reader.

My stories have always had strong characters and dialogue and good plots. Though I always cringe a bit when I talk about "plot" since I agree with Bradbury that the plot is only what the characters leave behind as they run through the story.

In the past, my transitions came as the result of external forces. They were reactions to what was going on around me.

Now I'm being proactive. I'm forcing a new transition period by setting new priorities.

I recently decided to back off a bit and reset my goal to 7,000 words per week. But I didn't do that so I could write better stories. I did it so I could spend less time in the chair when necessary without feeling guilty. And I did it so I would be more likely to get back to writing every day. (Hence, "be a writer.")

I might still turn out 3,000 or 4,000 words per day on some days. But I no longer feel that I "have" to.

What it all means is this: Instead of turning out a 60,000 word novel in +/-20 writing days, it might take as long as +/-60 days.

Will the quality of the works change?

A little, probably, as I learn and apply new techniques, but not significantly.

One major difference is that I'll have more time to read and study works that I really enjoy by writers I want to emulate. That's huge.

I'll also have more time to read nonfiction "how to" books by people like Lawrence Block and James Scott Bell. (I'm not a fan of Bell's fiction, but I've learned a ton just reading a few of his blog posts.)

And I'll have more time to spend with my wife, visit with children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren and friends (camping? shredding philosophy and strewing it across the wilderness?) without feeling torn.

Finally, nothing I do or propose here is submitted as a cure-all for anyone else. This is just what I'm doing, as I'm doing it, submitted for your leisurely perusal and adoption if the fit feels right to you. (grin)

\*\*\*

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

At long last, via The Passive Voice, "Amazon targets authors and marketers for alleged abuse of Kindle Direct Publishing system" at <https://www.geekwire.com/2017/amazon-targets-authors-marketers-alleged-abuse-kindle-direct-publishing-system/>.

Also via The Passive Voice, see "What to Post on Each Social Media Platform" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/what-to-post-on-each-social-media-platform-the-complete-guide-to-optimizing-your-social-content/>. He links to the original post. I posted it this way so you could read what he says about Buffer.

## **Fiction Words: 2460**

Nonfiction Words: 920 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3380

## **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781

Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459

Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601

Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061

Total fiction words for the month..... 15142

Total fiction words for the year..... 394762

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4540

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 140940

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 535702

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 649 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novel Goal (15 novels or novellas)..... 8 novels or novellas

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, 9/8](#)**

[September 8, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Especially if you're a writer of science fiction or science fantasy, check out Science Alert at <http://www.sciencealert.com/>.

Bear in mind, though, it's a good idea for writers to absorb knowledge on all sorts of topics, not only those that are genre specific.

I saw articles and photos on Science Alert today that would easily lend themselves to ideas (and stories) in Mystery, Psychological Suspense, Noir, Romance and other genres. So pretty much everything.

\*\*\*

I rolled out late, then spent part of the morning updating my website and redesigning the sidebars.

If you go looking for stuff on the site, here's what I did:

On the left sidebar

The Donate button

The revised Writers' Resources

On the right sidebar

Links (icons) to connect with me

The revised Quick Links

The revised Readers' Resources

The revised Bundles I'm currently in

Recent Posts

Archives

I also created a footer widget and put the tag cloud down there.

After that I remembered I hadn't added "The Tarp" to my Short Fiction page yet, so I did that.  
\*\*\*

Finally to the novel at 11.

Well, I got my 1000 words easily enough. Then I dealt with stuff around the house and online.

A few things came up that annoyed and distracted me, so I didn't write much more than that.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Just for something to put in this section, see "I put the duster away" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/i-put-the-duster-away/>. Kind of appropriate for how I felt late this afternoon.

**Fiction Words: 1302**

Nonfiction Words: 260 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1562

## Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363

Total fiction words for the month..... 16444  
Total fiction words for the year..... 396064  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 48000  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 141200  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 537264

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 650 days  
Days of writing at least 1000 WPD..... 3  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8 Novels (since Oct 19,  
2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 9/9](#)

[September 9, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### Hey Folks,

Well, I didn't take the recliner back yesterday. If it doesn't rain today, I'll probably do that today.

It did rain what seemed like all night last night, but less than 1/10 of an inch in the gauge this morning.

Left about 8:30 for Sierra Vista. Back around 12. Not sure what else I'll get done today.

My WIP is kind'a weird. I mean, I keep hearing that all books write differently, and my experience has shown that's true.

In this one, not only will it (probably) be presented in "Parts," but I'm getting the feeling I need to just write the different scenes and then shuffle them around and put them all together after the fact. I've never done that before.

I currently have two major POV characters, a PI and a criminal, and I think there will be a third. Not sure yet who or what that will be.

But I have several scenes in mind at any given time for each POV character. Not the whole scene but a particular direction. Like the characters are children, tugging at my hands.

I'm writing along in the Criminal's POV, but the PI character is tugging on my other hand. "No, go this way!" And when I write in the PI's POV, the other guy is tugging at my other hand.

It's kind of neat, but annoying too. And I'm left to wonder who the third POV will be. It's almost as if the Criminal and PI characters are saying "Not yet."

Very strange. And I'm not complaining. Just wanted to share that in case it helps you in your own writing.

Anyway, it's 2:20 as I write this. I haven't written on the novel today, not even 1000 words. I took the recliner back, then worked on my 4Runner a bit. It's hot and I just want to Do Nothing, so that's what I'm going to do.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

If you're an SF fan, see "Dr. Jerry Pournelle" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/dr-jerry-pournelle/>.

For any female warriors out there (Linda Adams), see "This Viking DNA Discovery Is Our Best Evidence to Date of Female Viking Warriors" at <http://www.sciencealert.com/this-viking-dna-discovery-says-there-really-were-shield-maidens/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 370

### **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781

Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459

Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601

Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061

Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363

Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16444

Total fiction words for the year..... 396064

Total nonfiction words for the month... 5170

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 141570  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 537634

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 651 days  
Days of writing at least 1000 WPD..... 4  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8 Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 9/10](#)

[September 10, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Rolled out late again this morning. That's all right.

Had an urge to write something different, so I started another story. Then I got stuck. Then I sat back and thought about that. It's been happening a lot over the past couple of months. Then I realized what's going on and wrote the topic below.

### **TOPIC: Introspection**

Recently, privately, a friend applauded me for sharing the down sides as well as the up. Possibly he didn't realize he was only encouraging me. (grin)

I find myself in a ridiculous predicament, though "predicament" is too strong a word. Besides, it's so ironic I have to laugh.

After 182 short stories, 26 novels and 4 novellas, I'm stuck. I can't say I'm blocked. I don't believe in writer's block as others have described it to me: a general inability to come up with anything to write about.

Um, if nothing else, write about the writer's block. Soon your brain will grow tired of you wasting its time and move on to something more interesting. It worked for me back when I still believed writer's block was possible.

So I'm not blocked, but I am stuck.

Now it seems to me when a professional encounters a problem, he simply takes a deep breath and works through the problem to a solution. He keeps working the problem. Diagnose, attempt and repeat.

In Writer World, that simply means Practice.  
I've diagnosed why I'm stuck.

I write an opening, concentrating on grounding the reader. Then I seem unable to Just Move On.

Why? Because I'm concentrating.

Allowing my conscious mind in to make sure I've pulled the reader deep into the story at the opening.

How do I get past it?

Practice.

In coming days (as long as it takes) I'll practice writing openings and moving past them to finish stories. I'll resist the urge to cycle back until I've written at least a thousand words.

And when I do cycle back, I'll just read what's there, allow myself to briefly touch it, then move on. That's the practice part.

I won't stick on it.

I won't become encumbered (and allow the story to become encumbered) with details.

I already know how to ground the reader, and my subconscious has it. I've forgotten how to move on because I'm not trusting my subconscious. So that's what I'll be practicing. Trusting. Moving on.

If I can do that, my novel goals for the calendar year are still well within reach.

\*\*\*

Today is an excellent day. It is a lazy day. We made a necessary shopping trip.

I walked our quarter-mile lane, clippers in hand, to cut back the encroaching mesquites. I watered our large cactus-and-succulent garden (attempting to tempt some rain to fall).

I read. I did some online stuff. I took a few pictures. I rooted for the gathering cumulus clouds.

I even wrote the earliest beginning of a story (about 100 words), which led to a bit of Deep Thought and the topic above. But the only real writing I did today was on this Journal.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Nothing really of note that I saw around the web today. I didn't receive a newsletter from The Digital Reader (supposed to come every day) or Science Alert (ditto).

I did receive The Passive Voice and it was fair, but nothing specifically that I thought I should point out.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 580

### **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 16444  
Total fiction words for the year..... 396064  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5750  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 142150  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 538214

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 652 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8 Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 9/11](#)**

[September 11, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, have you guys heard me whine enough?

The thing is, I'm either a writer or I'm not. For awhile now, I haven't been. Not really. So I'll see about cutting down on the whining, and instead go back to tending to business.

I am somewhat heartened, because in the original essay in which Robert Heinlein laid out his Business Habits for Writers, he mentioned that he himself had violated his own rules on occasion.

\*\*\*

Today in “Of Interest” you’ll see that Dean’s going to offer his services as a first reader again in two challenges, short story and novel. Something to consider.

Even if you don’t want to take advantage of his generous offer (if you finish the challenges or opt out after paying, you still get two online workshops), it still might be a fun challenge for some of you to do on your own.

\*\*\*

I’m going to read back on my novel start to see where I took a wrong turn and get back to writing.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Dean’s “New Story and Novel Challenge For You” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/new-story-and-novel-challenge-for-you/>.

See “Humans Have 27 Distinct Emotional States” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/humans-have-27-distinct-emotional-states/>. The Passive Guy’s take is excellent in my opinion.

Do yourself a favor and visit Science Alert at <http://www.sciencealert.com/>. Several stories today that might be of interest to writers. Read Sceptically. For example....

If you want a laugh and an example of Orwellian Doublespeak, see “The World Is Facing a Global Sand Crisis...” at <http://www.sciencealert.com/our-world-is-facing-a-global-sand-crisis-because-we-re-mining-way-too-much-of-it/>. (One of the major ways nations are using mined sand is to repair beaches. So picking it up, then relocating it, and putting it down.)

“RIP Jerry Pournelle, the first author to write a novel on a computer” at <https://www.theverge.com/platform/amp/2017/9/9/16279582/jerry-pournelle-science-fiction-author-writing-computers-obituary/>.

**Fiction Words: 3182**

Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3482

**Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545

Total fiction words for the month..... 19626  
Total fiction words for the year..... 399246  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6050  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 142450  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 541696

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 653 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8 Novels (since Oct 19,  
2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Science Alert](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 9/12](#)

[September 12, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Okay, I mentioned a couple of times a workshop I'm taking with Dean. It ended this morning, so here's my report.

On the Online Workshops tab of his website, the title (if you want to read about it) is officially "Writing Mysteries." If you're interested, I encourage you to read the writeup there.

First, I found that the actual workshop more than nailed the description on the website.

This is an actual writing workshop. He teaches you how to write mysteries in the ten most popular subgenres. Plus there are extensive notes on writing Thrillers (used to be a subgenre of Mystery, but is now on its own).

He doesn't teach plotting, but he does teach what's required in each subgenre of Mystery (in other words, How To Write it).

In each subgenre, he provides instruction on five areas:

1. Focus-of and details-about the sub-genre.
2. Types of writers best suited to write the sub-genre (with examples).
3. Can it be used in other genres?
4. Focus on the POV character “type” needed and the focus of the POV character.
5. Focus of the opening. What needs to be in the opening. What will draw readers in.

Those five areas make this workshop pretty much invaluable if you want to learn to write mysteries. It’s also a good idea to study those five areas of any genre you’re interested in writing. Just sayin’.

The weekly assignments were also good. I won’t comment specifically on those because how well they work for you will depend on your level of skill. If you’re a beginning writer (a few novels/a couple dozen short stories under your belt), I have no doubt you’ll find them all very useful.

So I recommend this workshop if you

1. Want to write in a Mystery subgenre, or
2. If you want to learn Mystery elements to include in other genres (SF, Young Adult, etc.).

\*\*\*

Started cycling through what I wrote yesterday at about 8:30. Allowed myself to touch the manuscript, but very lightly, always looking forward to resuming the story.

By 9:30 I was through cycling. During that hour I also answered some email, etc.

One of the emails I worked with was the notice that the next bundle my work is included in, Death Before Defeat, a 10-book SF omnibus, is available for presale at only \$2.99. For details, see <https://bundlerabbit.com/b/death-before-defeat/>.

Too much playing. By noon-thirty I’d written only a little over a thousand words. My fault. When I pay attention to it, the novel’s flying.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see “The Only Rule Amazon Truly Cares About” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/the-only-rule-amazon-truly-cares-about/>. PG’s response is priceless. Of course, in his posting of the article you can also click through to the original post.

Via The Digital Reader (and strictly for fun), see “10 Books That Were Written on a Bet” at <https://electricliterature.com/10-books-that-were-written-on-a-bet-5e0343dd3030/>.

Also via The Digital Reader, for anyone who believes publication in TradPub is a golden ticket, see “Publishers Are Now Shedding Best-Selling Authors” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/09/11/publishers-now-shedding-best-selling-authors/>.

Anybody need an SF novel idea? See “We Can Finally Read The ‘Clock’ That Tells How Long Human Cells Have Left to Live” at <http://www.sciencealert.com/researchers-can-now-check-how-long-live-human-cells-have-left/>. This could go in MANY diferent ways.

Dean posted “Some More Challenge Details” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-more-challenge-details/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3775**

Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4305

### **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320

Total fiction words for the month..... 23401  
Total fiction words for the year..... 403021  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6580  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 142980  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 546001

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 654 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, 9/13**

[September 13, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not a lot other than reading and writing (very little arithmetic) going on at the old homestead today.

It feels like a do-nothing day, but I don't want one. Besides, I need that like I need a cliché in my head.

I finally broke down and took my lawn mower in to a repair shop. That and surrounding details and sidetracks ate up the first two working hours of the day.

I started playing at the novel right at 10:30. It's now almost 1:30 (I've done some other little stuff too) and I've written barely over 1000 new words.

I had to stop and check the total word count because I knew I hadn't written much. I was actually surprised to see it was over 1000 words. My focus has just been scattered a bit thus far today. (For a reason, see "Of Interest.")

It will be interesting (to me) to see what happens for the rest of the day re that focus.

Well, I really thought this would be a small day, but it worked out all right. I also have a great starting point for tomorrow (a jagged edge) and a ball game starting in about 8 minutes (grin). Tonight Cleveland might extend its winning streak to 21 games. That would be history in the league.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, something perhaps "relevant to author promo, website and cover design decisions." See "Designing for Human Attention" at <https://uxplanet.org/designing-for-human-attention-ac0abe3d657d>.

If you use Smashwords, see "Smashwords Introduces Global Pricing Control..." at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/09/global-pricing.html/>.

See "The Attitude of a Challenge" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-attitude-of-a-challenge/>. Some good notes there re attitude.

For any Facebook users, via The Passive Voice, I read that FB is changing its mission statement. See <https://www.lrb.co.uk/v39/n16/john-lanchester/you-are-the-product>.

For some witty wordplay from The Passive Guy, see "Much Ado about Lavender" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/much-ado-about-lavender/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3147**

Nonfiction Words: 290 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3437

## Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467

Total fiction words for the month..... 26548  
Total fiction words for the year..... 406168  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6870  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 143270  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 549438

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 655 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8 Novels (since Oct 19,  
2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Smashwords](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 9/14](#)

[September 14, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### Hey Folks,

Man, I hate outsmarting myself. And I've done that twice recently.

The most recent was yesterday, when I planned to watch the historic Cleveland Indians' game against Detroit. Cleveland won and extended their streak to 21 games. But I didn't get to watch it.

When MLB Network advertised they would show the game live at "noon Eastern," I counted the hours the wrong way. I expected it at 4, when actually it came on at 9. Sigh.

And a couple weeks ago, I decided to take down my 10-volume Wes Crowley saga from Smashwords and D2D. The series was experiencing low sales, so I decided to give Amazon KDP Select a shot at it.

This morning, as I started to institute that process, I did an online search for the books. And of course, the paper copies are still available for sale all over the place.

So I can't do KDP Select. Duh. All I accomplished was removing my books from consideration around the world for almost three weeks.

And I created another couple hours of work for myself, reviving them on Smashwords and D2D.

I realize I ought to let this go and just quietly re-upload them. But I thought I'd mention my costly (and stupid) error on here just in case it might save you the trouble of making the same mistake.

Anyway, it didn't take two hours. It took an hour and fifty-five minutes. So there's that.

I don't think I'm going to bother putting them back up in BundleRabbit. I mean, they're a bundle all by themselves, and a bargain at almost 500,000 words of quality stories for only \$20.

Or maybe I'll put up the first book in the series so it can be included in bundles.

Anyway, now for about an hour-long break (mostly so I can calm down), and then back to the novel.

\*\*\*

Weird. Today is turning out like yesterday, so far. I started a new chapter but it wasn't quite right. The characters wouldn't let me move on. So I hovered.

In about 3 hours (like yesterday) I managed about 1000 words (like yesterday). I can only hope now things will break loose and the novel will run for awhile (like yesterday). (grin)

Well, it ran pretty good. Frankly I just got tired. Figured I didn't want to push it. The story's still speeding along just fine, and I have zero clue how the characters are going to solve what's going on. But I'm sure looking forward to finding out.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

At Dean's place, see "Bet You Didn't Know I Wrote YA" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/bet-you-didnt-know-i-wrote-ya/>. I swear, the guy's more of a ham than I am.

For more Raymond Chandler from The Passive Voice, see "When I got home" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/when-i-got-home/>.

## **Fiction Words: 2780**

Nonfiction Words: 450 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3230

## **Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247

Total fiction words for the month..... 29328  
Total fiction words for the year..... 408948  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7320  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 143720  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 552668

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 656 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8 Novels (since Oct 19,  
2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, 9/15](#)**

[September 15, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Welp, I started the day closer to my usual time. I read a lot (see “Of Interest”) and then checked Dean’s site.

Much of his post for today is a rehash of the previous couple of days, so it didn’t make “Of Interest,” but parts of it keyed something in me.

So I wrote the topic for today. Actually, I also wrote the topic for tomorrow (I won’t count those words until tomorrow).

I had so much fun with the latter, I decided to cross post that one to the main blog where it will appear on September 19.

You, lucky readers, get to see it tomorrow. I almost titled it “How Warped Was My Rainbow,” but decided finally on “On Challenges, Part 2.”

In the meantime, here’s the first part.

### **TOPIC: On Challenges**

In today’s post, DWS writes “challenges ... are a way to prioritize writing time. ... [That is o]ne of the many values of a challenge and why I do them regularly for myself. I get far more writing done when I have challenged myself...” (see <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/time-is-everything-these-days/> if you want).

Yeah, what Dean said. I’ve noticed that too.

Back in June when I challenged myself to write a short story every day, I failed miserably. But I still wrote 8 or 9 short stories in a row. I was hyper-productive because of the challenge.

Engaging in a personal challenge is a kind of partnership between the conscious mind and the subconscious creative mind.

The conscious mind says, “Ha! Bet you can’t do this!” and the subconscious responds with “Yeah? Hold my beer and watch this!”

Obviously, this works better if you happen to have an inborn stubborn streak, and the stronger the streak the better.

I do. And it is.

Now I’m not on the verge of announcing a new personal challenge. I’m not in that place at the moment. At the moment, I’m just getting back to writing every day.

At the moment, I’m more the curious observer, watching my own progress on my WIP and marveling that the new (to me) process I’ve come up with apparently is going to enable me to finish a novel in what many would see as record time.

And for now, for me, that’s good enough. I’m happy with it. Writing is fun again.

But if you’re a seasoned writer and you find yourself stuck in the doldrums, or if you’re just starting out and feeling a bit overwhelmed (or even just whelmed) and not sure what to do first, try giving yourself a challenge.

I almost wrote “a realistic challenge,” but if it’s too “realistic” it won’t be a challenge, will it?

\*\*\*

Yesterday, I guess, I mentioned in passing that when I started writing I was “stuck.” A few folks wrote me about that. Thanks.

But I didn’t really mean “stuck” in a bad way. I remember one novel I wrote that was like pulling teeth with a pocket knife pretty much all the way through. Fortunately, most of mine aren’t like that.

Most of mine flow straight from get-go to been-there-done-that.

In this particular WIP, I’ve been “stuck” two times that were big enough to mention. One of those was yesterday.

But notice too, being “stuck” lasted only until I’d stared at it long enough. I wasn’t stuck so much as mired. There were a lot of “little” bits of the scene I wanted to form and fashion and sequence just right.

You could say I rewrote that segment several times, but I wouldn’t call it that. I did make several passes until it was “just right.”

But each pass was in the creative mind and each pass made the scene (it turned out to be a chapter) a little better. A little fuller. Once I waded around in the muck and found a few rocks, I came straight on out and moved ahead.

So that’s all that was about.

Went to the grocery around 8, spent half a boatload of money and got everything put away around 9:45.

After that I did some other small things, including playing online for awhile. Finally around 11 I started to cycle back over the last couple of chapters.

When I finished cycling, I went right on writing instead of taking a break. Including what I added in cycling, I hit around 1800 words by 12:30. Then I took a break. (grin)

Flying along on the novel again for a bit, then took a break to chat with a friend via email. For a long while, I’ve told folks if you need cover or layout design check out [CovertUpload.com](http://CovertUpload.com).

Kat Magee, the owner, changed it. She’s rebuilding the site and the new name is Daring Creative Designs. And she’s very good. Check it out at <https://daringcreativedesigns.com/>.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, see “Business Musings: Rethinking A Title” at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/09/13/business-musings-rethinking-a-title/>. Hint: This is only peripherally about retitling a book. It’s more about Kris’ process, and in that way it’s both rare and very insightful.

Via The Digital Reader, see “You Are Already Living Inside a Computer” at <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2017/09/you-are-already-living-inside-a-computer/539193/>. It’s very long, very thought provoking, and chock full of story ideas.

Check the comments on “The Attitude of a Challenge” at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-attitude-of-a-challenge/#comments/>.

### **Fiction Words: 3614**

Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 4494

### **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861

Total fiction words for the month..... 32942  
Total fiction words for the year..... 412562  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8200  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 144600  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 557162

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 657 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 9/16**

September 16, 2017 by Harvey

**Hey Folks,**

Even after a relatively late night, I rolled out at 3:30 this morning. Not sure how much I'll get done in writing today since it's Saturday.

**TOPIC: On Challenges, Part 2**

Note: This follows on yesterday's topic. If you haven't read it, you can find it at <http://hestanbrough.com/the-journal-friday-915/>.

At the beginning of the calendar year, I challenged myself to write 15 novels during the year.

Later, after an intended novel fell short and ended as a novella, I adjusted the goal to 16 novels or novellas. That should have clued me I was in trouble.

It didn't. I plunged merrily ahead but conveniently forgot the whole purpose of a challenge: productivity.

In my desire to write a certain number of novels, I allowed myself to be overwhelmed. In short, I lost sight of the little picture: the word count.

Grandpa always said you can't build a house, but you can drive a nail. (Or you can't write a novel, but you can write a scene.)

If you drive enough nails, you'll look up one day through the clearing smoke and see that you have a new house.

Now just for fun, let's slip a bit afield.

Productivity isn't finishing a certain number of novels or novellas or even short stories.

In its initial, base form, productivity is putting words on the page. Like it or not, it all boils back down to the basic act: word count is what produces short stories, novellas and novels. You can't escape that fact.

I find it particularly telling (and humorous, actually) that so many writers wrinkle up their nose and eschew word count as if it were gross and even distasteful. Pedestrian, even. Like sex.

Well, it might be. But it's still a necessary (if ugly, depending on your POV) act in which the writer must allow his conscious and subconscious mind to engage if he is to birth a new novel.

It occurs to me that the metaphor extends when you realize word count generally isn't talked about in polite circles.

Get it?

And it's something all writers engage in whether or not they want to admit it.

After all, if such things really were only for us peasants, Great Britain's royal line would be really short. In fact, it would have ended abruptly on the other side of a pair of crossed arms and a head shaking side to side eons ago. (Somebody stop me!)

Okay. Okay (deep breaths). Enough on the metaphor.

Now I don't push productivity for its own sake. I push productivity as a matter of business.

The more works a writer has "out there" the greater the chance readers will stumble on something he's written, like it, and buy more.

This is common sense, even given that what was once common for most seems to have become a luxury for many. But I digress.

Noting word count, whether it's done publicly (as here) or in private (all the better people only do it in private) is what drives the writer to produce more literary children.

And when our word-count drive begins to weaken, there's no better way to enhance it than to give ourselves a challenge.

Try it. You'll like it. And you don't have to tell anybody.

\*\*\*

Well, I didn't get a lot done today. I got a lot done but not a lot of writing. Calling it early to watch a ball game.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Here you go, SF folks. How could the government use the new "Micropods" at <http://www.sciencealert.com/vaccines-made-of-these-tiny-micropods-could-an-end-to-booster-shots/>.

Even if you don't write erotic fiction, see "Smashwords Implements New Classifications for Erotic Fiction" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/09/smashwords-erotica.html>. Lot of good info there on BISAC codes, etc.

### **Fiction Words: 1514**

Nonfiction Words: 620 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2134

### **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861  
Day 11... 1514 words. Total words to date..... 27375

Total fiction words for the month..... 34456  
Total fiction words for the year..... 414076  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8820  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 145220  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 559296

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 657 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Science Alert](#), [Smashwords](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 9/17](#)**

[September 17, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Up a little earlier than usual this a.m. and was at the novel by 4. I did some cycling, then some writing into the dark, finishing a chapter and starting another chapter.

And that was both “into the dark” and in the dark at my outside desk. Something peaceful about the only light in the universe being my computer screen. Maybe I need to write an SF novel next. (grin)

It occurred to me this morning I might actually be writing two novels concurrently: a noir PI novel and a crime novel. Remember awhile back I mentioned this might be the first novel I’ve written that’s separated into “parts”?

Well so far, Parts 1 and 3 appear to be a crime novel. Part 2 wants to be a PI novel, albeit one working with the police. We’ll see. For now I’m just going to keep writing the story. After the smoke clears, I should be able to tell fairly easily whether the PI novel needs to be separated out.

I can write the noir hardboiled PI stuff, and I can write the crime stuff (that’s from the POV of the criminal[s]). I’m not so much on writing police procedurals. Been out of the business too long to include any level of detailed modern procedures required.

Anyway, it’s kind of exciting to know I might be writing both at the same time. I could even end up with two novels about the same crime, albeit one from the PI’s POV and one from the criminal’s POV.

As usual, I worked on the novel intermittently. Around 5:30, the hummingbirds reminded me I forgot to take their feeders down last night. The bats spilled it all out, so I refilled them. Annoying, but not as annoying as a hungry, ticked-off hummer buzzing your head at a b’jillion miles per hour.

Back to the novel, and sometime later I emptied the dishwasher and started filling it again, then revised my website a little. I removed a menu item, made the remaining menu items and the space between them a bit larger, and changed the colors.

Now it’s a little after 7 and I’m back to the novel again after a brief break to let my wife know I’m still here. (grin) We’ll probably walk in a little while, and then I’ll be at the novel off and on through the day.

Had a pretty amazing day. I didn’t write again until around 2, and hammered out a lot of words before I stopped because I was running out of time.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

If you’re interested in seeing some very old magazines, check out <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008893741?type%5B%5D=all&lookfor%5B%5D=Black%20Cat&ft=ft>.

## **Fiction Words: 3452**

Nonfiction Words: 450 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3902

## **Writing of Doctor Ramsey (novel, working title)**

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861  
Day 11... 1514 words. Total words to date..... 27375  
Day 12... 3452 words. Total words to date..... 30827

Total fiction words for the month..... 37908  
Total fiction words for the year..... 417528  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 145670  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 563198

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 658 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 9/17](#)**

[September 17, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Up a little earlier than usual this a.m. and was at the novel by 4. I did some cycling, then some writing into the dark, finishing a chapter and starting another chapter.

And that was both “into the dark” and in the dark at my outside desk. Something peaceful about the only light in the universe being my computer screen. Maybe I need to write an SF novel next. (grin)

It occurred to me this morning I might actually be writing two novels concurrently: a noir PI novel and a crime novel. Remember awhile back I mentioned this might be the first novel I've written that's separated into "parts"?

Well so far, Parts 1 and 3 appear to be a crime novel. Part 2 wants to be a PI novel, albeit one working with the police. We'll see. For now I'm just going to keep writing the story. After the smoke clears, I should be able to tell fairly easily whether the PI novel needs to be separated out.

I can write the noir hardboiled PI stuff, and I can write the crime stuff (that's from the POV of the criminal[s]). I'm not so much on writing police procedurals. Been out of the business too long to include any level of detailed modern procedures required.

Anyway, it's kind of exciting to know I might be writing both at the same time. I could even end up with two novels about the same crime, albeit one from the PI's POV and one from the criminal's POV.

As usual, I worked on the novel intermittently. Around 5:30, the hummingbirds reminded me I forgot to take their feeders down last night. The bats spilled it all out, so I refilled them. Annoying, but not as annoying as a hungry, ticked-off hummer buzzing your head at a billion miles per hour.

Back to the novel, and sometime later I emptied the dishwasher and started filling it again, then revised my website a little. I removed a menu item, made the remaining menu items and the space between them a bit larger, and changed the colors.

Now it's a little after 7 and I'm back to the novel again after a brief break to let my wife know I'm still here. (grin) We'll probably walk in a little while, and then I'll be at the novel off and on through the day.

Had a pretty amazing day. I didn't write again until around 2, and hammered out a lot of words before I stopped because I was running out of time.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

If you're interested in seeing some very old magazines, check out <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008893741?type%5B%5D=all&lookfor%5B%5D=Black%20Cat&ft=ft>.

**Fiction Words: 3452**

Nonfiction Words: 450 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3902

**Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861  
Day 11... 1514 words. Total words to date..... 27375  
Day 12... 3452 words. Total words to date..... 30827

Total fiction words for the month..... 37908  
Total fiction words for the year..... 417528  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 145670  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 563198

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 658 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 9/18](#)

[September 18, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Rolled out considerably early this morning, yet two hours later I'm still reading and toying with this thing. I even wrote a topic based on the article on Comic Sans typeface referenced in "Of Interest."

Then I remembered that a longer, more well-thought-out version will hit the big blog on October 3, so I'll wait.

Well, my eyes are a little fuzzy this morning for some reason. I've tried polarized (brown) shades, my regular grey-tinted glasses, and a cheap pair of flip-up blue blockers I bought on eBay.

The last few days my eyes haven't been bad, but for some reason today they're giving me fits. So we'll see what I can get done.

After email and FB, just doing things around the house until about 9. I went for a walk, just a bit over a mile. By the time I got back and settled in, my eyes were okay again.

So finally to the novel around 10. I took a wrong turn yesterday, so I spent a few hours cycling through (off and on) and moving bits to the CUTS section at the end of the document.

Usually I add words when I cycle. Today I'm taking words out. Well, it'll be what it'll be. I'm just enjoying the process, and as I keep telling myself, every novel writes differently.

So I added only around 500 new words by about 1. Hey, there are days like that. Anyway, I think all the adjustments are done. I'm starting a new scene soon, so things should pick up.

Uh, no such luck. Not today. I had a timeline problem and a bunch of stuff moved up one full day.

So I'm adjusting another chapter, and then maybe writing another scene. Or not. Overall it's probably not going to be a very productive day. On the other hand, it's already been a pretty productive week. (grin)

Well, I hoped to hit at least 2000 words today, but it's not going to happen. Still a pretty good day.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Especially if you design your own covers, see "Hate Comic Sans?" at <https://blog.prototypr.io/you-hate-comic-sans-you-dont-know-anything-about-typography-5133fbd4c8c4>. There are a few gems in this that you need to know.

See "What the "Book People" Won't Tell You" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/09/17/book-people-wont-tell-print-dead/>.

See "David Sarnoff Library ... Images" at <http://digital.hagley.org/>.

Via Science Alert, see "BREAKING: Light Has Been Stored as Sound..." at <http://www.sciencealert.com/breaking-light-was-just-stored-as-sound-for-the-first-time-ever/>.

## **Fiction Words: 1747**

Nonfiction Words: 400 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2147

**Writing of Doctor Ramsey** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861  
Day 11... 1514 words. Total words to date..... 27375  
Day 12... 3452 words. Total words to date..... 30827  
Day 13... 1747 words. Total words to date..... 32574

Total fiction words for the month..... 39655  
Total fiction words for the year..... 419275  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9670  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 146070  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 565345

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 659 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Science Alert](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 9/19**

[September 19, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

For awhile, occasionally I've included links to articles on Science Alert. Recently I've come to believe it's more of a populist rag with sensational, click-bait headlines than a valid source of stimulating information.

So I looked around.

If you're interested in space and science, try <https://www.space.com/>. If it looks interesting to you, you can sign up for any or all of three separate newsletters:

Space.com newsletter, headlines about the space program, space tourism and more.

LiveScience newsletter, the day's science news covering space, animals, health, environment, technology and history.

TechNewsDaily newsletter, technology news and information for non-geeks.

If you're interested in exploring our own solar system, I recommend Solar System Exploration at <https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/>. I didn't see a way to subscribe, so I'll be visiting this one regularly.

And finally, you can find all things NASA at <https://www.nasa.gov/>.

All three of these are listed with the subheading Science under Writers' Resources in the left sidebar of my website.

If you haven't visited in awhile, that would be a good place for you to explore too. A lot of great stuff there. Just sayin'.

\*\*\*

An early trip to the grocery for stuff for supper tonight, then home. But I spent a lot of time just playing, on my website, then on FB.

Finally to the writing around 10. For at least the first part of the writing day, it will be the same process I was following yesterday.

Well, when I get to the novel it will be the same. (grin) I spent the next hour and a half writing a nonfiction article called "On Addiction." I published it as a note on Facebook.

I've decided I have to give up smoking cigars, and I decided to make the decision public so it will maybe help other addicts too. If you don't do Facebook and you'd like a copy, send me an email.

In fact, a little later I think I'll come up with a cover and distribute it to Smashwords, Amazon and D2D as a free publication. I'll also add it to my main website as a page under the Free Stuff tab.

Now, a little before noon, I'm finally opening the novel. I'll be doing more adjusting and stitching together, so I expect a low word count for today.

But that's all right. Just the way this one's going together. And I have a feeling once the stitching is finished and I have the timeline right, it'll be a race to the finish.

It's almost 2 p.m. now. I think a lot of the stitching is finished, and I've added only about 200 words. That's good, though, because I didn't have to stitch much. (grin)

I also think I'm going to have to cycle all the way from the beginning and read through to get back into the flow of the story.

Welp, I always feel like crap when I don't get much writing done. I did a ton today but very little was in new fiction words. There's (almost) always tomorrow.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Guy, see "Where Crime Fiction Meets the Talmud" at <https://electricliterature.com/where-crime-fiction-meets-the-talmud-6f62214a5da8>.

Articles to titillate the imagination. See LiveScience at <https://www.livescience.com/>.

More articles to titillate the imagination. See Space.com at <https://www.space.com/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1012**

Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal) 1230 ("On Addiction")

So total words for the day: 2790

### **Writing of Current Novel** (novel, working title)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861  
Day 11... 1514 words. Total words to date..... 27375  
Day 12... 3452 words. Total words to date..... 30827  
Day 13... 1747 words. Total words to date..... 32574  
Day 14... 1012 words. Total words to date..... 33586

Total fiction words for the month..... 40667  
Total fiction words for the year..... 420287  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11450  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 147850  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 568137

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 660 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	26
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 9/20](#)

[September 20, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I had a copyediting job come in, so I decided I'll work on that during the early morning hours. I seem to do most of my own writing in the late morning and early afternoon anyway.

Worked on the copyedit (an excellent memoir) for a few hours, then to the repair shop to pick up my no-longer-busted lawnmower, then back here.

I should have gone straight to the novel, but I didn't. I played with creating a new meme that has a half-crazy pic of yours truly. I posted it to Facebook.

That was fun. Now to fetch some iced tea, then to the novel. It's not quite 10:30.

(I like that word, "fetch." It's an Auld English word that, roughly translated, means "Hey, brang me some'a that!" Or maybe not.)

Well, I sat down, looked at the novel, got up and went out to mow the back yard. And now it's 11:30. (grin)

### **TOPIC: Process Stuff**

This isn't really a planned topic, but I thought it might make a good topic for some of you.

Um, realized I hadn't put together a reverse outline for this thing. No wonder I was getting lost. So I spent the next 40 minutes glancing through chapter starts and ends plus any significant events and created two-thirds of a reverse outline.

And a glaring error popped out at me. The chapters go from Friday to Saturday, then back to Friday, then to Sunday. So more shifting of components is in my future. Very weird novel.

Took a brief break to fill the mower with gas, then back here to finish the reverse outline. Then I'll read over it as a whole document and maybe start rearranging some things in the timeline.

Finally started putting new words down at 1:30. It doesn't look like a lot, but MAN did I get a lot done today! And the novel's back on track.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Via The Digital Reader, see Anne Allen's "Want to Increase Your Blog Readership? Kill that Popup!" at <http://annerallen.com/2017/09/increase-blog-readership-kill-popup/>.

Via The Digital Reader, see "Hyphens, Em Dashes, En Dashes—Everything You Need to Know" at <https://www.thebookdesigner.com/2017/09/hyphens-em-dashes-en-dashes-everything-need-know/>.

## Fiction Words: 1149

Nonfiction Words: 370 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1519

## Writing of Loose Ends (novel)

Day 1..... 1781 words. Total words to date..... 1781  
Day 2..... 2678 words. Total words to date..... 4459  
Day 3..... 1142 words. Total words to date..... 5601  
Day 4..... 2460 words. Total words to date..... 8061  
Day 5..... 1302 words. Total words to date..... 9363  
Day 6..... 3182 words. Total words to date..... 12545  
Day 7..... 3775 words. Total words to date..... 16320  
Day 8..... 3147 words. Total words to date..... 19467  
Day 9..... 2780 words. Total words to date..... 22247  
Day 10... 3614 words. Total words to date..... 25861  
Day 11... 1514 words. Total words to date..... 27375  
Day 12... 3452 words. Total words to date..... 30827  
Day 13... 1747 words. Total words to date..... 32574  
Day 14... 1012 words. Total words to date..... 33586  
Day 15... 1149 words. Total words to date..... 34735

Total fiction words for the month..... 41816  
Total fiction words for the year..... 421436  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11820  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 148220  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 569656

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 661 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Reverse Outline](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, 9/21**

[September 21, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Up a little late this morning. I'll work on the edit for awhile, then on the yard for awhile, then maybe go play with the novel.

Edited 'til about 8:20, then mowed the front (north) yard and around the north and east sides outside the fence.

Back to the edit a little after 9 while I'm cooling down from doing actual work. (grin) Also running a couple loads of laundry.

Worked on the edit until 10, and now off to fold laundry and put another load in the dryer. While that was working, I mowed a little more, finished the yard. Then it was time to fold another load and put it away.

Now it's almost 1 p.m. and I've been basically screwing off for the past couple of hours. I was reading something on FB and it annoyed me. One of those "why do I bother doing what I do" moments.

Anyway, I've decided today will be a nonwriting day. I'll spend the balance of the day editing a truly excellent memoir and come back fresh tomorrow.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, see "How to Prevent Every Writer's Worst Nightmare" at <https://thewritelife.com/losing-your-writing/>.

Via Science Alert, you can now create your own nuclear blast scenario at <http://nuclearsecrecy.com/nukemap/>.

At the KillZone blog, James Scott Bell talks discusses "How to Cure Mid-Novel Sag" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/09/how-to-cure-mid-novel-sag.html>. As for me, I make sure I have a reverse outline (or I create one) and then I Write the Next Sentence.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 250 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 250

## Writing of Loose Ends (novel)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735

Day 16... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 41816

Total fiction words for the year..... 421436

Total nonfiction words for the month... 12070

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 148470

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 569906

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 662 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 9/22](#)

[September 22, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### Hey Folks,

Rolled out on time this morning, then spent an enjoyable hour or so talking via email with my young granddaughter, Taylor.

By the way, just in time for my topic today (see below) DWS is finally back to busting myths with another Killing the Sacred Cows chapter. It's in "Of Interest" today.

### Topic: Lying to Readers

It's annoying when Dean Wesley Smith is SO right on everything he says. Well, on most things. He does occasionally say he's going to make me angry when he's busting some idiotic myth, but that has yet to happen.

But on the other stuff, he's always right. Always. At least so far.

And it always annoys me a little. Especially on stuff that I initially believe is bunk and later come to learn (through being beaten to a pulp, and therefore gaining enlightenment) is true after all.

My most recent annoyance wasn't with DWS, but it was based on something I read in his blog a long time ago.

He wrote (paraphrasing), If you want readers to value your work (meaning “buy your books”) you have to lie to them.

I’ve come to understand that’s true.

Readers by the droves automatically assume, sight unseen, that a novel that’s written in a month or two or three is not worth reading.

As you know, I don’t post my numbers as some sort of competition; I do it to illustrate what’s possible if a writer simply spends time in the chair.

If I had it to do over, I wouldn’t tell anyone how quickly I go from the title to “the end” when I write a novel. And I would revert to using my personas and/or pen names.

Given that I write, on average, 12 novels and scores of short stories per year, I would have at least 12 different pseudonyms for novels and probably three or four times that many for short fiction.

Why? Because of math.

As simply EVERYbody knows, it takes at LEAST a year to turn out a quality novel. And a 2- or 3-year, labor-intensive process will result in an even better novel. Hence, at least 12 pseudonyms for novels.

With those pseudonyms, I could still turn out a novel every month, but each pseudonym would publish only one novel per year (or less frequently).

Gervasio Arrancado would release a new magic realism novel every January. Nick Porter would release a new noir novel every February. Ray Sevareid would release a new SF novel every March. Eric Stringer, bless his heart, would release a new horror/psychological-suspense novel every April. See where I’m going with this?

And if I had 36 novel pseudonyms, each one would turn out one novel every THREE years. Get the idea?

It’s all in the math.

I write, on average, 1000 polished, ready-to-publish words per hour. That a crawling-on-all-fours 17 words per minute. It gives me plenty of time to find just the right word from the thesaurus (not ‘green stuff on a rock’ but lichen). It gives me plenty of time to jump online to find out the name of that particular cross street on San Antonio Drive in downtown El Paso in 1887.

So say it takes me 100 hours to write a 100,000 word novel.

Okay, so if it takes me 3 years to write a novel and I take two days off every week and two weeks off every year for vacation, that’s 150 weeks or (with two days off per week) 750 days.

So to write a 100,000 word novel in 3 years, I'd have to write an average of 134 words per day. (I refuse to talk about rewriting. Writers are paid to write, not to rewrite. They are paid per word, or per haps, not per endless word-erasure-word-erasure-word.)

To write the same 100,000 word novel in only 1 year, I'd have to write at a blazing-fast rate of 400 words per day.

Well, that wouldn't be so bad, I guess. At least that's almost a whole half-hour workday 5 days per week.

But to write the same 100,000 word novel in a 30-day MONTH (4.285 weeks) of 5-day weeks, I'd have to develop an actual work ethic.

I'd have to sit at my laptop and churn out 4,668 words every day for 21.425 days. Still less than a 5-hour workday. And still only 5 days a week.

And many MANY of my novels are in the 25,000 to 70,000 word range. My average is around 60,000 words.

In case you're wondering, for a short novel of 25,000 words I'd have to write 34 words per day over 3 years or 100 words per day over a year.

For my average novel length of 60,000 words, I'd have to write 80 words per day over 3 years or (Oh No!) 240 words per day over a year. And if I write that novel in a month, I have to actually write 2800 words per 5-day week. Three hours per day.

Again, it all boils down to math. But unfortunately, so does reader opinion. So you have to lie to them.

I'm a reasonable guy. It's true that I tell lies for a living. Still, I don't like the dishonest feeling of telling someone it took me much longer to write something than it actually took.

So tell me again why, if I churn out a novel over a 3-year period it "just might be a masterpiece"; if it takes "only" a year, I'm rushing it but it "still might be worth a look."

But if I write the SAME 60,000 words in one month or less, it isn't worth the time it takes to sniff and turn up a nose.

Sigh.

Okay, so if you're reading this, and if you're young (meaning you expect to turn out novels for at least another 10 years or so), and if you have a work-ethic AT ALL, get yourself a stack of pseudonyms.

Just sayin'.

\*\*\*

I did very little in the early morning other than some Internet stuff and writing the masterpiece topic above (grin, took all of a half-hour), then moved straight to the novel around 9.

In a little over 3 hours, I read the whole thing through, skimming, to correct one more problem, an awkward metaphor that wasn't working for me. In all that time, I added around 400 words.

Well, something happened to me today that has never happened before on a novel. Sometimes I'll enjoy writing a short story so much that I really like the story as a reader. So I read it again, later.

That happened today with this novel. As I was reading through it, I was pulled in and actually enjoyed it. So I kept going.

So that's all the writing I did today. Just little bits here and there. Welp, every novel writes differently.

And tomorrow might be a light day too. I have to go to Sierra Vista tomorrow morning. We'll see what shakes out.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See "Beta Readers Help You" at <http://www.deanwesleymith.com/killing-the-sacred-cows-of-publishing-beta-readers-help-you/>.

Via The Digital Reader, see Kris Rusch's "I Spent Decades Developing My IP" at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/09/20/business-musings-i-spent-decades-developing-my-ip-contractsdealbreakers/>. Seriously, this is a must-read.

Some good stuff on Linda Maye Adams' blog today. She does an "around the web" thing each week. Check it out at <http://lindamayeadams.com/>.

## Fiction Words: 1146

Nonfiction Words: 1223 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2369

## Writing of Loose Ends (novel, working title)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735

Day 16... 1146 words. Total words to date..... 35881

Total fiction words for the month..... 42962

Total fiction words for the year..... 422582

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13293  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 149693  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 572275

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 663 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 9/23](#)

[September 23, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Rolled out a little late this morning even though I went to bed on time. Catching up, I guess.

I actually wrote a little on the novel (after breakfast the usual early morning wandering around the Internet), but my wife's ready to head for SV soon, so it's a shower and a shave and be back in a bit.

Well, "a bit" turned into about five hours. Then Internet to square away a botched order, etc. Finally back to the novel at 1:40.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

I recommend reading the comments on "Beta Readers" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/killing-the-sacred-cows-of-publishing-beta-readers-help-you/#comments/>.

And do see "Well, That Was Fun" at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/well-that-was-fun/>. It's a very short continuation of yesterday's post.

For any SF writers out or would-be moon colonists out there, see "What is Space 4.0?" at [http://www.esa.int/About\\_Us/Ministerial\\_Council\\_2016/What\\_is\\_space\\_4.0](http://www.esa.int/About_Us/Ministerial_Council_2016/What_is_space_4.0). Tons of interesting links there too.

And via The Passive Voice, see "Starting Your Day on the Internet Is Damaging Your Brain" (grin) at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/09/starting-your-day-on-the-internet-is->

[damaging-your-brain/](#). You can click through but The Passive Guy's take on the article is excellent. NOTE: I DID find this interesting enough to consider altering my early morning ritual. If you read it, you'll know what I'm talking about.

Also via TPV, see "Danielle Steel's Desk Is Unlike Anything You've Ever Seen" at <https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2017/09/danielle-steels-desk-is-unlike-anything-youve-ever-seen>.

### **Fiction Words: 1102**

Nonfiction Words: 220 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1322

### **Writing of Loose Ends** (novel, working title)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735

Day 16... 1146 words. Total words to date..... 35881

Day 17... 1102 words. Total words to date..... 36983

Total fiction words for the month..... 44064

Total fiction words for the year..... 423684

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13513

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 149913

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 573597

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 664 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, 9/24](#)**

[September 24, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Rolled out on time this morning, spent some time waking up, then hammered out around 1500 words by about 7:30. Some time off for family stuff now, and back to the novel later in the day.

Around 10, back to the novel.

Another break around 11, then some baseball and back to the novel. Turned out to be a pretty good day, especially for a Sunday.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

More comments on Dean's Sacred Cows post at <http://www.deanwesleysmith.com/killing-the-sacred-cows-of-publishing-beta-readers-help-you/#comments>. To see the new stuff, scroll down to K. Vale Nagle.

Via The Passive Voice, see "7 Free Online Tools for Writers and Authors" at <http://www.digitalbookworld.com/2017/7-free-online-tools-for-writers-and-authors/>. (I haven't checked this personally yet.)

### **Fiction Words: 3723**

Nonfiction Words: 120 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3843

### **Writing of Loose Ends** (novel, working title)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735

Day 16... 1146 words. Total words to date..... 35881

Day 17... 1102 words. Total words to date..... 36983

Day 18... 3723 words. Total words to date..... 40706

Total fiction words for the month..... 47787

Total fiction words for the year..... 427407

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13633

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 150033

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 577440

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 665 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 9/25](#)**

[September 25, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

“Many would-be novelists never get around to writing a novel for the same reason nobody ever gets around to eating an elephant.

“Wrong focus. To eat an elephant, you have to take one bite at a time. Focus on the bite.

“It seems impossible to write a whole novel, but you can write a scene. So just write a scene. Then write another scene. Then write another one. Forget about writing a ‘novel.’ Lather, rinse, repeat.”

I posted that to FB this morning, spurred by my 15 year old granddaughter’s complaint (via email) that her teacher had assigned her to write “a 150 page story.”

Such an assignment forces the student to focus on the page count.

My granddaughter wrote, “I’ve written 984 words on my story so far, but it’s only 3 pages.”

Poor kid. Angry grandpa.

I suppose learning to pad a paper has its advantages.

Wait. No, it doesn’t.

\*\*\*

I have stories or novels in five bundles now. The latest is Without A Clue in the [Gumshoes Bundle](#). As the name implies, this bundle is all mysteries, all about detectives and the crimes they solve.

To see all the bundles my stuff is currently in, check the right sidebar at <http://HarveyStanbrough.com>.

\*\*\*

Rolled out a little late, and I’m back on the Internet, but learned a lot this morning, so it’s all right.

My wife looked out her window and noticed the neighbors’ horses were out, and one was growling at something out in the mesquites (probably the cattle out there).

So we went out and put them back in the corral, fed them, and secured the gate. Interesting start to the day.

After that, a lot of little niggling but necessary things to take care of. Finally to the novel at 10:30 a.m. Some cycling over the chapters I wrote yesterday first.

\*\*\*

Before she left, my wife reminded me I have a doc appointment in Tucson tomorrow. Gotta get the battery replaced in my pacemaker.

It occurred to me, I can recharge the battery in my phone and all sorts of other devices wirelessly, but for this I have to have invasive surgery. Reckon maybe the priorities are a little

skewed somewhere? (grin)

\*\*\*

This morning as I cycled back through the chapters I wrote yesterday and glanced over my reverse outline, I realized I have to enhance a character.

I almost wrote “add” a character, but the character himself is already in the book. I have to let him talk with me a bit, name himself, let me know what he does for a living (he’s old and wealthy), etc. All of that’s to bring him into the fold, so to speak.

That’ll take probably two more chapters earlier in the book. (Told you this one’s writing weird.) Anyway, either this guy or another guy who’s already developed in the book is the antagonist.

Then it’ll be a rush to the finish and I’ll be done.

Well, another light day for word count, though it doesn’t really reflect how much I accomplished today. (grin) But that’s all right. The novel still feels good.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

From The Digital Reader, see “The HTTPocalypse is coming – Is Your Website Ready?” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/09/24/httpocalypse-coming-website-ready/>.

Read This: “Michael Hyatt Has Something To Sell You” at <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2017/09/23/michael-hyatt-has-something-to-sell-you/>.

## Fiction Words: 1650

Nonfiction Words: 560 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2210

## Writing of Loose Ends (novel, working title)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735

Day 16... 1146 words. Total words to date..... 35881

Day 17... 1102 words. Total words to date..... 36983

Day 18... 3723 words. Total words to date..... 40706

Day 19... 1650 words. Total words to date..... 42356

Total fiction words for the month..... 49437

Total fiction words for the year..... 429057

Total nonfiction words for the month... 14193

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 150593

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 579650

The Daily Journal blog streak.....	666 days
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date.....	8
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	26
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Tuesday, 9/26**

[September 26, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I expected this to be a nonwriting day, frankly. But the subconscious mind is an amazing thing.

I knew I'd spend much of the day in Tucson today, so my characters woke me up early. I spent some time doing nothing, then moved to the novel at 4 a.m.

This morning so far I did a little cycling, then wrote, then basically recst two chapters (only about 1400 words). Each time through was in creative voice (no 'thoughts' given to sentence structure, what to add or omit, stuff like that).

If I had the whole day to play (not sitting all day, but coming back all day) I probably would finish the novel today. But I don't. So probably the novel will finish tomorrow.

I'm not going to try to push anything, so I'll post this now. Leaving for Tucson in about an hour.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

From a friend, see "139 Old Norse Words That Invaded The English Language" at <https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/139-norse-words>.

### **Fiction Words: 1422**

Nonfiction Words: 170 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1592

### **Writing of Loose Ends** (novel, working title)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735

Day 16... 1146 words. Total words to date..... 35881

Day 17... 1102 words. Total words to date..... 36983

Day 18... 3723 words. Total words to date..... 40706  
Day 19... 1650 words. Total words to date..... 42356  
Day 20... 1422 words. Total words to date..... 43778

Total fiction words for the month..... 50859  
Total fiction words for the year..... 430479  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14363  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 150763  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 581242

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 667 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 9/27](#)**

[September 27, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

First, for any veterans out there, beginning on November 11, 2017, the online Exchange System (PX) is open to all veterans who served honorably regardless of length of service.

Note that this is only the ONLINE exchange. Still, they lists tons of stuff, and it isn't all high-ticket merchandise. Great discounts.

To qualify, visit <https://www.shopmyexchange.com/veterans>. Again, you don't have to have a current ID card, and you don't have to have retired.

\*\*\*

Also too important to be shuffled down to the "Of Interest" section...

Much as I (and other amateur photogs) like to think we can always take pics that are good enough for our book covers, that just isn't always the case. (grin) At least in my case.

Before this, I've bought cover photos from sites like Bigstock.com and Canstockphoto.com. I paid only a pittance since I had a subscription each time(around 56 cents per pic), but Free beats a pittance every time.

Now, via The Digital Reader, comes “Fifteen Free stock photo sites that will keep your website sizzling” at <http://valiantchickendigital.com/blog/15-free-stock-photo-sites-will-website-sizzling/>.

Don't let the “keep your website sizzling” admonition fool you. Many of these are cover-quality photos. Some are operated by pay sites, but the pics are still free on the specific free sites.

Some also are public domain picture sites. Be sure to read the terms of use/service on each site before you join.

Hey, if you find even one good cover pic, the time you spend searching will have paid for itself. And even if you don't do your own covers, you can get TONS of story ideas from checking out stock photos.

In the first half-hour after I started searching through just one site, I had added around a dozen prospective cover pics to “lightbox” to download later. Just sayin'.

\*\*\*

Rolled out late this morning, intentionally. I had a Negra Modelo (with lime!) with my enchiladas yesterday, and I'm not used to alcohol anymore. So I let it steep appropriately. (grin)

I won't get to the novel until around 9 this morning. There's a good chance I'll finish it today, though I kind of hope the characters come up with a twist that keeps the story running a little longer. We'll see.

Finally to the novel a little after 9:30.

Writing, a few chores and moving the water around on the yard. At 2000 words so far today I'm rapidly approaching the ending. Taking a lunch break at 12:15.

At 12:45, I think I know the ending now. If so, it shocked the tar out of me. (grin)

I'm always trying to learn more. Because I like the way he teaches and because much of what he says/writes makes sense to me, I ordered three of James Scott Bell's Kindle ebooks today: Voice: The Secret Power of Great Writing, Marketing for Writers Who Hate Marketing, and How to write Dazzling Dialogue.

Yeah, I think I'm pretty good at dialogue. But I want to see whether maybe there's something I'm missing.

I was headed back to the novel at 2 p.m., but I think I'll wait and finish it tomorrow. I have a few more chores to do, and frankly I'm a little out of sorts today.

Either way, I'm kind of excited.

This will be my 27th novel, and it will have been written all in this month. So in the 9th month, I will have written 9 novels on the year. Woohoo!

Maybe I ought to read Bell's marketing book first, eh?

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

For what it's worth, see "The Weapon of Surprise" by James Scott Bell at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/09/the-weapon-of-surprise.html>.

### Fiction Words: 2108

Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2688

### Writing of Loose Ends (novel, working title)

Day 1 – 15..... Total words to date..... 34735  
Day 16... 1146 words. Total words to date..... 35881  
Day 17... 1102 words. Total words to date..... 36983  
Day 18... 3723 words. Total words to date..... 40706  
Day 19... 1650 words. Total words to date..... 42356  
Day 20... 1422 words. Total words to date..... 43778  
Day 21... 2108 words. Total words to date..... 45886

Total fiction words for the month..... 52967  
Total fiction words for the year..... 432587  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14943  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 151343  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 583932

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 668 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 8  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 26  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 9/29](#)

[September 29, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

Hey Folks,

Looks like I updated my website to include a page dedicated to bundles just in time. A new bundle started today.

I only have a short story in this one but still. (grin)

Well, I signed up this morning to support the restart of Pulphouse Fiction Magazine. There are some really cool “rewards” for pledging to the Kickstarter campaign.

I won’t tell you which one I pledged, but I do encourage you to at least go take a look at the various offerings. You can find those at

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/403649867/pulphouse-fiction-magazine>.

\*\*\*

On a day when I could as easily have slept-in until 4 or even 5, I rolled out on time. Go figure. The little girl likes going outside early, so....

\*\*\*

On her blog, Linda Maye Adams referenced an article that seems to prove Hemingway did not write the original six-word short story that many claim he wrote. You can see the proffered “proof” at <https://www.thevintagenews.com/2017/09/24/for-sale-baby-shoes-never-worn-tracing-the-history-of-the-shortest-story-ever-told/>.

I choose to believe he wrote the story. The fact that it closely resembles advertisements that were published earlier doesn’t matter to me in the slightest. To paraphrase Uncle Hub from Secondhand Lions, I believe he wrote it simply because it’s one of those things that are worth believing in. (grin)

\*\*\*

Smith’s Monthly is a monthly magazine in both ebook and print in which DWS fills every issue with his own work: a full novel, a novel serialization, short fiction and poetry.

And apparently he has a boatload of subscribers. Which means he’s not only filling the magazine, but he’s *accountable to subscribers* for filling the magazine.

Ever since I first heard of that insanity, I’ve wondered what it would be like to actually fill a magazine with my own work every month.

After all, I started this Journal to help increase my productivity by making myself accountable to others. (And Marines, as it turns out, need a place to report.)

Don’t worry. I’m not going to start a monthly magazine and go begging for subscribers.

But in this lax time after I just finished a novel, I’m using that as a model to think up a really good challenge for myself.

One that won't create unnecessary pressure, but one that pushes me to produce and one for which I can duplicate the results month after month to create a streak.

Stay tuned.

Well, an old friend dropped by today. We enjoyed a good visit. No writing today, and no regrets.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

For those of you who are bent that way, take a look at StoryShop (Lite), a new free writing tool that allegedly removes all distractions and better enables you to write. You can see it at <https://storyshop.io/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 450 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 450

Writing of (novel)

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 54526  
Total fiction words for the year..... 434146  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15693  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 152093  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 586239

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 670 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 9/30](#)

[September 30, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Rolled out slightly after 3 this morning and went straight to email and then Facebook.

As a result of one article in one of the several e-newsletters I receive each morning, I found a topic.

My reading and then writing the topic below formed the start for the day.

We have a trip planned to Sierra Vista a little later this morning. Between now and then, I hope to write a bit of fiction.

### **Topic: Try And vs. Try To**

First, a disclaimer — When people are speaking in real life (or characters in dialogue in a fiction) and they use the “try and” structure as a colloquialism, it doesn’t bother me.

In fact, I usually don’t even notice. If I do notice, I assume the structure is necessary to that person’s (or character’s) manner of speech.

In a real life conversation, the usage is unintentional.

In fiction, the usage is usually intentional as it speaks subliminally to the character’s level of education and/or ignorance.

But when the structure appears in a nonfiction article or book, it slaps me right out of the topic. Most of the time I stop reading.

That happened this morning.

I was reading “Astronauts Are Roasting B.o.B’s Flat Earth Satellite And It’s Amazing” by Jacinta Bowler. Here’s the offensive passage:

“[B.o.B] ... is currently crowdfunding to TRY AND get a satellite out to space....” (emphasis added)

How much credibility does the author really have if she doesn’t know the difference?

The article didn’t allow comments. If it had, I would have left one.

My comment might have been a snarky “Try *and*? Really?”

Or perhaps the more specific and illustrative “Your ‘try and’ grabbed me and tossed me right out of your article. I hope you’ll ‘try to’ do better next time.”

I like to think I’d have left the second comment instead of the first. Maybe it would help this hapless writer.

Am I being nitpicky? Not really. It wasn’t like I was looking for a fight. Shrug. I just wanted to read the article.

The author's use of the phrase was her choice. It was a result of her ignorance, not my reading. It affected me so strongly I was unable to continue reading the article.

Fortunately, there was an article on the same topic by a different author in a different newsletter. I read it all the way through and never noticed what sort of grammar or syntax the author was using.

There's a lesson here for fiction writers.

Readers don't read critically. They don't read for words or phrases or sentence structure. They read for Story. They read to be entertained.

We all have our little writing quirks. When you're fortunate enough to have one pointed out, consider it and learn from it.

If readers are often suddenly shoved out of your story by boredom or an awkward construction, it's your fault, not theirs.

Again, readers only want to read and be entertained.

Whether they read YOUR work is important only to you. So the question you have to answer is this: How important is it?

\*\*\*

I didn't get enough done to cause a ripple in a pond before we left. We were gone longer than we expected, and when I got back, I worked on my website. Basically, I changed the home page. Check it out at [HarveyStanbrough.com](http://HarveyStanbrough.com).

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Mars Colonization in Five Years? See <https://www.livescience.com/60560-elon-musk-spacex-fly-people-to-mars-2024.html>.

Here's one on Musk's vision for both the moon and Mars: <https://www.space.com/38310-elon-musk-moon-base-mars-city-images.html>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 590 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 590

Writing of (novel)

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 54526  
Total fiction words for the year..... 434146  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 16283  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 152683  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 586829

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 671 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Live Science](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Space.com](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 10/1](#)

[October 1, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Hmmm. Strange things going on with the Internet lately. Sites that have been fine for years suddenly not working. Then a few minutes later, they're fine again.

I've encountered problems with some of the plugins on my own site, DWS has encountered several problems recently, and other sites I visit regularly have experienced glitches of various levels of severity.

Just wondering, is anyone else seeing these problems? At this point, I'm only hoping I can access hestanbrough.com (The Daily Journal) when it's time to post today's edition. It's already blanked out on me three times this morning. (grin)

Of course, my security-bent mind goes immediately to hoping some nation or group that's hostile to the US isn't behind it.

I also have heard recently about flares on the sun (sorry, but "sunflares" are those pretty flowers with the bright yellow petals) and how those are currently affecting electronics of all sorts on Earth. (For the most relevant events, see <https://www.spaceweatherlive.com/en/news> if you are able.)

The bottom line is, what do you do if the Big Plug we've all come (more or less) to rely on is suddenly kicked out of the wall?

\*\*\*

I wrote a start that might go somewhere someday. I was “trying” to write a short story, I think, but as I wrote it felt bigger than that. And I wasn’t in the mood to live with that particular topic for longer than a day. So I’ll sideline it.

Then I started another PI novel. I’m really enjoying writing those right now. I got a good opening written, then decided to take the rest of the day to watch a baseball game. My main goal was to write fiction on the first day of the month. (grin) I hate starting a month with a goose egg.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See “Herd Your Cats” at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/10/herd-your-cats.html>.

From Sam Turner, see “Hemingway’s First Short Story Found in Key West” at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/29/books/hemingway-first-story-found-in-florida.html>.

### **Fiction Words: 2505**

Nonfiction Words: 340 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2845

Writing of “Untitled Start” (short story or novel)

Day 1..... 1425 words. Total words to date..... 1425

**Writing of “Pulp Novel 5” (a Stern Richards novel)**

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Total fiction words for the month..... 2505

Total fiction words for the year..... 436651

Total nonfiction words for the month... 340

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 153023

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 589674

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 672 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Hemingway](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 10/2](#)**

[October 2, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## **Hey Folks,**

First and foremost, my heart goes out to the victims of the shooting in Las Vegas, and my unbridled rage to the shooter. Damn him.

Rolled out way late this morning. Almost 5 a.m. That's a couple of hours late for me. Partly though it was a choice. As I work toward snapping off my cigar-smoking habit at the end of this week, the later I get up the easier it will be to smoke fewer cigars per day so my current stash will last through Friday.

I can't say I'll be sorry to see the little monsters go. Since I made the decision over a week ago to stop being so selfish, I've enjoyed exactly two of the several cigars I smoked.

The rest tasted, as one friend so wittily described them, like "a rolled up batch of stinkweed held together with duct tape and bailing wire." (Thanks, DB.)

\*\*\*

Got a little writing done this morning before 8 a.m. on yet another fiction that sprang hard into my head. It ricocheted around awhile, propelled by a very light discussion of religion (not spirituality) and belief vs. truth on Facebook.

Don't know whether the opening I wrote will go anywhere. It isn't any easier playing God in a fiction than it is in real life. (Been there, done that, found it way too much responsibility.)

But it was 800 words of sheer fun (see "God Piece" below). The good news is, if it goes anywhere at all, it'll be a novel. Far too much to play with to be a short story. Or a short anything.

In fact, I don't think I could finish it in a month, so I'll probably save it for sometime next year.

In the meantime, I'll push it to the side and get back to the for-sure PI humor-noir novel I started yesterday. Onward.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader and Open Culture, at "the Flickr account PhotosNormandie, you can browse and search over 4,300 high resolution photographs from the pivotal Normandy campaign." See <https://www.flickr.com/photos/photosnormandie/with/37364227366/>. I'm not clear on whether some or all of these are in the public domain or otherwise royalty-free. Browsing some of them brought back memories of my time in the Corps.

Also see “People Are Weird About Books” (and I even left a couple of comments) at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/09/29/people-weird-books-attempts-improve-fix-books-web-browser-proves/>.

Via The Passive Voice, “Remove Watermarks Online?” is an interesting read. See <https://artlawjournal.com/watermarks/>.

Just for fun, if you think you know the “10 Commandments,” check <http://disinfo.com/2010/02/the-ten-commandments-we-always-see-arent-the-ten-commandments/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2967**

Nonfiction Words: 430 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3397

### **Writing of “Pulp Novel 5” (a Stern Richards novel)**

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

### **Writing of “God Piece”**

Day 1..... 0800 words. Total words to date..... 800

Total fiction words for the month..... 5472

Total fiction words for the year..... 439618

Total nonfiction words for the month... 770

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 153453

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 593071

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 673 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 10/3](#)**

[October 3, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Rolled out on time this morning and went through my usual routine, albeit in 47 degree weather. It wouldn't be bad, but there was a light breeze. Brrr.

For my first sojourn outside this morning I was in sweatpants, a long-sleeved thermal shirt, and a thick, hooded zip-up sweat shirt. (grin) It wasn't pretty, but it was dark, so....

And to think when I was living in Indiana I was running around outside without even a t-shirt on in 30 degree weather. Of course, I was wearing pants 'cause the cops get picky over stuff like that.

After making my rounds of the Internet, I read what I've written on the WIP thus far to my wife. She liked it, but then, that's part of her job. (grin)

I wrote for awhile, then broke away and wrote a blog post for the big blog. It will go live Friday. It's part of the expansion of the main site from a Writers' Resource to a Writer's Resource AND a Writer's Website.

Back to the novel at around 10:30.

Well, I hit a glitch. I won't talk about it here because I don't think doing so would help anyone else, but I'm temporarily stalled in the novel.

Way too early in the story for nonsense like this. I'm not worried about it, not to the point of fretting or anything. I have nine novels on the year, and I don't doubt that before the end of October I'll have 10 or 11.

But for the rest of today, I need to just forget about it.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Dean's "Working On Pricing Post" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/working-on-pricing-post/>.

## **Fiction Words: 1370**

Nonfiction Words: 890 (280 Journal, 610 main blog)

So total words for the day: 2260

## **Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)**

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Total fiction words for the month..... 6842

Total fiction words for the year..... 440988

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1660

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 154343  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 5953311

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 674 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Wednesday, 10/4](#)**

[October 4, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, this is a long post.

Awhile back, Nate Hoffelder of The Digital Reader mentioned that soon Google will begin prioritizing sites (in search results) that are secure (https vs. http). As a result, I was going to spend part of the day today converting my main website over to https.

But the more I read, the more I suspect SSL is primarily a necessity for monetized sites, which mine is not. Everything on the site itself is free, and anything that can be ordered goes through a secure site elsewhere: Amazon, B&N, PayPal, etc.

The cost involved in installing SSL myself isn't all that great, but it's a seemingly involved process that would take a professional web designer two to three hours. So it would probably take me three to four hours.

Then there's the fact that my site still hasn't migrated from my web host (ehost) to the new host (JustHost), to which ehost sold out. Therefore an SSL certificate is not currently available to me, so I can put off this process for awhile.

So the reason I wrote all of that: Does anyone out there have knowledge of SSL and converting a site from http to https? If so, please email me.

**Topic: Print (Paper) Books (a word to the wise)**

If it's important to you to put your books out in paper, you have to do so via POD (print on demand) unless you are extremely well-heeled and can afford to send an order (10,000 books or so) to an offset printer.

My choice for POD is CreateSpace. Always has been, always will be. Yes, it's an Amazon company. I don't care.

I pay a designer, Kat MaGee at <https://daringcreativedesigns.com/> to turn my covers into paper covers and to design the interior layout of my paper books. It costs me \$100 per book. It's an investment, and it's my only cost. CreateSpace costs nothing. In fact, Kat even uploads them to my CS account for me.

Awhile back, a friend told me he'd heard a speaker say "in public" that books published through CreateSpace are not available at Barnes & Noble and other brick and mortar stores. My poor BS Detector almost exploded.

That is a bald-faced lie. So if you hear that, disregard it.

To make your CreateSpace books available for order by brick and mortar stores, you have only to select Expanded Distribution on CreateSpace. You should also set the price so that you earn at least a \$2.00 royalty. (Yeah, that's a measly two dollars. Not a typo.)

The price will seem high to you, but that's because you devalue your own work and you're comparing trade paperbacks (your books) to mass produced mass-market paperbacks.

You can set your price too low, then order a trunkload and sell them yourself, but then you aren't concerned about whether they're in B&N anyway. So why not set the price to get Extended Distribution and then sell the ones in your trunk at a "substantial discount" (or not)?

Anyway, that speaker also recommended a printer called Ingram-Spark. That tells me she has an iron in the fire. A dog in the hunt. Maybe stock options. Hey, she might even own the place.

At any rate, Ingram-Spark is NOT affiliated with Ingram, the distributor, and shame on them for leaching off the Ingram name. I have a feeling it's just another scam aimed at writers.

Now, Ingram (the distributor) DOES have a printer in its family. The name of that printer is Lightning Source.

Lightning Source does pretty much the same thing CreateSpace does, but they charge a fee. CreateSpace does not. (CS does have paid services of which you can avail yourself, but there's no reason to.)

So if you want to publish your books to paper, I strongly recommend using CreateSpace. If you want to pay money to have your books published to paper, use Lightning Source.

CreateSpace puts out an excellent product. In my case, I publish to paper only so shoppers at Amazon, B&N, etc. can see and compare the print price with the ebook price. In other words, I use print books to drive ebook sales.

This sort of thing really annoys me. When someone sets herself up as an authority figure and then delivers intentionally misleading information, it makes me wanna chew wheels and spit nails.

If I ever attend an event where she says that in public, you can bet I will call her on it. Also in public.

### **A Brief Factoid**

To earn only \$1,000,000 (ONE million dollars) in a single year, you would have to work 365 days, 16 hours per day (that 5840 hours). And you would have to earn \$171.23 per hour.

Think about that the next time you hear a professional baseball player gripe about the “long season” or the next time you see an NFL or NBA player disrespect the very nation that enables them to be so rich.

(And we can’t really cite “Freedom of Speech” because they aren’t allowed to speak their mind on myriad other topics.)

\*\*\*

**Re my WIP**, I don’t have the patience I used to have. My strongest urge is to simply drop it and move on to something else.

But I really like the main character.

So this morning I’m going to review some notes, then read over the WIP from the beginning and try to discern where it took a wrong turn into a dead end.

My main problem is that I’m not trusting the process. Been there before. I’m allowing things I’ve learned recently (conscious mind) to leach into the writing so that I’m watching for those things (again, conscious mind) and allowing the story to grind to a halt as I add them.

So there y’go. Again I find myself wanting to get back to the basics of writing. Writing a story like this is so much fun that grinding to a halt is really annoying.

So that will be today. It’s currently 6:15 a.m. We’ll see how the day turns out.

\*\*\*

Well, by 10 (while doing several other things) I went back through some of the videos of a recent workshop and even added to my notes, then went over the more pertinent notes.

I also wrote a topic for tomorrow (I’ll count those words tomorrow) and mentioned I’m going to switch back over to my dedicated writing computer and why.

I made the switch today, then had to wait for Dropbox to sync about a b'jillion files. Now it's almost 1 p.m. and I'm just about to begin reading over my WIP to see where it slipped off the deep end.

Oh wow. I found the problem. Major, *major* critical mind stuff. So I'm cutting a lot. And I don't really care. I'm just glad I was able to save this WIP and especially this character. (grin)

I'm also writing a little, but I doubt the new stuff will add up to more than a few hundred words. It'll take a couple more hours to finish going over this, and that's about all the time I have left in the day.

Okay, so officially I'm calling today a nonwriting day. I'll include any new writing with tomorrow's count.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

To stir thought, see "What's the Best Way...?" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/03/whats-best-way-create-distraction-free-writing-environment/>.

See "Found: A Lost Dictionary of Slang..." at <http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/anthony-burgess-slang-dictionary>. I started a dictionary myself years ago and have added to it ever since, one akin to Ambrose Bierce's The Devil's Dictionary.

From Space.com, see "Best Space Books and Sci-Fi" at <https://www.space.com/28973-best-space-books.html>. They have five separate lists, including one of the best SF. I'm not on it. Oh darn. (grin) But the four nonfiction lists look pretty good. I added four new links to my website that begin with "Books" under Writers' Resources.

Two of Dean's posts made the cut today. See "Novel Structure Workshop Announced" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/novel-structure-workshop-announced/> and "One Time Science Fiction Cover Branding Workshop" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/one-time-science-fiction-cover-branding-workshop/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1320 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1320

### **Writing of "Pulp Novel 5" (a Stern Richards novel)**

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 6842  
Total fiction words for the year..... 440988  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2980  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 155663  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 596651

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 675 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, 10/5](#)**

[October 5, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, another long post today. Sorry about that. (grin)

It turns out I wrote quite a bit yesterday, considering. I revised the total yesterday before the Journal posted, and today's numbers are current. I don't remember the last time I had such a great day as yesterday. It's like someone turned on a light.

One thing I realized was that my current WIP isn't "just" a PI-noir novel but a PI-noir suspense novel. That's what it was wanting to be, and that's where I took the wrong turn.

### **Topic: Writing Environment**

The post by Nate Hoffelder in "Of Interest" yesterday keyed this post. It started me thinking (again) about my own writing environment.

As most of you know, I like the idea of a dedicated writing computer without Internet, games, etc. Why? Because when you sit down at a computer that's dedicated to your fiction, it keys your subconscious that it's time to play.

But when writing fiction I also enjoy the ease of hopping online for a moment to check a reference, etc. And I am able to do that without being drawn to check emails, Facebook etc.

For the better part of two years I did that in a structure I call The Adobe Hovel. It's basically a stacked-mud storage-room structure about 150 feet from my house.

I put a LOT of short stories and novels through my dedicated writing computer out in that Hovel. Unfortunately, the distance combined with the 3-foot thick walls, put the Hovel JUST outside the range of my WiFi.

So to “jump online” I had to use my phone’s hotspot, and that takes time, another distraction. It also involves data, and that gets expensive. Then a family of scorpions moved into the Hovel and I moved back to my home office.

I also have an outside desk, a plastic-coated wire-frame desk just outside my office window, where I write quite a bit. Of course, it’s within range of WiFi, so it’s all good.

But awhile back, I decided to try to do everything on one computer. My “new” Lenovo. I chose that one mostly because the battery lasts close to 5 hours vs. a little over an hour on my old HP computer.

But I’ve struggled with writing on the new computer. The keyboard has a slightly different feel, the screen is a different configuration, and so on. Just little things, but things that almost continually interrupt my writing.

And recently I’ve realized I’m more prone to spending longer online (email, FB, etc.) or playing a game on the new computer than I was on my dedicated writing computer.

So yesterday I switched back to my dedicated writing computer. And I had the best day I’ve had in a long time.

No doubt part of that was because I took the time to cycle back through the WIP and let the characters tell me where I took a wrong turn. But part of it was because I felt like I was Home again.

I also ran the power cord through the window so I won’t have to worry about the battery. (grin)  
And once again I can say writing fiction is the most fun a guy can have with his clothes on.  
\*\*\*

I rolled out late this morning after watching the wildcard baseball game last night. Great game.

I was chomping at the bit to get back to the story. I looked it over again. Turns out I cut a little over 2000 words, so a little more than the new number of words I wrote yesterday.

Anyway, I read the revised version to my wife. She didn’t miss any of the stuff I cut during my cycling session yesterday. Some of what I cut probably will make it back into the novel later.

I wrote around 400 new words this morning, then stopped to take a look at a manuscript a guy sent me for which he wants me to provide a copyedit.

Then for some reason my writing ‘puter went glitchy, so I dealt with that for awhile. Finally I restarted it and everything’s fine again, but that ate up a couple of hours.

I was headed back to the novel a little before 11 when I received notes on the previous one from my first reader, Kenneth Flowers. I can't say enough about how good this guy is at being a pure first reader. If you need one, email Kenneth at [krf1952@gmail.com](mailto:krf1952@gmail.com).

NOW back to the novel. (grin) It's a little after 12.

Well, I'm a little disappointed. It's not being the big day I was expecting, but good enough I guess. I was so impressed with the technique I realized yesterday that I practiced a lot of the same thing today. (grin)

I let the writing rip for awhile (subconscious), then went back and checked (conscious) to be sure I was applying what I learned recently. Then I allowed myself to touch it on the way through (subconscious again). It's coming along.

This will definitely be a learning novel, and I think it will be a plateau novel. It will take me to another level. And I'm not bragging here. As with any art form, there's a natural progression.

A musician learns how to make that particular note, a painter how to create the exact shade, and a writer how to add just enough description (always through the POV character's senses) without drowning in it.

From what I've heard, the first million words of writing novels gets you to the point you're more or less a "novelist." After that, if you continue to learn and apply what you learn, from time to time you attain a new level as certain epiphanies occur.

By my count, this will be my fourth transition.

I read a lot, and I judge my own work against that of some of the authors I whose work I read. There are a few who put out a quality I still feel like I'll never approach.

But at the moment I'm closing in on the quality of craft of one of my favorite authors (James Lee Burke). I've surpassed a couple of best-selling authors. I won't mention those names publicly. If only I were a master at marketing. (grin)

In the meantime, I'll keep hacking along at whatever speed I can manage.

See you tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "Text-only news sites are slowly..." at <https://www.poynter.org/news/text-only-news-sites-are-slowly-making-comeback-heres-why>. This is VERY good news.

And it might be time to get on Instagram. Again via The Passive Voice, see “The Instagram Poet Outselling Homer Ten to One” at <https://www.thecut.com/2017/10/profile-rupi-kaur-author-of-milk-and-honey.html>.

**Fiction Words: 1193**

Nonfiction Words: 1110 (Journal)

So total words for the day: XXXX

**Writing of Pulp Novel 5** (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457

Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650

Total fiction words for the month..... 9875

Total fiction words for the year..... 444021

Total nonfiction words for the month... 4090

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 156773

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 600794

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 676 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Cycling](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, 10/6](#)**

[October 6, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, another long post, but one I think you’ll find is worth it.

First, while searching for something else, I ran across an article titled “Master of Magic Realism Harvey Stanbrough is Offering a Free Short from His Collection of Cantina Tales.”

You can see the brief article at <https://davidjrodger.wordpress.com/2011/11/22/master-of-magic-realism-harvey-stanbrough-is-offering-a-free-short-from-his-collection-of-cantina-tales/>.

I remembered I had left a ‘thank you’ note in a comment below the article. I never received a reply or a follow-up comment.

This morning I clicked the home page of that WordPress.com site, and I learned that David J. Rodger passed away the same day that post about me went public.

I had never heard of David before he was kind enough to mention me in his blog.

I haven’t read any of his work, but I intend to order some today. To read a bit more about David J. Rodger and his books yourself, please check his main website at <http://www.davidjrodger.com/>.

### **Guest Topic: Pricing in 2017**

*The following is excerpted from Dean Wesley Smith’s blog post this morning. You can read the full article at the link in the “Of Interest” section below.*

#### ***Electronic Pricing... Novels***

Genre matters. Range from \$3.99 to \$6.99, with romance being on the lower side, mystery on the upper side.

Length does not seem to matter at all.

All the studies have shown that you get above \$6.99 and you start hitting price resistance for electronic books unless the book is something really special.

You go below \$3.99 and you leave yourself no room for discounting or short-term sales.

You get down into the 99 cent area and you are in a trash ghetto.

And yes, I do know about the stupidity of ever-free. Just say no.

[...]

#### ***Electronic Pricing... Short Stories***

[...]

A general rule of thumb of short fiction... Genre does not matter. Length does matter. Exactly opposite of novels.

Under 3,000 words, 99 cents or \$1.99. I would favor the \$1.99 to stay out of the trash pile.

Over 3,000 words, \$2.99. (I know some writers who are doing \$3.99 and making fine money on short fiction, but I like the \$2.99 as a good balance.) [*Editor's Note: The \$2.99 or higher price point also gets you a 70% royalty at Amazon too, vs. 35%.*]

Over 10,000 words, \$3.99 and above 20,000 words price it as a novel in the genre and call it a short novel. [...]

### ***Paper Pricing... Novels***

The old general rule of \$2.00 profit in extended distribution in CreateSpace has become meaningless. [*Editor's note: If you remember, I mentioned this extended distribution only a day or two ago. Ignore what I said, and go with this instead.*] Get your price down as much as you can. Under \$10 is the best for trade paper. \$12.99 is fine as well. Above that you hit resistance unless the book is longer.

Length not only matters, it causes [your cost] to go up. You have no choice, but try to keep the [price] down as low as possible.

[B]ookstore distribution [is] a folly in 2017 because as Author Earnings have reported, almost 80% of paper books are sold online these days.

[...]

Keep the price low as possible, especially in romance. Very price conscious group.

### ***Paper Pricing... Short Stories***

Yes, why not do a paper edition of your stand-alone short story? It's free to do, easy with Vellum to lay out, and makes your \$2.99 electronic price look pretty good with the \$4.99 paper there linked. [...]

### ***Audio Pricing***

Not getting anywhere near audio. You are on your own. But do realize there are new players on the field in audio. Go slow and learn them and give them a chance to grow some.

That's it.

***2017 sure has made things a ton easier.*** The drive of pricing to hit the bottom leveled out a few years ago and now we are stable.

And if we indies keep our prices in those ranges, it makes those traditional electronic prices look downright stupid. And more readers will go to indie books.

\*\*\*

A couple of quick, related things — In the original post, Dean talks about using IngramSpark to try to get Ingram to list your book IF you follow his advice and don't go with Extended Distribution at CreateSpace (so you can keep your price low).

So One, I guess IngramSpark is a thing and that it's part of Ingram. I stand corrected (and surprised).

Two, if you DO still go with Extended Distribution (and the required higher price) at CreateSpace, your book will be offered in many more stores than "just Amazon."

Most of my sales are in ebooks and most come through Amazon.

Now, you might think I'd visit CreateSpace later today to lower the prices on all of my paper novels.

Nope. I'm gonna leave them right where they are and in Extended Distribution.

So will my books be overpriced, even for trade paperbacks?

Sure. But price also goes to perceived value, and mostly I publish in paper only so readers will see the price comparison between paper and ebook when they look up my books.

In other words, I use paper only to drive the purchase of ebooks. I think I'll continue in that vein.  
\*\*\*

I found Dean's thought on pricing longer fiction very interesting, that genre, not length, is what matters. I have a question in to him via email.

After I hear back from him, I'll post my own new pricing guidelines in case you might find them of interest.

UPDATE: Dean responded, and he said pretty much what I expected. I'll post my new personal pricing guidelines as a topic in a day or three.  
\*\*\*

Today will be a light writing day probably. My son and his family are coming to visit for the weekend, so I have preparations to make. Grocery, laundry, stuff like that.

Finally back from doing chores just before noon. Now to the novel for a little while. There are also division baseball games on today, so... (grin). But I'd like to advance the novel a bit before I go to that for the day.

Okay. I got the story back on track. We'll see what happens tomorrow.

See you then.

## Of Interest

See “Pricing Silliness and a Learning Lesson” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/pricing-silliness-and-a-learning-lesson/>.

From The Digital Reader, see “Author Website Checklist” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/05/author-website-checklist-2/>.

### **Fiction Words: 1407**

Nonfiction Words: 1000 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 2407

### **Writing of Pulp Novel 5** (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457

Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650

Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057

Total fiction words for the month..... 11282

Total fiction words for the year..... 445428

Total nonfiction words for the month... 5090

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 157773

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 603201

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 677 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Christopher Ridge](#), [Cycling](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, 10/7**

[October 7, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, it’s Saturday. A very short post today, maybe making up for the longer ones recently.

Today was to be my first day as a nonsmoker (leaving cigars behind) but I thought that might not be fair to my visiting grandchildren. (grin)

So I'll make a trip later to Tombstone or Sierra Vista to buy enough sticks to get me through the weekend. I'm looking forward to leaving the habit behind me.

Ah, after the sun came up, I found out my son and one adult grandson are here, but the little ones aren't. So maybe I'll buy just enough cigars to get through today (since I already had one this morning).

Anyway, nonwriting day today and probably tomorrow. I'm not worried. The novel story is in a good place, so I can easily jump back in pretty much at will.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

If you're interested in space stuff, I encourage you to visit <https://solarsystem.nasa.gov/> and browse awhile. Excellent.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 160 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 160

### Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 11282  
Total fiction words for the year..... 445428  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5250  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 157933  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 603361

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 678 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [NASA](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

# The Journal, Sunday, 10/8

October 8, 2017 by Harvey

## Hey Folks,

Not a lot to see here today. I thought I might return to the story today, but I'm not going to. It's been a tiring and emotional day, just family stuff. Two big-deal (to me) baseball games coming on, so I'm gonna watch those.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See Dean's "Anthology Workshop Surprise" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/anthology-workshop-surprise/>. If you write short fiction, you could potentially earn enough from sales to editors at this workshop to make back your investment. Just sayin'.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 100 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 100

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 11282  
Total fiction words for the year..... 445428  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5350  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 158033  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 603461

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 679 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

# [The Journal, Monday, 10/9](#)

[October 9, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, we had a good visit with our youngest son and our oldest grandson. Also very much enjoyed watching the baseball games yesterday, especially Cleveland at New York. Even though Cleveland chose to put off sending New York home until today or until they make them travel back to Cleveland first. (grin)

Today it's back to writing. For anyone who cares about nominal personal nonsense, today is also my last day as a cigar smoker.

I have three left, including the 1/3 that's currently clenched between my teeth. I figured it's only fair to my wife that I do the Nicotine Withdrawal Shuffle while she's at work tomorrow through Friday.

I realize I should be curled into a fetal position in a shadowy doorway in a seedy neighborhood in major metropolitan area, but where I am will have to do. The whole thing wasn't properly staged.

And now, as promised and just as if it matters to anyone but me, here's...

## **My Updated Fiction Length and Price List for 2017/2018**

*First, a few explanatory notes —*

**1.** In everything below, I'm talking about indie publishers, like you and me. All signs indicate the traditional publishing model (the agency model) is dead or dying across the board.

I'm also talking here about ebooks. If you want to deal with print, see my excerpt from Dean's post at <http://hestanbrough.com/the-journal-friday-106/>. And remember that DWS' pricing guidelines are for trade paperbacks, not mass-market paperbacks.

**2.** As DWS mentioned a few days ago, in short fiction, Length, not Genre, matters in pricing.

In long fiction, however, Genre, not Length, rules in matters of pricing. This is a major change for me and one I had a little difficulty getting my head around.

To mitigate that "lost at sea" feeling, it helped me to remember that most well-selling genres have general length guidelines (e.g., Westerns are most often around 40,000-50,000 words).

It also helps to remember that dedicated readers of a particular genre have come to expect certain price points (e.g., most Romance readers are used to paying around \$3.99 regardless of the length of the novel).

3. DWS also mentioned, in response to a comment, that the terms “novelette” (long short story) and “novella” (between a novelette and a short novel) have no meaning for readers. I agree. However, to add two more price levels that pertain to Length in short fiction, I use the designations for myself as a publisher.

All of that comes into play in what follows:

***For short fiction, Length, not Genre, matters:***

To 2999 (Short-short Story).....	1.49
3000 to 6999 (Short Story).....	1.99
7000 to 14999 (Novelette or Long Short Story)...	2.99
15000 to 24999 (Novella).....	3.49

***For long fiction, Genre, not Length, matters:***

Romance.....	3.99
Western.....	3.99 – 4.99
SF/F.....	3.99 – 4.99
Mystery, Suspense.....	4.99 – 5.99
Thriller (big book).....	5.99 – 6.99

The pricing variations above (for me) afford room to take into account pricing for Length. For example, Cozy Mysteries generally are short novels or novels. Mysteries and those that crossover into Suspense generally are novels or long novels.

So the second tier below illustrates my own divisions for length. I suspect this is a kind of security blanket for me:

25000 to 44999 (Short Novel)
45000 to 69999 (Novel)
over 70,000 (Long Novel)

Will these change? Possibly. And of course you should feel free to use this (or not) as only a guideline.

Hope this helps.

\*\*\*

Rolled out late, mostly intentionally, mostly as a time-management technique because I have only three cigars left. (grin)

I browsed the Internet, added the “Of Interest” stuff, then wrote most of this Journal entry.

Spent a couple of hours while it was still cool outside pre-cleaning a car I just got. Now it’s almost 10 and I’m headed to the novel for awhile.

Well, I keep eeking out these little writing days. The novel is moving along fine, a spurt here, a spurt there. I'm not worried about it. This one just isn't writing in 3,000 – 5000 word chunks.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See “Author Pen Names: 5 Reasons they’re a Bad Idea in the Digital Age” at <http://annerallen.com/2017/10/author-pen-names-digital-age/>. Great article.

Strictly for fun, see “10+ Times Writers Took Book Dedications To Another Level” at <https://www.boredpanda.com/creative-book-dedications/>. There are actually 57 dedications.

## Fiction Words: 1180

Nonfiction Words: 670 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1850

## Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6020  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 158703  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 605311

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 680 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 10/10](#)

[October 10, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

Well, I kind'a held off posting the Jurnal just in case, but today is a nonwriting day. My brain's too fuzzy. (grin) Might be this way tomorrow too. We'll see. I'm putting this up only to keep the blog streak going.

Thanks to those who forwarded their good wishes re shedding the nicotine habit. At present I'm wishing I'd never started again.

But it'll all be fine in a couple more days. Then I can get back to things that really matter.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Nothing really of interest that I saw online today.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 100 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 100

### Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6120  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 158803  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 605411

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 681 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

# The Journal, Wednesday, 10/11

October 11, 2017 by Harvey

## **Hey Folks,**

Well, my subconscious is out wandering around the universe on its own, chasing shiny objects and worrying about absolutely nothing. I hope it's having fun.

I got through the first full day without nicotine. Today is day two. From here on out, it's just a matter of will power. Well, that and fear.

I am a recovering addict. At the moment, I'm going through the rough part, although that will end soon. But if I take even one more hit of my drug of choice, I'll have to go through the rough part all over again.

Remembering that and guarding against the necessity of going through this again is a function of the conscious mind. So for now, the conscious mind is fully in charge.

Once it's safe to let my guard relax, I'll return most of the control of this insane fleshbag runabout on Starship Earth to my subconscious.

In the meantime, I hope to return bits of control later today or (more likely) tomorrow, at least enough so I can resume playing a little with my PI novel. However, there's absolutely no rush.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "Send Your Name to Mars..." at <https://www.space.com/38413-your-name-on-mars-nasa-insight-lander.html>. Or go straight to the form at <https://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/participate/send-your-name/insight/>.

Via the Smashwords Blog, see "Rachel Van Dyken on Overcoming Fear" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/10/rachel-van-dyken-on-overcoming-fear.html>. If you get something out of it, great. She lost me at "...the hate, fear, and insecurity swarming our lovely book community...." What?

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 250 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 250

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6370  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 159053  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 605661

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 682 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Smashwords](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 10/12](#)

[October 12, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

First, welcome to “fan2orcas,” the most recent subscriber to this Journal. Glad to have you aboard. I’m going through a personal transition at the moment, so not a lot of substance here for a few days. But hang in there. It will pick up again soon. (grin)

\*\*\*

Woke up to good news this morning. I have another book, The Platinum Blond Perturbance (novella), in an upcoming bundle from BundleRabbit. I’ll post details on the website as they become available.

The request for that book caused me to look at my other similar books. I realized I have two series characters going. City police detective Lou Galecki and the PI Stern Richards. Hmmm. Wonder how they’d work together?

Actually, the last novel I finished, the one I recently got back from my first reader, has Stern Richards and a police detective, but it isn’t Galecki. Maybe I ought to change the name of the detective before I publish that one.

And that reminds me I haven't published that one yet. I need to do a cover and get that thing outta here. I'll do that today.

### ***More notes on quitting smoking...***

Feeling a little better this morning. Intellectually I know it takes three days to flush out the poison, but that's not much more than an annoying little factoid when you're actually going through it. (grin)

Wow. I started creating the cover at around 5:30. That and uploading the book to D2D, Amazon and BundleRabbit has taken 3 hours. The entire process usually takes an hour or less. Still operating through a haze.

I remember, before I took up cigars, there was a certain extra-clarity in everything: thoughts, vision, hearing, all of it. It isn't that way again yet, but because I remember I know it will be. Clinging to that knowledge keeps me on task.

I was telling a friend this morning that I've discovered quitting cigars is considerably different than quitting cigarettes.

Actually, I expected it to be different, but I assumed it would be easier, maybe because I didn't inhale smoke from cigars, there weren't as many, etc.

But I'm finding the resurgent cravings are just as frequent but a LOT stronger. There are times when all I can do is sit and focus on taking the next breath.

Now, don't get me wrong. I won't give in. That simply isn't an option. But it's interesting (to me) to note these things as I'm going through them. It's a kind of research, I suppose.

Interestingly, today (Day 3) seems as rough as Days 1 & 2, so I'm also wondering whether it might take longer than three days to flush the poison out of my system this time. I guess I'll know more tomorrow. (grin)

Hope you don't mind me sharing this stuff as well as the writing stuff. If my experience helps someone else, it's all good. And I guess if you DO mind, you can just skip over the parts you don't like. (grin)

I'm just looking forward to getting back to writing. A few days from now I'll be wondering what all the fuss was about. I hope.

I'm feeling... different. I'm going to take one more day off. I have a feeling I'll be fully back tomorrow.

See you then.

**Of Interest**

Via The Digital Reader, see “The great writers forgotten by history” at <http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20171010-the-great-writers-forgotten-by-history>. (I was disappointed when I tried to order the ebook and found it was available only to customers in the UK.)

From Linda Maye Adams on Dean’s site, an article on how the mega corporations get writers to write free at <http://authorkristenlamb.com/2017/10/welcome-to-the-matrix-you-work-for-free-there-is-no-payday/>. Though I must admit, I got lost after awhile. My be my mental cloud or it might be the article going on and on or maybe both, but I still don’t know a) how to unplug or b) from whom or what to unplug. Sigh. I was so looking forward to being unplugged.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 630 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 630

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7000  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 159683  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 606291

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 683 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, 10/13](#)**

[October 13, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Okay, I'm never again doing anything that's personal-world earth-shattering while I'm in the middle of writing a novel. Losing a bunch of days to a magical, mysterious haze while writing a novel is not a good thing.

A lot of the haze is gone this morning. So my thought that the primary part of the trial would take three days seems to have held up. However, I'm still a bit foggy headed, and it comes and goes.

Another son and his family are coming to visit this weekend. They'll arrive later today and stay through Sunday morning.

So I think I'll take a few more nonwriting days. With any luck, I can dive back into writing on fresh on Monday. In the meantime, I'll keep this Journal going and as interesting as I can.

I'll be doing what some like to call "writing related" things. I'm considering putting together a boxed set or two of my mystery/suspense novels.

I was thinking of reading over my current WIP too, but I'll hold off on that until I know I'll have time to play. At that point, I'll read over it and go if it goes or set it aside and write something else if it doesn't.

If I write something else, probably it will be the same series character with a different crew around him. Anyway, that's all supposition at this point.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "A Brief History of the 'Danse Macabre'" at <http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/danse-macabre-david-pumpkins-art-history>.

Via Linda Adams, see "Write Like a Girl" at <http://writerunboxed.com/2017/10/07/write-like-a-girl/>. Very good article.

Also via Linda, I also enjoyed "Here's How Not to Critique Romance Novels" at <https://jezebel.com/heres-how-not-to-critique-romance-novels-1819188174>. At least right up until the author of the article herself invoked a stereotype in the second sentence from the end of the article. So close. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 300

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7300  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 159983  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 606591

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 684 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 10/14](#)

[October 14, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Just want to take a minute to say thanks for hanging in with me.

When you write a daily blog like this, and especially when you're determined to share the less-than-good along with the good, you're going to have some off days.

I'm kind of proud of what I've done here for the past two-plus years. I've written every single day, even when that writing was only in this Journal.

Thus far, I've written one novel every month for this calendar year. (It isn't lost on me that when I get back to writing on Monday, I'll have exactly one-half of this month left.)

And I've tried to keep the Journal interesting otherwise with occasional Topics of interest to writers and with items in the "Of Interest" section below.

I intend to keep going in that regard as long as I can. But none of it would mean anything without an audience, so thanks again for being there.

\*\*\*

Enjoyed Game 1 of the ALCS last night. Rolled out a little late this morning.

I'll probably spend the balance of the morning with my son, messing with the 4-Runner. Then this afternoon and evening, more baseball.

I think some younger folks don't appreciate baseball the way some older folks do. Sportscaster Howard Cosell once called baseball "two minutes of excitement crammed into three hours."

But that's kind of the allure of it for me. Moment by moment, the initial draw isn't what IS happening but what might happen.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See Linda Adams' "Adventures at the book sale" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/10/14/adventures-at-the-book-sale/>. Made me hungry to start visiting book sales.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 280 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 280

### Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7300  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 159983  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 606591

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 684 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	27
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 10/15](#)

[October 15, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I'm really missing (fiction) writing, storytelling, and it will be good to get back to it tomorrow in whatever form it takes.

For me, being immersed in a good story as it develops is like that moment when you smile and sigh as you're sinking into a tub of hot water. It's just that good.

One more visiting day with my son and his family and one more day of baseball to see whether the Cubs will tie the series with the Dodgers. I'll continue following the LCSs tomorrow, etc. but watching games will be secondary to writing.

Oh wow. I nearly broke my Journal posting streak today. I was just in here checking on something else and happened to remember I hadn't posted it yet. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "Napoleon's Traveling Library" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/napoleons-traveling-library/>.

Also via TPV, see "What copyright does not protect" at <https://ucomm.wsu.edu/what-copyright-does-not-protect/>.

See "Copyright Term and the Public Domain in the United States" at <https://copyright.cornell.edu/publicdomain>. (Get a free PDF download at <https://copyright.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/2017-08/publicdomain.pdf>.)

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 200

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7780  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 160463  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 607071

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 685 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, 10/16](#)**

[October 16, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Here we go. The first day of the rest of my writing life. (grin) And I'm going to start it in Sierra Vista at a brake shop. So my restart on writing might be one day late. We'll see.

In major news from the department of Well That Sucks, via The Digital Reader, see "CreateSpace to Close its Web Store" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/13/createspace-close-web-store/>.

**Note that this estore closure does *NOT* affect CreateSpace's other services.** For more on that, I recommend you read the original announcement at CreateSpace:

<https://www.createspace.com/Help/Index.jsp?orgId=00D300000001Sh9&id=50139000000oxUN>

.

The biggest immediate impact is that CS pays (well, has paid) an 80% royalty for books sold directly through its estore. Amazon, true to their greedy form, pays a whopping 60%.

This will further widen the gap between authors who already sell a lot of copies and authors who don't sell as many. I predict it will also burden already struggling print cover designers and interior layout folks.

This causes me to rethink (again) whether going to paper with my books is really all that important. The dwindling royalty makes the \$100 I spend for cover and layout considerably larger. Hmmmm.

Damn. And the thing is, I just want to write. So maybe that's my answer too.

\*\*\*

Wow. If ever I needed something to soothe my nerves, it was this afternoon.

The day began with my little girl bringing in a packrat. She doesn't kill them. She just watches them. I'm convinced she's looking for a friend, someone who will play with her. (In the front yard, she runs with [not chases] rabbits.) But whatever.

I had to get the thing out of the house.

I thought I had done that, and several minutes later I let her outside again. But the idiot packrat remained close by where I let it out.

She grabbed it by the scruff of the neck (like carrying a kitten) and headed for her safe place, under the bed in our bedroom.

So I followed her in there, ran her and her stepsister out, then conducted a meticulous search for the packrat.

Turns out she took her little friend with her and let it go out in the yard. So over all, that was about an hour and a half I'll never get back.

Then the trip to Sierra Vista to get the brakes repaired on my son's car. On the phone it was to take about three hours if I could get it there before 9 a.m.

I got it there at 8:15. It was on the rack by 8:20. And it stayed right there on the rack for four straight hours. Then it descended and went next door for an oil change. I finally got back home around 1:30.

Will I write today?

Um, no. I would love to suck the south end out of a northbound cigar, but I won't do that either. If I did, the frustration would still be there, only then it would be smokey *and* frustrating. (grin)

No, I'm gonna do zip for the rest of the day, watch a ball game this early evening, then sack out.

And I'm not going to tempt Fate again by saying something stupid like "tomorrow I start writing again." That's just crazy talk. I'm seeing that tempting Fate doesn't generally work out well for me.

So I'll write again when I sit down and write again. Then, once again, I'll be a writer. Until then, I'll be a something-elser.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "FBF [Frankfort Book Fair] marred by violent political altercations" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/fbf-marred-by-violent-political-altercations/>.

Frankly, I was surprised TPG didn't comment on this article, as he often does. So anyway, I'll comment.

The first-ever book-length poetry collection published as an ebook was mine. It was (is) called Lessons for a Barren Population, and it was nominated for the Book of the Year Award at the Frankfort Book Fair in 1996 or 1998. It didn't win.

And now that great fair, like everything else, it seems, is all gone to politics. Why don't people just get over themselves? Frankly, when someone begins to opine about something of which they very obviously have zero first-hand knowledge and zero practical experience, I stop listening. Or as I like to put it, "Your right to free speech doesn't guarantee you an audience."

Also from The Passive Voice, for a story idea, maybe, see "In the future" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/in-the-future/>.

And from Harvey's Department of Well, No Sh\*t, see "School District Pulls To Kill a Mockingbird: It 'Makes People Uncomfortable'" at [http://www.slate.com/blogs/the\\_slatest/2017/10/14/mississippi\\_school\\_district\\_pulls\\_to\\_kill\\_a\\_mockingbird\\_because\\_it\\_makes.html](http://www.slate.com/blogs/the_slatest/2017/10/14/mississippi_school_district_pulls_to_kill_a_mockingbird_because_it_makes.html).

My opening comment concerning the source department was meant for Arne Duncan, who saw fit to tweet about this toward the end of the article. Ahem. Pretty cheeky tweet IMHO.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 720 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 720

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8500  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 161183  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 607791

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 686 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 10/17](#)

[October 17, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I emailed DWS yesterday about CreateSpace closing their online store. He wrote, “Saw it. No books ever sold out of there anyway, so no great loss.”

So there’s another take on it for you.

\*\*\*

I was going to recommend James Scott Bell’s column over at The Kill Zone Blog, but I decided not to. The title is “Use NaNoWriMo to Repo Your Mojo.” All well and good. But if you go look it up on your own, PLEASE take it with a huge grain of salt.

I’m glad NaNoWriMo exists, and I’m glad so many people have fun with it. Though I suspect the number of professional fiction writers who got their start from NaNo is extremely low, probably hovering somewhere around zero.

The one massive thing I actively DON’T like about NaNoWriMo is that it actually encourages poor writing and holds that ugly practice up as a Good Thing. It isn’t.

Yeah, yeah, I know. Just get the words down, then come back and fix them later. But what's wrong with getting the words down To The Best Of Your Ability the first time? How is that a bad thing?

Incredibly, even James Scott Bell apparently advocates writing sloppily the first time through, which is hands-down the stupidest advice I've ever heard. Again, why would ANYone write poorly intentionally? For that matter, why would anyone do ANYTHING poorly on purpose just so they could come back and clean it up later?

Am I just being a grouch here? I mean, has doing something to the best of your ability somehow become passe?

It reminds me of that old saying: There's never enough time to do it right, but there's always time to do it over. Well, there you go.

Bell also actually writes in the article, "It's a major accomplishment to finish a novel. To do it in one month is astounding." Again, astoundingly, head-shakingly ridiculous.

\*\*\*

Today has been a bits and pieces day. Today has been fragmented. I took a vehicle title in to get it switched over this morning, mailed another one out, then swapped out a license plate. All of that pretty much wraps up what was going on yesterday. Finally.

I'm the kind of guy who likes to have things settled. Whether in my favor or not, settled is good. Settled means it's off my plate and I no longer have to think about it. Settled means I can move on with other stuff.

\*\*\*

I actually dreamed writing last night. I don't think I was in my current WIP — or maybe I was in and out of it — but it felt like I wrote for much of the night.

Whatever the story, it kept taking off on tangents. I was up through about Chapter 49 when I woke up a little after 3. That was a very good night. A wonderful night.

Do I remember the dreams? No.

But that's all right. Whatever I was dreaming is "in there," so it'll come out when it's time.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

For a LOT of declassified documents on a range of topics, see The Black Vault at <http://www.theblackvault.com/>. (This is under Writers' Resources on my website now too.)

Just for fun, via The Passive Voice see R. Heinlein's take on "Writing" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/writing-5/>.

Dean's Pulphouse Magazine Kickstarter is winding down. If you're interested in jumping in, see "36 Hours or Less Left" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/36-hours-or-less-left/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 550

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9050  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 161733  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 608341

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 687 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 10/18](#)

[October 18, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Not sure what the day will hold. I've been a bit depressed lately, mostly because I'm allowing myself some remembrances of a camaraderie I'll never know again. Sigh. I miss it like air.

I mentioned this to an acquaintance a few days ago and he said, “Well, at least you have the memories. Not everyone has them.”

Well duh.

Of course, what he said is true, but it didn’t help. Not that it was intended to, I suppose.

When he said that it reminded me of the scene in Men in Black in which Agent J caught Agent K looking at a Google Earth image of his wife in her garden.

Agent K quickly closed the scene, and Agent J began with, “Well it’s better to have loved and lost than—”

And Agent K turns on him with some simple but profound advice. “Try it.”

\*\*\*

The coyotes were yowling out around the home place this morning. My little girl stayed close. Good girl.

Well, it’s late morning and thus far all I’ve accomplished is messing with my Android phone (an old Motorola Razr). It’s already been degraded so a lot of stuff won’t work on it, but because I use it primarily as a TELEPHONE I don’t mind.

I’d almost talked myself into getting a new phone soon and being “connected” all the time, but why? I don’t want to be connected all the time.

The other day I went to the store (about 10 miles away in the next town) and forgot my cell phone at home. When I realized I didn’t have it with me I actually felt FREE.

\*\*\*

Weird. I haven’t even looked at the WIP for the past several days. Haven’t even opened it to look at it.

I guess I will when the time comes. Until then, I’m not going to worry about it.

Of course, the novel-per-month thing is in the back of my head. But that doesn’t really bother me either.

I think maybe it’s kind of a been-there-done-that sort of thing. I know it’s possible to write a good novel-length story in less than a month (even two, if I pushed) because I already have.

So there’s nothing there to entice me other than simply writing the story. And that can be done in any length of time.

Possibly part of my current fugue is due to my cigar cessation endeavor. Mixed in with the other stuff, of course. Not a big deal. Just indulging in a little self-psychoanalysis. (A buddy in Dallas

and another one in Tucson, having read that previous sentence, thought “emphasis on ‘psycho’,” I’ll bet.) (grin)

Anyway, back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Via The Digital Reader, see “The delusions continue” at <https://madgeniusclub.com/2017/10/17/the-delusions-continue/>. Excellent article.

Also see, for a bit of SF history and even instruction, “When Science Fiction Grew Up” at <http://conceptualfiction.com/whenscifigrewup.html>. There is also a series of essay links vertically along the right side of this article.

Still wondering how to publish an ebook on Amazon’s KDP platform? Honestly, there’s nothing difficult about it, but if you need to, see “KDP Jumpstart Guides Authors...” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/17/kdp-jumpstart-guides-authors-steps-publishing-book/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 530

### Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 9580  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 162263  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 608871

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 688 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 10/19](#)

[October 19, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Enjoyed a brief conversation with a dear friend from Dallas this morning. That was a pleasant surprise. Thanks Robert.

Of course, in my current state I probably sounded grouchier than normal, though I don't think I actually was.

Part of our discussion was about my current endeavor to leave cigars behind. And in that, I've had an even more recent epiphany.

If I had a cigar stashed away somewhere and happened across it, there's a very good chance I would at least light it and take a couple of puffs before putting it out.

Of course, that would re-set my struggle and make my subconscious mind believe, erroneously, that I am not serious about quitting after all. So no, I don't want to do that.

But that led me to think about when I stopped smoking cigarettes. It was the same sort of thing then.

And then I realized even if someone walked up and offered me a cigarette, I wouldn't take it. Even as badly as I want a cigar, I have zero desire to smoke a cigarette. Isn't that weird?

Both are nicotine delivery systems, and cigarettes actually deliver a lot more than that in the form of carcinogens.

But I don't want one. At all.

And that gives me a great deal of hope.

My stopping smoking cigarettes all those years ago was so complete and so final that even now, when I'm going through withdrawals from cigars, I don't want a cigarette.

So if I stick to my guns, there's at least a good chance when all of this is over I won't want a cigar anymore either. And that's just a really cool motivator.

\*\*\*

I actually wrote a little fiction today. I wrote the beginning of what I thought would be a short story (around 700 words), then realized I'd already told that story in "The End Game," back in June 2016.

It wasn't exactly the same, but it was the same idea, the same general events and probably a very similar outcome. So it was a different story, but similar enough that once I recognized it, it was too boring to write again. (grin)

I know that story isn't going anywhere, so I'm not counting the words.

\*\*\*

Re my WIP, I just don't know. I really like the series character so I want to write this story. I might have to write yet another (a third) new opening and use the current secondary character elsewhere in the novel or not at all.

Or I might have to set the current WIP aside completely, write a new opening for a new story with the series character, and go from there. Then I can go back and finish the other WIP later, or not.

We'll see.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "The History of the Ampersand" at <https://medium.com/black-lion-banner/the-history-of-the-ampersand-c81839171940>.

Dean's Kickstarter campaign is finally over for the revival of Pulphouse Magazine. Maybe he'll get back to writing now too.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 510 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 510

## **Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)**

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457

Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650

Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057

Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237

Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 10090  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 162773  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 609381

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 689 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, 10/20](#)

[October 20, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I love finding new resources, and I was handed one yesterday. A guy who represents another guy sent me a link to the second guy's work and asked me to look it over.

There are so many scams in this world, at first I thought this was just another one. It wasn't.

I looked it over briefly yesterday, then added two links to my website, one on Character Development under Writers' Resources and one pointing to Jerry Jenkins' website. That one's under both Writers' Resources and Quick Links.

Then this morning I spent a couple of hours reading different things on his website. It was time well spent.

When you have time to browse for awhile, check out the website of NYT bestselling author Jerry Jenkins.

Check out his Courses while you're there, and maybe even his Writers Guild. But whatever you do, be sure to check his Resources tab. Some great stuff there.

His website is <https://www.jerryjenkins.com/>.

\*\*\*

Not even thinking much about fiction today. I'm just gonna allow myself the time I need to drift through this major change. I have to admit, I didn't think it would be this disruptive.

But regardless of expectations, what happens happens and it goes the way it goes and we deal with it.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Via The Digital Reader, see “A Book Ban Like No Other” at <http://blogs.ncte.org/index.php/2017/10/book-ban-like-no/>. The utter idiocy of some people is simply unbelievable.

Visit Linda Maye Adams’ blog for some great items of interest at <http://lindamayeadams.com/2017/10/20/adventures-around-the-web-october-14-20-2017/>.

If you’re interested in the upcoming “Orionid Meteor Shower 2017” see <https://www.space.com/34373-orionid-meteor-shower-guide.html>.

Almost forgot to check Dean’s site. He says he’s coming “Back To Regular Programming” (soon) at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/back-to-regular-programming/>.

Via The Passive Voice, see “An Exemplary Mouse” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/an-exemplary-mouse/>. I still have the very first wireless mouse I ever bought. I’ll stick with that one for now.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 310 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 310

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462

Total fiction words for the year..... 446608

Total nonfiction words for the month... 10400

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 163083

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 609691

The Daily Journal blog streak.....	690 days
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date.....	9
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	27
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, 10/21](#)

[October 21, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, I spent much of the morning on the Jerry Jenkins website I told you about yesterday.

Here are my recommendations:

- take advantage of the free giveaway for signing up for his newsletter. You can always unsubscribe later.
- take advantage (with a grain of salt, as always) of the appropriate blog posts and other items listed on his Resources page.
- take advantage of his blog, which I finally found at <https://www.jerryjenkins.com/blog/>.
- be careful of spending money. Like many of these sites, it exists primarily to upsell you on other products.
- avoid getting a Writers Guild membership. It does NOT include any of the courses on the site. The Writers Guild is basically a forum in which you can glean advice from people who have zero or very little idea what they're talking about. So caution there.
- before you shell out the bucks for any of the courses, be sure to read the course description.

\*\*\*

I also rediscovered Chris Fox's website (see "Of Interest"). I ordered his ebook, *5,000 Words Per Hour: Write Faster, Write Smarter*. Mostly out of curiosity. (You can get it free at his site for signing up for his nonfiction newsletter, but I didn't want to sign up. Besides, it was only \$1.20 at Amazon.)

I thought I might write today, but that's not going to happen. Not just yet.

\*\*\*

However, reading roughly half of *5,000 Words Per Hour* reminded me of several things I used to do back when I was being very productive. It also encouraged me to begin doing them again.

Chief among those things was having a dedicated writing space. That consists of not only a physical location, but a dedicated computer and chair so that when I approach that computer and that chair in that location my subconscious knows it's time to play.

Mr. Fox, I and others espouse that theorem, and I know it to be true at least in my own case because it worked so well for me for so long.

So I spent part of the afternoon prepping a new place. It isn't The Adobe Hovel. Then again, it doesn't harbor scorpions and burrowing animals and things that bite sandaled toes beneath the desk.

I'm not promising myself when I will begin writing fiction again, but when the urge hits, the place will be there. Onward.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

See "Introducing the Smart Author Podcast" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/10/smart-author-podcast.html>.

"When You've Lost Your Passion for Writing" at <https://www.jerryjenkins.com/youve-lost-passion-writing/>. A couple of good tidbits and some things I didn't know.

I kind of like Chris Fox's style. Stop by and take a look at <http://www.chrisfoxwrites.com/>. Especially check out the menu items on his For Writers tab.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 440 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 440

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457

Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650

Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057

Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237

Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462

Total fiction words for the year..... 446608

Total nonfiction words for the month... 10840

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 163523  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 610131

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 691 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Chris Fox](#), [Jerry Jenkins](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Smashwords](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, 10/22](#)

[October 22, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Tomorrow — Another Memorial Day — On October 23, 1983 the Barracks in Beirut was bombed. Please remember.

\*\*\*

I didn't roll out until 4:15 this morning after watching the Yankees sigh their last for the season last night. Oh well. What a powerhouse they have for the next few to several years.

We have a trip to Sierra Vista scheduled for today. I've already decided (at 8:20 a.m.) that I won't write any fiction today. Still in deck-clearing mode. I wouldn't want to bump into myself in the fog.

Soon, as a friend would say, all will be well. Then I'll slip back into the groove of this thing I do and we'll see where it takes me.

Semi-frigid outside this morning at 39 degrees. T-shirt weather when I lived in Indiana, but heavy coat weather out here where the heat thins the blood. (That's silly, of course, but it sounds right doesn't it?)

\*\*\*

I've thought recently about writing a book on personal physics.

It's long been suspected that different worlds are ruled by different sets of physical laws.

It has NOT long been suspected (by anyone but me) that the same is true of the various personal worlds right here on this planet.

But it makes perfect sense.

After all, we each have our own gravity (often depending on the situation in which we find ourselves), are the center of our own universe for purposes of observation (always), are stable (or hey, maybe not) to varying degrees, and so on.

And that, I believe, explains how one person can appear to be the scatterbrained purveyor of a life-long soup sandwich yet accomplish everything he sets out to accomplish while adding more to his personal plate of stuff-to-do with pretty much every passing day, and why another person can be focused and concise and clear-minded, yet accomplish zip-point-squat.

Don't get me wrong here. I'm not complaining.

I'm just trying to postulate a new theorem here, one that has to do with a personal physics. A set of personal physical laws that, other than a passing nod to Gravity and a begrudging acknowledgment of the need to sleep and thus be rejuvenated, completely trumps the laws of physics for the overall planet.

When you read the entry on DWS in today's "Of Interest" you will understand more about why I believe individualized personal laws of physics exist.

\*\*\*

Wow. See the second item in "Of Interest" below.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "A Job By Another Name" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-job-by-another-name/>.

Good old Amazon is at it again. See "Amazon's Hall of Spinning Knives" at <https://davidgaughran.wordpress.com/2017/10/20/amazons-hall-of-spinning-knives/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 430 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 430

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1.....	1080 words.	Total words to date.....	1080
Day 2.....	2167 words.	Total words to date.....	3247
Day 3.....	1370 words.	Total words to date.....	4617
Day 4.....	1840 words.	Total words to date.....	6457
Day 5.....	1193 words.	Total words to date.....	7650
Day 6.....	1407 words.	Total words to date.....	9057
Day 7.....	1180 words.	Total words to date.....	10237
Day 8.....	XXXX words.	Total words to date.....	XXXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11270  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 163953  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 610561

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 692 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 10/23](#)

[October 23, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I was going to talk about Dean's age-based challenge frenzy, but you can see it for yourself in "Of Interest" and draw your own conclusions.

I'll turn 65 in a few weeks. I tried to set up an interesting goal that has something to do with the numeric designation of my age, but I kept coming back to "Why?"

I mean, if setting such a goal increased my actual productivity and made writing fun again, that could be something.

The closest real challenge I could come up with was to write 52 short stories (one per week) during the year. Add 13 novels to that and I would have 65 publications.

But that goal has serious flaws. For example, I could as easily fulfill the "65" requirement by writing 13 additional short stories.

Okay, so the most salable length for short fiction according to most sources is 3,000 words. If I wrote 65 3,000-word stories, that would still be only 195,000 words (that's 535 words per day). No real challenge there, eh?

But what if I wrote only the 52 short stories and then compiled 5 10-story collections and 10 5-story collections? That would bring my number of publications for the year to 67.

I could even toss in an omnibus collection of all 52 stories and make it 68.

But including the collections would feel a little like cheating just to beef up my numbers.

Besides, I'm not into writing short stories right now. The only reason to write all of those would be to reach that arbitrary number, and that just doesn't do it for me. Maybe because in my story-a-week streak, I reached 72 stories before I broke it.

Now 65 *novels* in a year, that would be really something.

\*\*\*

I rolled out late, a little before 4, did a lot of online reading, then wrote a lot of this.

After my wife went to work I started setting up the camping trailer as a writing office. The Internet out there is iffy at best, but I'll carry a flash drive with me back and forth just in case.

(When the Internet's working, I just save things to my Dropbox and they're uploaded on my office computer by the time I get inside.)

Anyway, not surprisingly I ran into some problems, so that will be the rest of the day. When I was writing at a kitchen table out there, the Internet was fine. When I moved my little writing stand in there—it's two inches lower at 27"—the Internet became iffy.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

From The Digital Reader, see "From eBooks to eBooks..." at <http://www.talkingnewmedia.com/2017/10/20/ebooks-cbooks-new-ebook-format-combining-best-book-film-exciting-new-story-platform/>. Reminiscent, in an odd way, of silent films back when "movies" first started.

Also from The Digital Reader, see "199+ Plot, Name, Story, and Other Generators" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/22/199-plot-name-story-generators/>.

From DWS, see "My Two New Challenges" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/my-two-new-challenges/>. Personally, I'm more interested in following the 30 stories in 30 days November challenge.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 500 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 500

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457

Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650

Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 11770  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 164453  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 611061

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 693 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Challenge](#), [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 10/24](#)**

[October 24, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

One of my new favorite quotes: “Amateurs sit and wait for inspiration. The rest of us just get up and go to work.” ~ Stephen King

Stephen King introduces the 1986 edition of *The Running Man* with an essay titled “The Importance of Being Bachman.” The essay is nothing short of a gem, and I encourage you to read it.

I took the liberty of transcribing it into a Word document, then saved it as a PDF file and added it to my Free Stuff page on my website.

Please go there and download it. Read it. If you don’t glean something important from it... well, I’m betting you will.

In full disclosure, I did not get the man’s permission to reprint this. However, given my purpose for doing so, I believe strongly enough that he wouldn’t mind that I’m willing to risk having my rear end handed to me in court.

King had written a longer (and angrier) essay titled “Why I Was Bachman” a year earlier. It served as the introduction to *The Bachman Books*, which contains *The Long Walk*, *Roadwork*, and *The Running Man*.

I believe the 1985 essay is the one he was referring to in “The Importance of Being Bachman” when he said the too-nosy press’s outing of Bachman as King was not a good thing.

I agree.

Anyway, go. Download it. Learn stuff.

\*\*\*

Welp, World Series Game 1 tonight on Fox. Only 4, 5, 6 or 7 games left in the year. I will miss baseball.

\*\*\*

I wrote a little fiction today, but nothing I’m counting. It wasn’t really storytelling. It was more a kind of therapy, maybe.

Anyway, I’ll finish up this Journal entry then call it an early day. Huh. As I applied the numbers for today, I realized my nonfiction has outdistanced my fiction for the month.

### **Topic: We Few, the Fortunes**

Awhile back I posted a blog over at HarveyStanbrough.com titled “Why Do You Write?” I think probably I can answer that now, at least for myself.

Possibly the most annoying aspect of human life is 20-20 hindsight and the realization that we don’t get a do-over.

When I graduated basic training for the USMC 47 years ago (November 1970), I was assigned the military occupational specialty (MOS) I wanted: 0331 (Machine Gunner). I was slated as a Feb/Mar 1971 replacement for the 3rd Marine Division in RVN.

But while I was on leave, my MOS was changed to 6700, Basic HAWK (missile) Fire Control Crewman, and I was ordered to report to Ft. Bliss at El Paso for training.

I was devastated.

And then 40+ years later I found out from another Marine who preceded me by a few years that I could have requested my MOS be reinstated. He knew because he had done it. He came out of boot camp as an Avionics tech, requested 0311 (Basic Rifleman) and got it.

All I knew back then was “Follow your last order first” and “The Corps sends you where they want you to be.” I never thought to question the change of MOS and orders. I never realized questioning it was possible.

Anyway, like I said, there are no do-overs. If you don’t know enough to get it right the first time, well, you’re just what we used to call Ess Oh Ell.

After all, there is no right or wrong. You do your best, then live with the ghosts.

But that's where we, the writers, have at least a very minor advantage. We can't do it over, but we can have others do it over in our stead. At least I realized that much in time.

So I wrote Wes Crowley and let him do what I couldn't because I was born about a hundred years too late.

I wrote mafioso and let them do what I couldn't because I wasn't born into the right nationality or community.

I wrote an explosives expert and let him blow up a strategic train trestle because I wasn't alive to do it myself during the Spanish Civil War.

I wrote PIs and detectives because I couldn't put up with human garbage long enough to last more than a year as a cop. (When you begin to wonder how long juries give cops for murder anyway, it's time to move on.)

I built a lunar settlement and wrote the settlers because I'll never get to settle on the moon.

I wrote space travelers and alien species because I'll never get to meet them unless, fingers crossed, they hurry up and come here.

And I wrote warriors, warriors, warriors of all kinds because I didn't know enough to take charge of my own life at a young age.

And I'll write more. Because it's what I do. We who miss the boat write the wake. (Yeah, isn't that a great double-entendre word?)

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

You can now download Steven Hawking's doctoral thesis, "Properties of Expanding Universes," once the website is back up. It had so many requests it crashed:

<https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/251038>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 850 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 850

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 12620  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 165303  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 611911

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 695 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Steven Hawking](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, 10/25](#)

[October 25, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, trying to use the camping trailer as a writing hovel just isn't going to work. It's constantly too cold or too hot and there are myriad other problems I won't go into here.

I'm just gonna have to bite the bullet and do my writing in my office. I'll have to let the separate small desk and the separate, dedicated writing computer constitute my "space," and that will have to be enough.

I think I'll also add a different, dedicated chair. Sitting in the same chair to write fiction that I use when I'm browsing the Internet can't be a good idea. I know it seems only a very minor difference, but what seems minor in the conscious world can be huge trigger to the subconscious.

Went to bed early last night and got up late this morning to make up for it. In all, I slept, mostly, for 10 hours. I don't remember the last time I did that.

I've written quite a lot over the past few days. But none of it interested me after the initial scene. Still, it feels as if the break in the dam is getting closer.

There have also been a few times when a strong idea popped into my head when I was in the middle of doing something else. Each time the idea left before I sat down to write it.

I'm not worried. I'll do what I do when it's time to do it. Until then, I'll do other things. Like read.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

All of the following are via The Passive Voice:

See "California Rescinds Autograph Mandate for Booksellers" at

<http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/california-rescinds-autograph-mandate-for-booksellers/>.

See "First, forget inspiration" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/first-forget-inspiration/>. Short, but oh so sweet.

See "John Grisham reveals his biggest money mistake" at

<http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/john-grisham-reveals-his-biggest-money-mistake/>. I would still be pursuing that agent.

Via The Passive Voice but at The Digital Reader, see "Seven WordPress Plugins for Author Bookshelves" at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/25/review-roundup-seven-wordpress-plugins-author-bookshelves/>. Wish I'd seen this a few years ago. (grin)

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 340 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 340

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080

Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247

Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457

Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650

Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057

Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237

Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462

Total fiction words for the year..... 446608

Total nonfiction words for the month... 12960

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 165643

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 612251

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 696 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	27
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 10/26](#)

[October 26, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I did some work on my website today and thought about a few more things I'm considering doing but not sure about yet.

Also took care of a client's website for her and chatted with a friend about holding tanks in camper trailers and things like that.

Got another Stephen King (Richard Bachman) book in the mail today. I recently bought (or re-bought) a few of his Bachman books. As long as I'm still working through this problem I might as well have something good around to read.

I'm not intentionally putting off my writing, but there's no reason to rush this other process since it's something I have to do. And there's no reason to try to write while I'm immersed in this other. I have a feeling that would only leave me and whatever I write looking addlebrained.

So it just is what it is. In the meantime, I'm reading a lot, relaxing some, puttering around the yard, and getting back into the habit of walking, albeit only a mile or so at a time.

And then sometime this weekend I have to coat the top of the camping trailer with a rain-proof coating.

When I was a child, I helped my paternal grandfather coat the roof of their house in High Rolls, NM with hot tar.

Yes, I handled the stubby-headed straw broom sometimes. I was 4 or 5, and part of the time Grandpa wasn't even up there. Of course, he wouldn't have left me alone if he thought I didn't understand the danger.

That couldn't happen now. Some neighbor would be on the phone to the cops or the social justice warriors. Then Grandpa would be on his way to jail, and one of my few great memories from childhood would be turned into something ugly.

Just in case any of you are familiar with High Rolls, my grandpa's house was about halfway down Cottage Row on the left.

Anyway, this won't be that hot or that stinky, and it has to be done just in case it ever rains out here again. Wish I had a grandson close enough to help me. (grin)

Then tomorrow or early next week I have to go to Sierra Vista to take care of a pressing matter.

More than once I've almost "decided" not to write for a specific period, but that would be just silly. As I've said before, I'll write again when it's time.

By the way, GREAT baseball game last night. Houston won their first ever World Series baseball game. Most importantly, they illustrated to themselves last night that the LA Dodgers are not invincible even in their own home park.

Johnny-come-latelys, is what they are. (grin) I love underdogs. I hope they win it all. And I have a sneaking suspicion they might win the whole thing in Houston in Game 5.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Atlas Obscura at <https://www.atlasobscura.com/>. This is nothing specifically to do with writing, but of great interest to pretty much everyone, especially writers. If you don't have a subscription, I recommend it. Today's newsletter featured, for example, an article about the only man buried on the moon.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 540 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 540

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462

Total fiction words for the year..... 446608

Total nonfiction words for the month... 13500

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 166183

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 612791

The Daily Journal blog streak.....	697 days
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date.....	9
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	27
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Atlas Obscura](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Friday, 10/27**

[October 27, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I'm slow on the uptake lately. For example, I feel bad when I don't have a lot of writing to report in this Journal. But I realized, finally, that's just silly.

A lot of writers (most, even?) intentionally take time off between projects. Well, we assume they're taking time off. In reality, we don't know whether they're just busy with other things, are in a slump, or are fighting some other battle.

The difference here is that I'm slathering great gobs of my writing life (and my regular life as it affects my writing life) in public. Probably I should be arrested.

Is slathering in public against the law? If it isn't, possibly it should be. Something to consider for that next town council meeting.

\*\*\*

Well, I almost left a placeholder post for today and headed out on a fairly long turnaround trip to NM. Eight hours each way plus the hour or so of turnaround in the middle.

Turned out it was a good thing I rethought the trip because there were a lot of considerations I hadn't, you know, considered. Mostly because I didn't know they existed.

Anyway, over the past 3+ hours I've settled tons of stuff. As you know, settled stuff ALWAYS beats unsettled stuff, even if you weren't aware of it a short time before you settled it.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "Donald Bain, Widely Read Author (but Not by That Name), Dies at 82" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/donald-bain-widely-read-author-but-not-by-that-name-dies-at-82/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 260 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 260

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 13760  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 166443  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 613051

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 698 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Saturday, 10/28](#)**

[October 28, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Getting back in the habit of walking every day. Only a mile, but still. I'll increase that later to maybe as far as three, but I won't go nuts with it like I did a couple years ago.

Today started out pretty good. Had to clear a clogged outside drain. That was okay, but then it turned into a lot of other stuff that was mostly unnecessary. Had to do it to see that it was unnecessary though.

So I had a few of those wasted hours, where I might as well as rolled them into a ball and tossed them out the window. I don't like hours like that.

Switched a lot of little stuff around in my office too. The writing desk and chair and ‘puter are across the (small) room behind me now, against the opposite wall.

My Internet router was in the window sill (the sills are around a foot deep) and it’s now across the room on an old chest of drawers. We routed the cable down the wall, around a table and past my desk and my guest chair, then past the chest.

It all looks a lot better. I don’t do much Fung Schway (yeah, I know that can’t be how it’s spelled) but I’m not in it for “flow” anyway. I just want the place to look a little more inviting and feel better.

Oh, and after the changes, my kitten approved so that’s pretty much that. (My office is her primary house, so....)

AnNeeWay, I’m gonna read away part of the afternoon (started a novel yesterday by JA Konrath) and then watch Game 4 of the World Series beginning at 5 my time.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See “Smart Author Podcast Launches with Four Episodes” at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/10/smart-author-podcast-launches.html>. Then listen to the podcasts.

More ugliness from the people with the Big Money. Via The Passive Voice, see “Stealing Intellectual Property” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/stealing-intellectual-property/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 330

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14090

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 166773  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 613381

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 699 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Sunday, 10/29**

[October 29, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I didn't stay up for the whole game last night but I still woke up later than my usual time. Sorry to see that Houston lost their first home game in the post season.

Plus although I'd like to watch a seven-game series, I was also kind'a hoping Houston would wrap it up at home.

This morning I tweaked my website again. Most notably, I changed the home page back to the ProWriters Blog, moved the bundles into the left sidebar, and moved Writer Resources onto a dedicated page.

And frankly, that's about all I did today.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Via The Passive Voice, see "Amy Tan on Writing and the Secrets of Her Past" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/amy-tan-on-writing-and-the-secrets-of-her-past/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 130 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 130

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617

Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 12462  
Total fiction words for the year..... 446608  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14220  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 166903  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 613511

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 700 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, 10/30](#)

[October 30, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

This morning, in a piece I was reading online, I saw this: “In my opinion, less is more, just as it is when you’re writing, period.”

Oh dear god. I can almost see him primping.

Every time I hear a writer say “Oh, in writing, less is more,” I want to suggest they write nothing at all then. Based on their reasoning, their canon of work should expand exponentially.

But I can’t bring myself to do it. The vacant-eyed, slack-jawed stare that would ensue as the moron wondered whatever in the world I was talking about might be just enough to send me over the edge.

Hey, carpe jugulum.

And either the author of the article (James Ledbetter) or one of the bon vivants featured in the article tossed in a “try and weed out” where he or she meant to say “try TO weed out.”

The preposition “to” followed by a verb forms what is called an infinitive. Now, class, what do we call the conjunction “and” followed by a verb?

Yes, that's right. A blatant illustration of ignorance.

Yeah, I know. Picky. But these things matter. You're either a professional or you aren't.

And the truth is, you don't have to write a word of fiction to prove yourself a pretentious, condescending snob, uttering ridiculous platitudes that have zero meaning beyond the rhythm of the syllables themselves.

Hey, anything to add emphasis to that pinkie raised alongside the teacup or wine glass, eh?

Then again, the article was in the New Yorker, so maybe pretentious and condescending fits.

At any rate, I'll 'try and' ignore my desire to hold the writer responsible for what he puts on the page. Instead I'll 'try and' understand that he knew what he meant to say and so should I. After all, if the reader misunderstands, that's the reader's fault, right? Right? (Umm, no.)

Oh, the name of the article is "When British Authors Write American Dialogue, or Try To." Perhaps it should have been titled "When American Essayists Write in the American Language, or Try To: Illustration of a Failure."

Maybe before the New Yorker continues paying Mr. Ledbetter the big bucks, they should require him to 'try and' learn how to use the language.

\*\*\*

I actually wrote fiction today. I'm not sure why. I thought I'd look back at the novel I started, read over it and see where it goes.

It went pretty well, actually, within itself. But I still don't get a feeling that it wants to run to a full story.

Since today is the 30th and I have one more day in this month, I'll give that one more day to this same story and see what happens. If it doesn't take off, maybe I'll shelve it and begin something new.

I really enjoy writing the two major characters currently in the WIP but I don't know that they enjoy being written. Know what I mean? Maybe I'm intruding and they aren't ready to tell this story yet.

Who knows... maybe my subconscious, realizing it's under the gun, will cough up some good stuff. (grin)

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

Some interesting stuff in Dean’s “Some Clutter Gone” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/some-clutter-gone/>. For my money (at the risk of the pot calling the kettle seared), he fiddled around with his website as an excuse—albeit a worthwhile one—to put off writing until his challenges begin.

Via The Digital Reader, see “Checklist: Eight Items to Include in an Author’s Book Listing” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/10/29/checklist-eight-items-include-authors-book-listing/>.

Also via The Digital Reader, see the rant-starting “When British Authors Write American Dialogue, or Try To” at <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/when-british-authors-write-american-dialogue-or-try-to/>.

### **Fiction Words: 2834**

Nonfiction Words: 550 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 3384

### **Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)**

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... 2834 words. Total words to date..... 13071

Total fiction words for the month..... 15296  
Total fiction words for the year..... 449442  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 14770  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 167453  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 616895

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 701 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Tuesday, 10/31](#)**

[October 31, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Happy Hallowe'en.

I'd planned to return to my WIP novel today, but didn't. Other things took priority, but it was still a good day. No more pushing it. I'll write when it's time.

In the meantime, a brand new bundle launched today. The Trouble Comes Calling bundle contains my mystery novel, *The Platinum Blond Perturbance*. You can see the ad for the bundle at the top of the left sidebar on my website. The photo will take you to the bundle page.

\*\*\*

"I'm not really that knowledgeable about police work. The real story is in the psychology of the characters." ~ James Lee Burke

Worked on my website a little more this morning. I'm always trying to tweak it closer to being a writer's website. I think it's pretty much there. Take a look and let me know what you think.

The changes today were pretty big, so I thought I'd outline them for you here.

The main blog is still there, of course, but under the Home tab. As a related aside, I've thought about publishing a post occasionally on a Friday about my characters or my WIP or whatever. Then again, this Journal kind of covers the bases for that.

I got rid-of or reconfigured pretty much every tab. The new tabs for the long fiction are *The Wes Crowley Saga* with a drop-down menu, then *Mystery/Action/SF* with a drop-down menu.

It was kind of neat, grouping the non-Wes Crowley books. I found out I have 8 mystery novels, 6 Action-Adventure novels or novellas, and 7 Science Fantasy novels. Weird. I don't remember having written that much. (grin)

After that is the Short Fiction tab with a drop-down menu. Then come the Writing Books, then For Writers with a drop-down menu, then my bio and personas.

Under the For Writers tab are Copyediting, Audio Lectures, Writer Resources, and Free Stuff.

Like I said, the change (or rearrangement) was pretty extensive.

\*\*\*

I've come to understand that I'm motivated by the novels of Stephen King and James Lee Burke. I mention those two specifically because I know they write in much the same way I do. They just write off into the dark.

When asked by an interviewer, "How do you approach writing a new novel?" James Lee Burke replied, "I never know where a book is going. I have no plan. They just evolve and I incrementally discover the story."

And King has said publicly he tries to make a habit of turning out four good pages per day (about 2,000 words). When he writes, he does nothing else.

So why am I motivated specifically by these two? Because even as I'm lost in the story, on some subsurface level I'm aware that they're allowing the characters to shine through. They're putting their fingers on the keyboard and trusting what comes. And what comes is amazing.

Soon, fingers crossed, I'll get back to doing the same thing. But for today, no fiction writing. I'm going to read.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

If you read "A Story About Piracy" via The Passive Voice, you will be glad you did. See it at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/10/a-story-about-piracy/>.

For an interview with James Lee Burke, see <http://www.januarmagazine.com/profiles/jlburke.html>.

To get JA Konrath's The Newbie's Guide to Publishing in PDF, visit <http://harveystanbrough.com/downloads/> and click The Newbie's Guide To Publishing.

Via The Digital Reader, see "Create an Ebook Cover with Spark and Canva: Which is Better?" at <https://publishdrive.com/ebook-cover-with-spark>. I mention this one mostly for the links in the article. Well worth the time to read and play.

Check out Dean's "Catching Up And Pulphouse Fun" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/catching-up-and-pulphouse-fun/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 610 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 610

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1.....	1080 words.	Total words to date.....	1080
Day 2.....	2167 words.	Total words to date.....	3247
Day 3.....	1370 words.	Total words to date.....	4617
Day 4.....	1840 words.	Total words to date.....	6457
Day 5.....	1193 words.	Total words to date.....	7650
Day 6.....	1407 words.	Total words to date.....	9057
Day 7.....	1180 words.	Total words to date.....	10237
Day 8.....	2834 words.	Total words to date.....	13071

Total fiction words for the month..... 15296  
Total fiction words for the year..... 449442  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 15380  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 168063  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 617505

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 702 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, 11/1](#)

[November 1, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Wow. November already. For that matter, 2017 already. What happened to 1978? Just sayin'.

I failed to mention yesterday that we had a little visitor.

In the pre-dawn pitch, I was at my outside desk when I heard a sound that seemed not part of the usual early morning sounds.

I grabbed my torch (I like the Brit “torch” so much better than “flashlight”) and went looking for my kitten.

As I stepped past the southeast corner of the house, I shined the light to the west.

Toward the southwest corner of the house, something was sniffing at the base of the double doors that lead from my bedroom into the back yard.

When I shined the light on it, the head moved and a pair of eyes shone back at me. But it was too black to be my kit and it was too small to be Hannah, my wife’s cat. Besides, Hannah was still in bed.

Thinking it must be one of the neighborhood toms, I stamped my right foot and yelled “Git!”

It blinked a time or two, then stuck its fluffed-out tail straight up in the air and turned around to leave.

In that flash of time, the broad white streak up its tail filled the beam of my light.

At that point — and I am thankful — the story ends. The visitor wandered off to the west, the aroma around the back of my house no worse for wear.

\*\*\*

Out east of my house where I usually walk there are a few planted cottonwood (grandfather) trees. Until recently, the man who owns the little strip of land on which they stand was keeping them watered with a buried PVC system.

But the PVC kept breaking, I guess, and leaks kept springing up, so eventually he turned off the water to the whole row.

The two nearest my house had become oases for local wildlife. But for the past week, they've been dying.

At first I thought they were simply going dormant with the advent of autumn. But when I started walking again, I noticed the ground around them was dry.

My landlady knows the guy well, so I'd meant to ask her whether she might ask him to turn the water back on to the few trees that are (maybe) still viable.

I hadn't seen her until this morning. She said she would talk with him. Then she asked whether, for the time being, I could rig up something to run from her water source at the back of the corral. Maybe I could at least run water to the "big" tree at the corner. (This cottonwood is well over a hundred feet tall and very full.)

So instead of walking this morning I spent a couple hours gathering old garden hoses, inserting new washers, and running a system. As it turned out, I was able to run water to two cottonwoods, so we'll see whether we got to them soon enough. I hope so.

Cutting off water to ANYthing out here is just counterintuitive, or should be. And that's a very nice way of expressing the red-hot thought that's usually in my mind on this topic.

\*\*\*

Well, I wrote right at a thousand words in a crazed hour today, but the thing didn't go anywhere. It wasn't on the WIP. Not sure what's going on with that.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See "Indie Authors on Indie Authorship" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/10/indie-authors-on-indie-authorship.html>. Frankly, I didn't read this. I thought some of you might be interested.

## **Fiction Words: 1105**

Nonfiction Words: 600 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 1705

Writing of Pulp Novel 5 (a Stern Richards novel)

Day 1..... 1080 words. Total words to date..... 1080  
Day 2..... 2167 words. Total words to date..... 3247  
Day 3..... 1370 words. Total words to date..... 4617  
Day 4..... 1840 words. Total words to date..... 6457  
Day 5..... 1193 words. Total words to date..... 7650  
Day 6..... 1407 words. Total words to date..... 9057  
Day 7..... 1180 words. Total words to date..... 10237  
Day 8..... 2834 words. Total words to date..... 13071  
Day 9..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105  
Total fiction words for the year..... 450547  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 600  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 168663  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 619210

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 703 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Smashwords](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, 11/2](#)

[November 2, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Hmm... a meandering, personal-thought journey in today's Journal....

I've still been thinking about challenges, but I think that's almost over.

I thought about a challenge in which I would write at least one opening per day during the month of November.

If the opening took off, I'd write it. If not but if it piqued my interest, it would go into my Openings file. Either way, I'd still have to write a new opening every day.

But something didn't feel quite right about that. Mostly it felt too contrived, probably because it was.

The main thing, I think, is that I don't feel like I need to push or be pushed. I feel like when it's time, I'll write again. In short, I don't want to force it.

That's kind of an epiphany. So I'll think about this challenge a little more.

No. I'm certain I won't do the challenge, at least not as I first conceived of it.

Maybe I'll make a few adjustments and then do it. Like if an opening takes off, I won't write anymore openings until I've finished the story that took off. That might be all right.

But again, if I don't want to force the issue, what's the real purpose?

Maybe I'll just forget the whole challenge silliness and trust that when I'm ready, the words will be there. (grin) We'll see.

Okay, I called it "challenge silliness." But back when I was first starting out, especially with writing novels, challenges were a very important part of that.

The various challenges I took-on drove me to the keyboard and kept me writing. Without them I probably never would have written a whole novel, much less 27 of them.

But today I don't really need to be driven to the keyboard. Today when I get an idea that feels good, I just sit down and write. I break about once an hour, but otherwise I just write until I'm through the scene or chapter. Or too tired to keep going.

I stop with a jagged edge, then come back to it the next day, write my way out of the jagged edge and continue on. So maybe I'm beyond needing challenges. Is that possible? I do know that when the challenge is only about numbers, it no longer interests me because I've been there and done that.

And I have the kind of personality that rebels against being artificially psyched up or motivated.

Even back in high school when we were required to put our hands in the center of a circle, count one-two-three and yell "Team!" I was almost embarrassed. I just wanted to go play football already. I mean, does that sort of nonsense really help anyone?

It's prevalent enough even in professional sports that I suppose it does, but it never did anything but annoy me. For me, it's right up there with someone saying (with all good intentions) "I know you can do it."

The truth is, the person "knows" no such thing. Again, artificial encouragement.

\*\*\*

I was reading more of Stephen King's take on writing in story introductions here and there.

SK writes into the dark, and he writes very fast, usually holding himself to four clean pages (around 2,000 words) per day *When He's Writing*.

He also engages in cycling, going back over what he's written each day, though I think I read somewhere that he's more of a "taker-outer" than a "putter-inner." (I'm definitely a putter-inner.)

Anyway, when SK isn't writing, he's mulling, observing, listening, reading and waiting. And when it's time to write again, he writes.

A couple of days ago, I put up a quote of his here: "Amateurs sit and wait for inspiration. The rest of us just get up and go to work."

The thing is, *when he has something to write*, he gets up and goes to work. When he doesn't, he doesn't.

It isn't that he's "taking time off" between books. It's that he doesn't have anything to write.

That's kind of how I'm feeling recently. And more and more, I think that's probably all right.

You'll note, maybe, that I've removed the accounting for Pulp Novel 5 from the Journal. It's officially stalled at something over 13,000 words. Should it revive at some point, I'll put it back. I promise.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

Wow. Via The Digital Reader, see "Interactive Ebooks? Almost..." at JA Konrath's blog at <http://jakonrath.blogspot.com/2017/11/interactive-ebooks-almost.html>.

Also via The Digital Reader, see "8 Tips on Pricing Kindle Ebooks" at <https://selfpublishingadvice.org/how-to-price-an-ebook/>. Note: I offer this only as additional information. Her tips look pretty good to me but nothing really new.

See "Lifelike 'Sophia' Robot Granted Citizenship to Saudi Arabia" at <https://www.livescience.com/60815-saudi-arabia-citizen-robot.html>. Yeah. This is not a joke.

Today I refer you to The Passive Voice website for a lot of interesting things. Visit <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/>. Enjoy.

Finally see Dean's "False Start on Challenge" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/false-start-on-challenge/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 780 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 780

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105  
Total fiction words for the year..... 450547  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1380  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 169443  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 619990

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 704 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#),  
[Science Alert](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Friday, November 3](#)**

[November 3, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Yesterday after I posted the Journal, I noticed it looked as if it read “Thursday, One and One-Half.” So I’ll try to remember to spell out the month from now on.

More on writing...

In my ongoing mental-morphosis, I’m coming to understand more of what’s going on.

Nothing. Nothing’s going on. (grin) Well, nothing sinister. Maybe.

I got so used to a daily word count and then other goals that it feels odd not to be writing constantly. That’s all.

I’ve become comfortable with storytelling, and comfortable with knowing stories will come. At least that’s what I think has happened.

I can’t take the coming of stories for granted, but neither do I want to worry them into existence.

Somehow I feel like all of this is still tied up with me kicking cigars, a process that’s ongoing.

But what I wrote above about being tied to productivity and challenges and goals — that seems like something I don't need anymore. Yet on the fringes of my mind, something about not having a set goal nags me.

Could I have met my novel-a-month goal in October and kept it going?

I think so.

But do I need that?

Maybe.

I talk about S. King and others, but I don't know what goals they set for themselves, if any. And I don't have to emulate anyone else, but it's a luxury to know what's possible.

Ah well, the battle continues.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

See Linda Maye Adams' "Writing Around the Web" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/11/03/adventures-around-the-web-oct-28-nov-3-2017/>. Very good post. At least the first two thirds of it.

If you read the articles she lists, read the third article (8 Things...Fight Scenes) with a HUGE grain of salt, or not at all. It's filled with so many generalities and, in places, outright inaccuracies that I actually shudder to think how many young writers will take it to heart.

Via The Digital Reader, see "'Carat' vs. 'Karat' (vs. 'Caret')" at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/usage-carat-vs-karat>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 340 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 340

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105

Total fiction words for the year..... 450547

Total nonfiction words for the month... 1720

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 169783

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 620330

The Daily Journal blog streak.....	705 days
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date.....	9
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	27
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, November 4](#)

[November 4, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

In “Of Interest” below, I mention a Smashwords podcast. It’s all about how to work with beta readers. As such, it extolls the virtues of letting readers into your work and (I’ll bet) mentions none of the downsides.

You all know that I often employ a first reader. That’s one avid reader who knows exactly what to look for (specific places where confusion ensues, inconsistencies, and OBVIOUS wrong-word issues IF they pop out at him) and what to leave alone (literally everything else).

Sometimes, with some stories, I ask Kenneth to look for certain overall things: Is there too much description? Is the story too vague? Too anything? Not enough something?

But even when I do that, I never ask-for (or want) his advice on how to fix anything. He understands that and he’s good with it.

So if you use a first reader and the two of you are clear on a set of strict guidelines, that’s fine. In fact, I recommend it. In fact, I recommend Kenneth ([krf1952@gmail.com](mailto:krf1952@gmail.com)).

So what are the downsides of using beta readers?

The first and biggest, to me, is that using beta readers is the latest thing. The latest craze. I’m lucky, I guess, in that I’ve never been big on chasing after the latest craze. Like writing in all lower-case or omitting quotation marks around dialogue or not using punctuation at all or using beta readers.

So here, just to play devil’s advocate, I’m going to point out a few more downsides. Consider them food for thought.

1. If you allow ten people to read your book, all ten will give you different input. (Of the ten, two or three will LOVE your book, two or three will HATE it, and the others will think it’s all right. And chances are, none of them will tell you the truth.)

2. Input from one reader will often directly contradict input from another. In that case, whose advice do you take?

3. Most advice from beta readers, no matter how it's disguised, will boil down to how they would have done it.

4. The biggie — why would you ever allow anyone else, especially someone who's never written a novel, to influence how your novel is written?

Of course, every writer is different, and I've heard that a lot of writers swear by beta readers. So there y'go.

As the Big Mick just said, "Hey, whatever you wanna do. I got my own mountain to climb."  
\*\*\*

Had a slow early morning, then a leisurely trip to Sierra Vista, then home. I'm going to read today, and maybe do some thinking, but I'm not going to write fiction.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Via The Passive Voice, I encourage you to read "The Pendulum May Be Swinging Away from Fair Use" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/11/the-pendulum-may-be-swinging-away-from-fair-use/>. Read TPG's comments, then maybe click through and read the original post. But read TPG's comments.

Maybe to make up a bit for "8 Things...Fight Scenes" in yesterday's Journal, via The Passive Voice see "Q&A: Uneven Balance is a Tension Killer" at <http://howtofightwrite.tumblr.com/post/165745299548/qa-uneven-balance-is-a-tension-killer>. If you don't read it all, scroll down to the 12 "rules of action." This seems a great deal more realistic than the thing from yesterday.

And finally, see "How to Work with Beta Readers" at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/11/how-to-work-with-beta-readers.html>. Remember your salt shaker, please.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 560 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 560

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105  
Total fiction words for the year..... 450547  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2280  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 170343  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 620890

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 706 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Smashwords](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, November 5](#)

[November 5, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, it's Sunday. Not much here in the Journal today.

Around here we're breaking out our winter clothes, putting away summer stuff, etc. Generally taking the day off to do little things we don't have to do more than a couple times a year.

Doing some cleaning, some cooking, some redecorating of one wall in my office. Revisiting and adjusting the bedroom closet, stuff like that.

I hope to break out tomorrow and write some fiction. But I guess we'll see.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Not directly about writing but hilarious, see <https://phoenix.craigslist.org/evl/cto/d/2001-jeep-wrangler-sport-and/6351701604.html>.

For some reason this Journal and the tag "The Writing Life" got me to thinking about Howard Nemerov's nonfiction book **Journal of the Fictive Life**. If you enjoy reading about how other people do things, find that and read it. Great book.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 100 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 100

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105  
Total fiction words for the year..... 450547  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2380  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 170443  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 620990

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 707 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [humor](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, November 6](#)

[November 6, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

I am annoyed to no end when some machine or program thinks it knows better than I what I want. Of course, the machine can't be held to fault. Nor, these days, can the humans behind the machines because there's no way to contact or, ahem, engage the humans directly.

Of course, if I were regularly screwing up people's lives that much just as if it were a pleasurable past time, I wouldn't want anyone to be able to get hold of me either.

Increasingly, "updates" (ostensibly "improvements") are foisted upon us whether or not we want them. And this is all strictly because the [Fill in the Blankety Blank] Company wants it that way.

Yeah? Well it's MY money I'm spending. What about what I want?

Yesterday a message popped up in a small box on the lower right corner of my screen. It read "Updates are available for Office 365. Click this message to begin updates."

I was busy, so I clicked the X in the corner of the message to close it instead. I'd get back to it when I was at a stopping point.

But the program went ahead with the updates anyway.

I do have Office 365 installed, but I also have Microsoft Word 2007 installed. I did that myself a long time ago (10 years?) in a separate folder, etc. to save the computer becoming confused.

And I did it for a reason, primarily so I could use the Photo Editor that came with that wonderful program. With an earlier round of “improvements” Microsoft “improved” the Office Suite by removing the photo editor.

When Microsoft “improved” Office 365 yesterday, they somehow managed to access my installation of Office 2007 and reinstall it OVER Office 365. This despite my previous installation having been in a separate partition of the hard drive.

They actually sought it out, found it, removed it, then reinstalled it over the newer program.

Then for good measure, they changed all my defaults. So when I opened a spreadsheet, it opened with Excel 2007. When I opened a Word document, it opened with Word 2007.

I finally had to completely uninstall Office 2007. I had no idea whether doing so would maul my entire Office installation since Bill Gates’ minions had mixed and matched them.

In the end, I was able to restore Office 365 as my default program for Excel, Word, etc. But of course, now my photos open with Paint.

I still have Photo Editor on my writing ‘puter. I’ll try later today to re-install it on my business ‘puter.

The typical response to such affronts is “Well, you can always use blah blah blah.”

Yeah, I KNOW I can do use some other program, but I already HAD the program I wanted to use. I bought it, paid for it, and some nameless, faceless corporation summarily removed it. Is there anyone left in America who does anything other than roll over anymore?

The first thing I did after I uninstalled Office 2007 was to disable updates to Office products. Period. And those are the only choices. You can have updates or you can disable them, but you can’t pick and choose which ones to install, when to install them, etc. It’s all or nothing.

And that’s fine. I’d rather have no updates than some I don’t want.

Okay, rant mostly ended. Grates on me that we’re careful not to lose our freedom of choice to politicians, then hand it over lock, stock and rubber duck to the corporations AND pay them for the privelege.

The whole thing puts me in the mood to download Corel WordPerfect and start using it again. Hmm. In case you’re interested, see <http://www.wordperfect.com/en/product/office-suite/>.

\*\*\*

Dean has moved all his online workshops to Teachable. I mention it because now when you sign up for a workshop with him, you have access to it forever. (Used to he allowed access for about two weeks after the course ended.) This is significant. If you’re interested, see

<https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/yeah-all-november-workshops-on-teachable/>.  
\*\*\*

Working with my computers and reading today. No fiction writing. Soon.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See Linda Maye Adams' "The Search for Discoverability" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/11/06/the-search-for-discoverability/>.

And remember that the main thing you can do to enhance your discoverability is create more product (write more stories and books). The more you have "out there" the easier it is to find.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 750 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 750

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105  
Total fiction words for the year..... 450547  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3130  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 171193  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 621740

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 708 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, November 7](#)

[November 7, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A mild morning for a change, at the cusp of 50°. If I took a photo straight up at the moon in the high mist, it would make a great horror or romance cover. Funny how those two genres can be so

closely related in the images they invoke. Or maybe it isn't.  
\*\*\*

Well, self-publishing platform and distributor Pronoun is shutting down. See "Epilogue" at <https://pronoun.com/>. I never got around to using them because of the extremely condescending language on their interface.

However, in other news, my preferred distributor, Draft2Digital, now distributes to Amazon. I am in heaven. For the announcement, please see <https://www.draft2digital.com/blog/draft2digital-now-distributes-to-amazon/>.

So Pronoun, who famously distributed works to Amazon, shut down yesterday, and then D2D, who previously distributed works to all the big-name players EXCEPT Amazon, began distributing to Amazon today. Hmmmm.

Now I'm waiting for the announcement that McMillan bought D2D. (I hope it doesn't come.)  
\*\*\*

Had to run a repair on my Office 365 today to make it work. Sure have had a lot of weird stuff happen recently. Ugh.

Back tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Oh my. See "An Offer To Readers for My Coming Challenge" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/an-offer-to-readers-for-my-coming-challenge/>. Note the money back guarantee toward the end of the post.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 200

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 1105  
Total fiction words for the year..... 450547  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3330  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 171393  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 621940

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 709 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182
Days free of nicotine.....	28

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## The Journal, Wednesday, November 8

November 8, 2017 by Harvey

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, I believe (knock on wood) the worst of the cigar madness is behind me.

Something in my mind sort of snapped late yesterday, leading to a lot more clarity than I've enjoyed in a while. I hope it stays that way.

\*\*\*

I wrote for a little while, just some dialogue between two wise guys over a poker hand, something to get my hand in.

One wise guy is complaining that his associates think he doesn't understand the concept of LOL all that well.

The other asks him for an example.

The first one says, "Oh. Well, I mean, say I'm workin' a blade into this numbers guy an' I say, 'Hey, this is a STICKY situation, ain't it? LOL.' Now how is that not appropriate?"

"I mean, a 'sticky' situation? You get it, am I right?"

"Or since I gotta hit him with the knife several times, you know, to be sure, maybe I say 'Hey, it's almost like you're STUCK in time, eh? LOL.' Eh? Eh? You see where I'm goin' here, am I right?"

He looks away, takes a drag off a cigarette, mumbles, "An' they say I ain't got the concept." He shakes his head and looks up at his friend. "Seriously, can you believe that or what?"

\*\*\*

Otherwise I installed the Opera browser on my business computer. Firefox was just dragging it down too much. But get this: Opera imported all my bookmarks, etc. from Firefox and I didn't even have to ask. It's a quick browser that, at least so far, doesn't eat up a lot of CPU or memory.

I also revised my website a little more, again, still fine-tuning it to be a writer's website. This time I got rid of the left sidebar, put everything in the right, and widened the right sidebar from 25% to 30%.

On the writing side, I began conceiving of a new set of goals, and a new overall annual goal that will rival Dean's AND remain realistic. Not ready yet to announce it.

We have a big weekend coming up with two of our sons and their wives and children visiting, so looking forward to that. I suspect by Monday I'll be ready to focus on fiction writing again.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

I hoped to have something here today, but frankly I didn't see anything I thought was worth sharing.

Fiction Words: 1133

Nonfiction Words: 410 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 410

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238

Total fiction words for the year..... 451680

Total nonfiction words for the month... 3740

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 171803

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 623483

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 710 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, November 9](#)**

[November 9, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Tomorrow marks the 242nd birthday of the United States Marine Corps. Happy Birthday and Semper Fi to any Marines out there.

Sometime tomorrow, I'll get off by myself and drink a toast (probably a shot of Beam Devil's Cut) to those brothers and sisters who are no longer with us.

To those who are still around,

*May your days be vibrant,  
your evenings calm,  
your heart safe and warm at home.  
Semper Fi  
\*\*\**

The air is damp and chilly this morning. Probably around 40-some degrees, but damp so it feels colder. We got 3/10ths of an inch of rain night before last, and then were socked in with heavy, San Francisco type fog for a few hours yesterday morning.

I prefer the damper air. It's very good for breathing, at least in my case.

\*\*\*

Not much going on today. Mostly just prepping for the visit with two of our sons and their families.

Otherwise I'm reading and periodically checking online for items that might be of interest.

Back tomorrow.

## **Of Interest**

DWS is offering a great deal. See "Holiday Offer for Workshops" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/holiday-offer-for-workshops/>.

Via The Passive Voice, see "The People in Your Office" at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/11/08/business-musings-the-people-in-your-office/>.

Because I have a friend who was slandered (and maybe libeled, I don't remember), see "Taylor Swift is Threatening to Sue a Blog for Calling Her a White Supremacist" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/11/taylor-swift-is-threatening-to-sue-a-blog-for-calling-her-a-white-supremacist/>.

I wasn't surprised, frankly, to see the ACLU standing up against Ms. Swift given their severe lean to the left side of the political spectrum. They tend to be all about the Constitution when they can use it to pummel someone on the Right.

But I was somewhat surprised to see TPG's comment and those of a few others. I suppose, now, we can say (or publish) whatever we want about whomever we want and are protected by the first amendment. Just like that, libel and slander are protected speech. Huh. Who knew?

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 330 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 330

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4070  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 172133  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 623813

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 711 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, November 10](#)

[November 10, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

This is mostly a placeholder post, but with some good stuff in "Of Interest."

It's early morning and cold (well, chilly at 40°). Let the ladies outside for awhile since they'll spend most of my sons' visit hiding under the bed.

Anyway, posts for today, tomorrow and Sunday probably will be pretty sparse. Thanks for hanging in there.

Back tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

I've been remiss recently in posting items of interest from James Scott Bell. See "Be Productive, Persistent, and Professional" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/11/be-productive-persistent-and-professional.html>.

I also recommend "What is Originality?" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/10/what-is-originality.html>.

See "Adventures Around The Web November 4-10, 2017" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/11/10/adventures-around-the-web-november-4-10-2017/>.

See "Starting Challenge Tomorrow" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/starting-challenge-tomorrow/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 120 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 120

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4190  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 172253  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 623933

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 712 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, November 11](#)

[November 11, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

To all the veterans out there and the spouses who support them, I hope you have an enjoyable and thoughtful Veterans Day. Or as we in the Marine Corps call it, Hangover Day. (grin)

I'll be back with regular, longer posts beginning on Monday, so thanks for hanging in there with me.

It's been something around 3 years since I started this, and most of you have been here from the beginning.

Then I broke the streak (not sure how long it even was) and started again almost two years ago. In 16 more days, this blog will have posted every day for two years without missing.

Of course, DWS has gone around 1400 days without missing. (I checked his blog yesterday, but didn't find the running total he used to post.)

But other than his and mine, are there any other daily blog posts out there about writing? Just curious.

Back tomorrow.

### **Of Interest**

Please see "The Voice of Women Veterans" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/11/11/the-voice-of-women-veterans/>.

See "Off the Ground and Flying" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/off-the-ground-and-flying/>. (For the really interesting stuff, scroll down to "Short Story Challenge.")

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 200

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4390  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 172453  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 624133

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 713 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Sunday, November 12](#)

[November 12, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, the last day of the visit of two of my sons, their wives, and five grandchildren (3 knights-in-training, 2 warrior princesses). It's been something akin to exhausting, but also great fun watching the cousins run and romp and play together.

On the adult side, we've all shared good visits, mixing and matching and drifting among each other.

Today will be a day of final visits and hasta-la-laters, then laundry etc. to move back toward a semblance of normalcy. For what's left of the day, I'll watch Casablanca for the billionth time (and enjoy it).

Tomorrow, my life as a fiction writer resumes. Finally. (grin) I hope to announce a new challenge, one that actually interests me. I still have a few details to work out so that it's interesting, easy to follow and of practical use.

See you then.

### **Of Interest**

Dean continues on his challenge with "Day Two: Still Flying" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/day-two-still-flying/>.

Via The Passive Voice, see "Oliver Sacks on the Three Essential Elements of Creativity" at <https://www.brainpickings.org/2017/11/09/oliver-sacks-the-river-of-consciousness-the-creative-self/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 160 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 160

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4550

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 172613  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 624293

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 714 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, November 13](#)

[November 13, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Well, this should be an interesting week. This is a convergence week for me, when several different events, sequences, and changes are coming together to consume blocks of time.

I went to Benson this morning to renew my driver's license and combined that with a shopping trip to settle our cupboard and refrigerator accounts after this past weekend. By the time that and a couple other necessary chores were done, that was the morning. It's now approaching noon.

On Wednesday morning, I have to head for Sierra Vista (Fort Huachuca) to renew my military ID card, and while I'm there I'll take care of a few other things I need to get done as well.

Then on Thursday afternoon, I'll go back to Sierra Vista for an eye appointment. Mona will be with me for that one since my eyes probably will be dilated. Ugh.

So this will be a fragmented week at best.

I keep saying I'm going to talk about my new challenge, but this edition of the Journal is getting long so I'll plan to do that tomorrow. I know you're waiting with bated breath. (grin)

### **Topic: Content Marketing**

In "Of Interest" today, Linda Maye Adams talks about writing free for discoverability. I want to say, for the record, I don't write free.

And why should I? Why should any of us give away our work for "exposure"?

After all, have you ever heard of a mechanic, even when he's opening a new garage, offering his services free just to get his name out there? Or a plumber? Lawyer? Doctor? Fine artist? Musician?

So why should we?

So again, I want to say, for the record, I don't write free.

But I can't.

This Journal goes out every day and has done for almost the past two years. And I've been posting to one website or another (often two or three at the same time) most often on a weekly basis since around 1998.

I also occasionally donate an article (usually a reprint of a posted article) to a writers' group magazine.

Of course, that's all nonfiction.

But I can't even say I haven't offered up fiction free. Remember my 70+ week streak of publishing a new short story every week, free, on my website?

I've also donated novels and even whole series to various groups and individuals, all without being paid with anything but "exposure."

So I'm not really in a position to cross my arms over my chest, set my chin and advise against giving away work for exposure.

There's enough piracy out there that you're giving away a lot of your work anyway. The title of one recent article in The Guardian (a worthless rag IMHO, but still) reads, "We're told to be grateful we even have readers."

What I will say is this: Be intelligent about your charity.

- There's nothing wrong with using "free" or "steeply discounted" TEMPORARILY to interest readers in a series.
- There's nothing wrong with sharing what you know, especially if you enjoy doing so and feel you have an appreciative audience.
- There's nothing wrong with occasionally giving away something you've written for whatever reason you choose.

But frankly, the term "writing for exposure" smacks of a scam to me, especially when it comes from a major publisher (like HuffPo). Outfits like that make tons of money from your writing, but they're ethically and morally bankrupt when it comes to sharing the wealth, a concept you would think a place like HuffPo would understand and eagerly endorse.

But back to the topic for a moment. Over the course of my free short story of the week, that gambit had no measurable effect on sales. Nor did any of the other times I gave away my writing. Not once.

The few times I've offered novels free, either on my websites, in my blog posts, or at retailers, I also saw no significant effect on sales.

If I tried "content marketing," I think my own rules of thumb would be

- If the market to whom you're submitting your work is making money on it, so should you;
- Look over the market (paying or not) carefully to be sure your work won't be published among stories that are poorly crafted compared to your own; and
- Check the "reach" of the market. If you're writing for exposure, be sure the market has more than a handful of subscribers.

Beyond that, if you figure it out, let me know.

\*\*\*

For the rest of today, I'll begin a copyedit on a lengthy work, I'll read a bit, and I'll work out the final details on the challenge so I can write about it here tomorrow.

See you then.

## **Of Interest**

Thanks to Alison Holt (see <https://alisonholtbooks.com/>) for pointing me to this movie trailer of great interest to writers: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt6225520/>.

See "Discoverability Adventures: Week 2" at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/11/12/discoverability-adventures-week-2/>.

See "A List of Fonts by Women" at <http://www.victoriarushton.com/fonts-by-women>.

A special treat for you who follow this journal. See "Betty Boop for President" (a film) at [https://archive.org/details/BettyBoopForPresident\\_201310](https://archive.org/details/BettyBoopForPresident_201310).

You can see many more BB videos at <https://archive.org/search.php?query=betty+boop&page=2>.

And finally, straight from Backwards Bizarro World, see "New York graffiti artists triumph over developer who destroyed their work" at <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/nov/09/new-york-graffiti-artist-win-lawsuit-5-pointz>. There is no mention of the so-called "artists" having defaced the legal owner's property to begin with. Ahem.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 880 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 880

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5430  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 173493  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 625173

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 715 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, November 14](#)

[November 14, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, again today I'm not going to publish my upcoming challenge. Frankly, I'm not certain yet what form it will take.

For the new folks who've recently joined us here on the Journal, welcome. To bring you up to speed, I've been a very prolific writer (by most standards) but have experienced something of a slump off and on for the past few months.

This morning, like a jolt of electricity, I realized the reason for the slump. More on that in a bit.

The last story I finished was a novel titled Loose Ends. That was in September. I published it on October 12, after my first reader had a go at it. But I have to tell you, it seems as if it were a year ago.

At times like this, I look back at numbers. They don't always show what I'd like to see, but they don't lie. And my spreadsheet tells me I've had a far less-than-productive year.

My fiction production started out well with a 92,000-word January. That fell off to a still somewhat respectable 59,000 words in February and 56,000 in March.

It dropped to 39,000 in April, and enjoyed a slight resurgence to 45,000 in both May and June.

But from there it took a nosedive to 25,000 words in July (that's also when my seeming slump started), then to 16,000 in August before surging back up to 54,000 in September. Much of that was the novel *Loose Ends*.

But in October my engine stalled again and my production dropped to 15,000 words of fiction. Thus far in November, I've written hardly any fiction.

Somehow, in the midst all of that, I managed to eke out 7 novels, 2 novellas and several short stories in over 451,000 words.

Still, I feel like a slacker. Ugh. And worst of all, I haven't been able to figure out what's going on. Well, as I mentioned earlier, until now.

This morning, while searching for a particular blog post for a friend over on my main website, I came across a post titled "Epiphany."

I took a moment to read it and realized exactly what went wrong: I fell off Heinlein's Rules. Or more to the point, I allowed conscious-mind garbage to shove me off Heinlein's Rules.

It happened in the midst of a story I was writing back in July. I've been struggling ever since.

Now I've long considered myself an "adherent" of Heinlein's Rules. They really are simple, but incredibly difficult to follow.

The first rule is, "You must write." The second is, "You must finish what you write." See? Simple to say. Not so easy to do.

If there were a Rule 6 to Heinlein's Rules, I suspect it would be "If you attempt to follow these Rules, you WILL occasionally fall off." What's worse, when you do fall off, it takes awhile to realize it. In the meantime, a kind of mental paralysis sets in.

If you don't have a copy of Heinlein's Rules, you can get an annotated copy free at <http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Heinleins-Business-Habits-Annotated.pdf>.

I'm not coming back just yet. I have some other things to do. But now that I know what's going on, I'll be back to fiction writing soon. And I'm able to breathe again.

See you tomorrow.

**Of Interest**

PLEASE read “Important. And Pass It On” at <http://www.neilgaiman.com/journal/2006/10/important-and-pass-it-on.html>.

If you like, see “Epiphany” over at <http://harveystanbrough.com/pro-writers/epiphany/>.

See “Story Four a Slight Miracle” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/story-four-a-slight-miracle/>. Interesting.

Well, here you go. In a continuation of yesterday’s topic (and via The Digital Reader), see “Author Blogging 103: Guest Blogging, or How to Write for Exposure” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/11/13/author-blogging-103-guest-blogging-write-exposure/>.

Note: For some reason Nate added, “You can find links to several good posts in the comments of this blog,” but I saw only two comments on that particular post and neither of them contained a link. So I’m not sure what he was talking about there.

Anyway, for those of you who pursue “writing for exposure,” best of luck. Frankly, beyond what I already do, I’d rather just spend the time writing fiction.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 690 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 690

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6120  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 174183  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 625863

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 716 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Neil Gaiman](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Wednesday, November 15**

[November 15, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

I started the day (and this Journal) with a brief write-up about an interview with Andy Weir, best-selling author of *The Martian* and now *Artemis*.

Some of his responses in the interview put me in mind of the film *Idiocracy*. If you haven't seen it, I strongly recommend it. More of the world that's conveyed in it becomes real every day.

But the write-up sounded curmudgeonly even to me, so I replaced it with this. Frankly, I thought the guy sounded like a moron, and I decided I probably don't want to risk buying his books.

But you can decide for yourself. You can read his interview at <https://www.space.com/38725-artemis-andy-weir-author-interview.html>.

\*\*\*

Well, it's already a wonderful day. I took care of a few things in Sierra Vista, and then returned to Saint David to check my mail. There was a complete collection of back issues of the old *Pulphouse Magazine* (c. 1991 – 1995) waiting for me. I am in Hebben.

\*\*\*

I still haven't hit on anything for a new challenge yet.

Dean's current "little" challenge is to write a short story every day for what remained (at the time) of November. He started on November 11, so that would be 20 stories in 20 days.

I've decided to jump into that just for the heck of it. I'll write a short story every day for the rest of November. Should be a piece of cake. After all, I don't have near as much going on as Dean does. So 15 stories in 15 days. If I'm having fun at the end of that time, I'll just keep going with it.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

Not a lot out there on the Web today. If you're interested in Dean's progress on his story-a-day goal, you might stop by and check his second close call in as many days.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 300

Writing of ()

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... 2238  
Total fiction words for the year..... 451680  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6420  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 174483  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 626163

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 717 days  
Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Non-Writing Day](#), [Space.com](#), [the writing life](#)

## [The Journal, Thursday, November 16](#)

[November 16, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Okay, so my challenge is a copycat of Dean's current short-term effort.

*UPDATE:* Not a copycat, not quite. My short-term challenge is at least one short story per day for the rest of November. If I miss one day, my challenge is busted.

Dean's challenge apparently was to write 20 short stories in the last 20 days of November. Not quite the same thing as having to write one per day. If he misses a day, he can simply make it up later. (See "Of Interest" below.)

In my case, I'm doing this primarily to jumpstart my writing again. I'll write at least one short story every day for the rest of November, beginning today. So 15 short stories in 15 days.

I hope a good novel start comes from all of this too, but either way, it should be fun.

The big thing I gleaned from the short interview with Harlan Ellison yesterday was that we write to entertain ourselves. We don't write for the audience, and we owe them nothing beyond the completed work. I kind of like that.

\*\*\*

I was up at 3, but I did practically nothing of any importance until around quarter to 9. After that I put in a load of laundry.

Around 10 I moved to the writing 'puter. By noon I'd finished "Mistaken Identity," a story about a gunfight in an old west saloon.

At about 1:20 I have to head for Sierra Vista for an eye appointment. Hope I don't cut my short stories this close anymore.

See you tomorrow.

## Of Interest

See "The Importance of Rest" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/the-importance-of-rest/>.

See "When Music You Wrote Becomes a Hate Speech Soundtrack," not so much for the original post, but for The Passive Guy's advice following the OP. It's on copyright, and it's excellent. See it at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/11/when-music-you-wrote-becomes-a-hate-speech-soundtrack/>.

## Fiction Words: 2082

Nonfiction Words: XXXX (Journal)

So total words for the day: XXXX

## Writing of "Mistaken Identity" (challenge story 1 of 15)

Day 1..... 2082 words. Total words to date..... 2082 (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 4320

Total fiction words for the year..... 453762

Total nonfiction words for the month... 6710

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 174773

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 628535

The Daily Journal blog streak..... 718 days

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#), [the writing life](#)

## The Journal, Friday, November 17

November 17, 2017 by Harvey

**Hey Folks,**

**Topic: On Describing Setting**

How much description in setting is "too much"?

Here's a rule of thumb: If the description is something you, the author, are adding, it's too much; you'll bore the reader to death. If it's the POV character's opinion of the setting that he absorbed through his own physical senses, it will be just right and the reader will be hooked.

Every character (like every human) has a unique POV that is determined by his or her physical senses (including any limitations or enhancements of those senses) and filtered through his or her past experiences.

The physical senses provide the setting; the past experiences provide the opinion of the setting. Both are necessary.

Description of a setting is not offered as a laundry list of bland facts bereft of opinion. We don't write, "The room was paneled in walnut. The floor was covered with a thick red carpet. The whole place smelled of cherry pipe smoke." (An author might bring that into a story.)

But if we give it to the POV character, he will give us his opinion of it. That's what makes it interesting to the reader.

According to one POV character, the walls are panelled in a warm brown, welcoming wood. Unfortunately, the floor is covered in a god-awful bordello carpet and the place reeks with the filthy stench of smoke.

According to another, the heavy wooden walls make the room feel closed in, and the carpet looks like hungry flames licking up out of the floor. The only saving grace is the sweet scent of cherry pipe smoke wafting through the room.

And another would see (hear, smell) it entirely differently.

Can you have more than one POV character describe a single room? Of course. Everything depends on your story.

Just remember that any description of setting that is filtered through the POV character's physical senses and delivered with his or her opinions is never too much.

And anything that you, the author, feel like you "should" add will probably be too much.

(If you cycle back through and the character notices something he/she didn't notice before, feel free.)

\*\*\*

**Well, a couple of things....**

**1. *I'm off the challenge.*** I just wasn't feeling it. Really, I wasn't feeling it from the beginning.

I probably won't even publish the story I wrote yesterday. It wasn't fun, and it wasn't anything good. It was the result of a guy trying to force something, and that never turns out well.

Writing was fun for me right up until I stopped writing in the middle of a story back in July.

After that I wrote and published two more novels (The Implications in August and Loose Ends in September), but when I started the novel for October, I stopped writing it too.

I think maybe I need to go back to the one in July and either follow Heinlein's Second Rule (Finish what you write) or throw it out completely, then move forward again from there.

I'll at least go back and look at it with that in mind. Then as I move forward, I'll look at some others I started and didn't finish until I get back to the present. Same thing, either finish them or throw them out.

But I'm not going to do it under additional meaningless pressure. I'm doing a lot of other non-writing things just now as well, including a couple of copyedits, some family things, and so on.

So I'll take care of those writing things as I'm moving through the other things.

**2. *In the meantime, it seems silly*** to keep publishing the Journal every day even when I'm not writing. So as of today, I'm letting it go for awhile. I hasten to add that I expect to be back. When I come out of this on the other side, I'll pick up publishing the Journal again, probably. But for now, as I said, it just seems silly.

After today, if I have something to convey that I believe you will find useful, you'll get a copy of the Journal in your email.

But if you don't, just know I'm fine. I'm just doing what I gotta do.

When I come back, I'll be immersed in fiction writing again. Until then, thanks for hanging in there.

### **Of Interest**

I suggest you check Dean's place at <http://deanwesleysmith.com> each morning. It doesn't really take more than a minute or two to determine whether the day's entry is worthwhile.

I also recommend subscribing to Linda Maye Adams' blog at <https://lindamayeadams.com/>.

Finally, I recommend you check the Writers' Resources page on my website from time to time. I add links to it often. See <http://harveystanbrough.com/writer-resources/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 780 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 780

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... 4320

**Total fiction words for the year..... 453762**

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7490

**Total nonfiction words for the year..... 175553**

**Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 629315**

**The Daily Journal blog streak..... 719 days**

**Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9**

**Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27**

**Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4**

**Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182**

*'Til we meet again. Adiós.*

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Signing Off For Now](#), [the writing life](#), [Topic](#), [Writing Setting](#)

I STOPPED PUBLISHING THE DAILY JOURNAL WITH THE ABOVE EDITION.  
IF/WHEN I RESUME, THAT EDITION WILL BE SHOWN BELOW.

## **[The Journal, Friday, December 1](#)**

[December 1, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

### *An Accounting of Days*

I closed out this Journal on November 18. I didn't want the unnecessary pressure of that daily deadline while I was working out whatever problem derailed my writing.

That was only twelve days ago, but it seems as if months have passed. Anyway, for whatever it's worth, it worked. Or more specifically, it's working.

Sometime in the last few days, I realized there is no specific one thing that "derailed" my writing habit. Instead, I seem to have reached a merging of life events and factors. I also realized that convergence has been building for some time.

The convergence doesn't "stop" me from writing, but its components require time and thought. They distract me from even thinking in the way I have to think when I'm writing.

I'm not back yet, but I do at least finally understand what's going on. And that has enabled me to turn a corner and head back toward where I want to be.

I have to give it the time it requires, but a few days ago I didn't even know that.

### ***History***

The first sign of this convergence appeared in my writing habit a few months ago when I tossed aside my daily goal as being unnecessary. You might remember that. I said specifically I didn't need a daily goal anymore.

Of course, that's just silly. If writing is your chosen profession, then you must write. And if your attitude about it is on track (that it's fun) then why wouldn't you want to write every day? But for the moment, it is what it is.

From that point, I progressed (regressed?) through starting and giving up on challenges, starting and giving up on novels and stories, struggling to keep writing even while in the midst of writing a short story or novel, and maybe most importantly, trying to "fix" my problem in various ways:

The most obvious and telling fix was that I changed my writing environment several times, both the surface I was writing on and where that surface was located.

To give you a glimpse of the lunacy, I moved my desk out to storage, as if the desk were the problem. To replace it, I used a drafting table; then I replaced that with a large typing table.

I replaced that with an old dining room table (I cut it down to the right height); then cut down a smaller old dressing table because at least it had small drawers in it; and did a few other crazy things.

While all of that was going on, I moved out of the hovel, then back in, then out again etc. I tried to write in the hovel, outside, and in my office. I tried to set up the travel trailer as an alternative office (like the hovel), but that lasted all of one icy-cold day.

And a lot of other stuff, non-writing stuff, was going on over those few months. I won't go into detail, but I was variously struck with direct physical, mental and emotional blows — some good and some bad — that you (or at least I) can't simply shake off.

I just have to muddle through them the best way I can. Oddly, the good ones stand alone. They don't serve to mitigate the bad ones, at least in my experience. Yet the bad ones tend to magnify the other bad ones. Very strange.

Anyway, in the midst of all that I stopped my only "bad" habit — cigar smoking — which was also my only avenue for an uninterrupted hour of Just Relaxation. I've written only 6000 words of fiction since October 10, the day I stopped.

(If I were certain I could smoke only one or two cigars per day, I'd start again in a heartbeat. As always, to validate such decisions, you must compare length of life with quality of life.)

### ***Back to the Present***

A couple of days ago, a lot of this cleared up for me. As a result, with these new realizations and with my wife's help, yesterday I moved my old desk back inside my office. It's a beautiful walnut creation that was put together back when craftsmanship still mattered.

That alone won't start me writing again immediately. But it's one massive step back toward my version of normal. I still have a few more things to work out. Maybe some gathering to do, and maybe some shedding of problems and people who lay them at my door.

As I said before, I'm not back yet. But I believe I'll be back before too much longer. For now, I'll just give this process the time it needs.

In the meantime, thanks for your attention, concern and support. I appreciate you.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 780 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: XXXX

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 780  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 176333  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 630095

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#) [Leave a comment](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, December 2**

[December 2, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I didn't plan to post again this soon. With my return feeling imminent, though, I figure what harm could it do.

A friend wrote to me privately. In his email, he mentioned the desk, said he'd like to see it and wondered whether maybe it has magic powers.

Actually, it might have. I thought I'd share my expanded response to him with you.

### *My Desk*

As I mentioned yesterday, my desk is walnut, stained naturally in a warm medium brown. The finish on the leading edge of the large surface shows some wear, primarily in four places: where my forearms rest while I'm typing and where the previous owner's elbows/forearms rested when he was writing longhand. More on that later.

The top of the desk, which is solid walnut and almost two inches thick, looks like the deck of an aircraft carrier. It's five feet wide and almost three feet deep.

Originally, the desk had five drawers. Two were shallow lap drawers, each 18" wide and 2" top to bottom. They were also as deep as the desk.

The other three drawers are in a single pedestal down the right side. Each of those is 14" wide and 5" top to bottom. They also are as long as the desk is deep. So tons of storage.

It just occurred to me, in that way the desk is like a giant treasure box. (All boys, it seems, regardless of age, must have a treasure box. It's similar to a woman's hope chest, I suppose, but it relies on actualities and memories rather than possibilities.)

I loved the two wide, deep lap drawers, but when I cut 3" off the legs to lower it to "computer desk" height, I had to remove the lap drawers and their support so I could get my legs under the desk. Sigh.

But if I hadn't done that, the desk would be too high, putting my arms at an awkward angle for typing. That can cause all sorts of problems.

I didn't want to cut the desk down, and that's why I first moved it out. Then recently I remembered it's MY desk and I bought it so I could write novels on it. So any modifications are fine. Modifying it is better than having it sit in storage collecting dust.

I saw a stamp somewhere on the underside of the desk that identified it as having been built in the 1930s. If memory serves, according to the lady we bought it from, it was already a writer's desk when her husband bought it, though the first writer's name escapes me, if she even mentioned it.

Then her husband, a novelist, bought it. As I recall, that was in the early 1950s. He wrote several novels on it longhand. He also wrote tech manuals.

When he passed away, we attended the estate sale and bought the desk from his 92 (I think) year-old widow for \$250.

When I told her I was a writer and novelist, she was very pleased and tears came to her eyes. "Then I know it's going home," she said.

So yes, it very probably is magic.

\*\*\*

I probably won't post for a few more days.

### Of Interest

Via The Passive Voice, see "A New Story..." at <https://electricliterature.com/a-new-story-by-the-master-of-hardboiled-detective-fiction-1ff845e9479a>.

Dean's offering to be a first reader for other writers again. The upshot is, participants get him as a reader (with feedback) free and two online seminars besides. See <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/want-to-be-challenged-i-am-doing-it-again/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 580 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 580

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1360  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 176913  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 630675

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [The Passive Voice](#) [Leave a comment](#)

## [The Journal, Tuesday, December 5,](#)

[December 5, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

A few days ago, a friend sent me an email: "You think too much."

I could only respond with a smiley face.

I do understand why “you think too much” would appear to readers of this Journal to be true. After all, the point of the Journal is to bare the most intimate details and thought processes of my writing life, with the ultimate goal of maybe cutting the learning curve a bit for you, the subscribers.

But I assure you, I only think “too much” here, in this Journal. And really, I don’t know that I’m thinking too much as probably sharing too much.

I’m very aware that one of my weaknesses has been conveying too much information (TMI), whether speaking aloud or in nonfiction writing like this Journal. I’ve been that way since my early childhood, so I doubt I’ll change now.

For example, my wife often says I’m “too specific.” When she asks where something is, I might say it’s “near the back right corner of the third drawer from the top in my desk.”

I just can’t bring myself to offer up a soup sandwich like “It’s in my desk” or “It’s in a drawer in my desk.”

I actually *want* to say “...the third drawer from the top *in the pedestal* in my desk” but I assume the prepositional phrase “from the top” adequately implies that the drawer is in the pedestal. (grin)

Of course, I’m joking. But I’m not exaggerating. I DO think like that, but I would elaborate on it only here. You know, by way of explanation.

And, as Bill Shakespeare might say, “There’s the rub.”

That “by way of explanation” thing is why I elaborate to such an elaborate degree (isn’t English wonderful?). I prefer to leave no room for misunderstanding, a hopeless goal where human beings are involved if ever there was one.

So think too much? Maybe, maybe not.

Share too much? Definitely. If I didn’t, there would be no basis to believe I think too much. (grin)

\*\*\*

Thanks to my friend, Robert Sadler, for the excellent poem he wrote as a take-off on my “desk” essay from a few days ago. Absolutely excellent.

I almost wrote a few days ago that Dean seems as stalled as I am. Kind of eerie. You can see the culmination of that in <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/auction-and-other-fun-things-today/>.

Then today, he began offering a new nonfiction book (this after he has planned to write two novels in December). This will be an important book for some of us, especially given the gems Dean often drops along the way seemingly without even realizing it.

Dean's new offering will be a book for writers on ways to beat critical thinking. To see the announcement and the introduction, please visit <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/beating-critical-voice-for-fiction-writers/>. He plans to post succeeding chapters on his blog, so I hope you'll follow along.

**IMPORTANT:** If you don't already visit Dean's site every day as part of your routine, and if you're serious about your writing, please do so. The existence of this Journal (and by extension, my "Of Interest" section) is not guaranteed.

I probably won't be back with another edition of this Journal unless and until I start writing fiction again.

Finally, in lieu of the "Of Interest" section, for an excellent article on scene structure, see "A Scene Template For New Writers" (don't let the title throw you) at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/12/a-scene-template-for-new-writers.html>.

IF YOU HAVEN'T established a habit of visiting the sites I mention regularly here, you can always find them in my Quick Links (left sidebar of my main website) and/or on the Writer Resources page on that site.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 600 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 600

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 1960  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 177513  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 631275

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, December 8,](#)

[December 8, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Just some important info for you today, mostly in the first listing below.

Via The Passive Voice, see Passive Guy's comments toward the end of "The Contributions of Publishing's Conference Contrarians" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/12/the-contributions-of-publishings-conference-contrarians/>. Very informative and heartening.

Also of possible interest, see "Astronauts Get Writer's Block, Too" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/12/astronauts-get-writers-block-too/>. Imagine what Astronaut Scott Kelly could write if only he had learned to trust his subconscious and write off into the dark. Sigh. (Frankly, I'm kind'a ticked off that Margaret Lazarus Dean felt a need to stick that comma in before "too" in the title of the article. Ten to one she can't tell you why it's there except that some style manual, probably AP, said it should be. Ugh.)

Around the Stanbrough camp I'm continuing to use this time to work through some life issues, copyedit a difficult manuscript, and visit with family and friends. Fiction seems to tug at my sleeve a little more strongly each day.

I hope you'll continue to check Dean's site daily as well as some of the others in the Quick Links in the sidebar of my website. I've also updated the Writer Resources page, so you might browse that too.

Just in case I'm not back again before December 25, I hope you will all have an enjoyable holiday season, a very merry Christmas, and a safe and happy New Year.

Be back when I can.

Categories [Daily Journal](#)[Leave a comment](#)

## [The Journal, Monday, December 11,](#)

[December 11, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, before I even think about returning to my own fiction, I've decided to power-through the first half of my latest copyedit to get it finished.

The author of the novel and I have agreed that I'll finish the prepaid first half, then bow out of the project. It's just too rough.

In related news, I've recently added several "new" inappropriate tag line verbs to my list. I'll be publishing those in a topic here soon, and in my ProWriters blog in the future.

Not sure when this Journal will go "daily" again, if ever. But I do suspect I'll at least be publishing it more often once I've put this edit behind me.

I'm also not sure of the form it will take. I'll continue to include boring tidbits about my blasé life for those who like that sort of thing, and I'll continue to share tips and knowledge you probably can't find anywhere else.

In the meantime, from my friend Dan Baldwin, here's a guest topic for you, reprinted by permission.

### **So You Want to Be a Ghostwriter**

I have written more than 60 books, but five out of six have someone else's name on the cover. Oh, I usually get some form of writer's credit, but that's often in the Acknowledgements section printed upside down in 6-point Mandarin Chinese.

But author credit isn't why someone pursues ghostwriting projects — unless it's to gain credit with other authors who need ghostwriters.

Ghostwriters are in the business to make money or to gain the experience that will lead to that money. If you're considering ghostwriting, here are a few tips I've picked up along the way.

#### ***Tip #1. You're Not the Author — You Only Write the Book.***

Keep your ego out of the project. That goes for your desires to win the Golden Ghost Award for Best Acknowledgement, your personal opinions or cause du jour, or what you think your author really ought to say. It's his (or her) book. Keep it that way.

#### ***Tip #2. KISS Your Author.***

Keep It Simple, Stupid. Most books are written at the eighth grade level. Why? Because just about everybody in America has at least graduated from the eighth grade. Everybody gets the message (or at least can read the message) when you write at that level.

#### ***Tip #3. Make Sure the Price is Right.***

What is the right price for a ghostwriting project? I'll answer with another question: How hungry are you?

The amount of writing, research, client hand-holding, and expenses will vary from project to project. Get a handle on as much of this as possible before quoting a price. Know how much you need to earn from a given job and start at a figure above that. Life as a ghostwriter is a life of negotiating. Have a rate or a fee in mind, but don't hesitate to adjust according to the level of rumbling in your stomach.

**Tip #3a.** If the would-be client says, "I'm pretty famous for my memos around here, heh-heh," double your fee.

***Tip #4. Your Client Must Know He is Part of the Project.***

I had a potential client tell me, "Just go to the Internet and you can get everything you need." My response was, "Well, then what do I need you for?"

Fortunately, the potential client was a friend who took my response in the right frame of mind. The writer carries the heavier burden in terms of work, but the project must be a cooperative effort. It's his book; he has to earn that name on the cover.

***Tip #5. You Don't Have to Believe What Your Client Believes.***

But know where to draw the line. Provided you remember that you are the writer not the author, a Republican can ghostwrite for a Democrat. A Christian can ghostwrite for a non-believer. A "My Country Right or Wrong" guy can ghostwrite for a "Peace at Any Price" guy.

When you take on a ghostwriting project, you are hiring out. Once you accept the job, you can be loyal to your client without being loyal to his cause.

***Tip #6. Understand that at Some Point Things are Going to Go South.***

Something inevitably comes up to extend the agreed upon deadline, foul the research efforts, or get between you and that final payment. Provided the client doesn't abuse the privilege, put up with as much as you can, finish the job, and earn something worth its weight in gold — a good referral.

I have on rare occasions walked away from a job, but I did so in a way that maintained a level of respect, courtesy, and integrity. I have also finished and been fully paid by clients I will never work with again. One of your best ghostwriting resources is a mental file labeled I Will Never Do THAT Again.

***Tip #7. Clients Should Pay as They Go.***

As Dr. Laura said about promises of marriage made in the steamy back seat of a sedan on a lonely road, "Unless you have a ring and a date, you don't have squat."

I think I got that quote fairly right — certainly the meaning. Your client must be invested in the project or in his mind it's not a real project. Invest is the key word. Get an up-front payment and then stagger payments on a pay-as-we-go basis.

So, you want to be a ghostwriter. Go for it. Just follow a few basic business rules so that the experience isn't a scary one.

(For a bit more on ghostwriting, check out <http://www.danbaldwin.biz>.)

**Quote of the Week:** “Most men make little use of their speech than to give evidence against their own understanding.” George Savile

**Dan's Western novel**, *Bock's Canyon*, is a Winner in the Best Book Awards 2017. His latest Western novel, *A Stalking Death*, is a Finalist in the New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards competition. His non-fiction work for writers and IP attorneys, *How Find Me Lost Me — A Breach of Trust Told By The Psychic Who Didn't See It Coming*, earned a Finalist award in the Best Book Awards and the New Mexico-Arizona Book Awards competition. And his short stories “Diddy” and “Lurlene Hurlbutt's Flatline” earned a commendation in the Society of Southwestern Authors Writing Contest.

#### ***A Few Websites Dan Recommends***

[http://www.ssa\\_az.org](http://www.ssa_az.org)

<http://www.ssa-vs.org>

<http://www.lwsliteraryservices.com>

#### **Of Interest**

Not much out there today that I could find.

Fiction Words: XXXX

Nonfiction Words: 200 (Journal)

So total words for the day: 200

Writing of “”

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the year..... 453762

Total nonfiction words for the month... 2160

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 177713

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 631475

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date.....	9
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014).....	27
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015).....	4
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014).....	182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dan Baldwin](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#)

## [The Journal, Saturday, December 16](#)

[December 16, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

### **Hey Folks,**

Okay, I've figuratively traveled some twisted, warped subterranean depths over the past month or so. In that time, I've tended to (or dealt with) a lot of tasks that have little if anything to do with writing in any specific way. In fact, they touch writing only in that they added to my general overall experience. I won't bore you with details.

Suffice it to say some of them are tasks that are common in the human experience. There also were a few that I'm glad are not common in the human experience, at least where my friends are concerned.

Now I'm in a place from which I can look back and see that I've encountered hand- and footholds here and there that are bringing me nearer the surface all the time.

The most recent of those was today's blog post from Linda Maye Adams, which you can see at <http://lindamayeadams.com/2017/12/16/calling-time-out-on-writing-in-public/>.

It rocked me a bit, frankly, as a kind of indirectly shared experience. But I want to thank her publicly here for posting it, chiefly (and first) because of her candor, and secondly because she pointed to another post, one by Kristine Kathryn Rusch.

You can read that one in its entirety at <http://kriswrites.com/2017/12/06/business-musings-sustainability/>.

As some of Ms. Rusch's posts are lengthy, I especially recommend you skip down to the subhead "Scheduling." Depending on your own experience, you might also want to read the subheads "Attitude" and "Product" above that and "Cash Flow" below it.

But for my particular situation, "Scheduling" (prefaced with Linda Maye Adams' post) is what I needed to see. If that wasn't the final leg-up I needed to pull myself from the subterrain, it was one of the last few.

So I thank Ms. Adams for her candor and join her in recommending you read that post, or at least that part of it. It's pure gold.

Back soon.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 300 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 300

Writing of “”

Day 1 ..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 2460  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 178013  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 631775

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough Adams](#), [Kristine Kathryn Rusch](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Professional Writer Series](#)

## **[The Journal, Monday, December 18](#)**

[December 18, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Mostly I'm posting today to pass along some stuff in "Of Interest" below. But as long as I'm here, I'll give you an update on my personal writing stuff as well.

My December's slipping by with not a word of fiction so far. How weird is that? In a way, knowing I could start writing today and have a new novel finished by the end of the year is a liability. In a way.

But that probably won't happen, and it's all right.

I'm allowing everything else in my life to take precedence right now. But that's by design, though I didn't realize it until recently.

The last two or three novels I attempted (November forward) all had one thing in common: They. Bored. Me.

After I wrote the opening, and far beyond that in two cases, they still bored me. So I got ticked at myself and didn't write them.

I'm not talking about the rough spot that occurs at the 1/2 to 2/3 point of a novel, where the new wears off and the writing mind (the 2 year old with a short attention span) wants to abandon that idea and move on to the next one. To get over that, all you have to do is write the next sentence, then the next and the next. Soon you're back in the flow.

The last novel I finished, *Loose Ends*, stretched me so much so that I asked my first reader to look for places where the story was "too" anything: too much description, too hokey, etc.

*Loose Ends* was twisty and turny and a little warped, so I didn't really trust it. But it held my interest, and I looked forward to getting back to it everytime I left it for the day. (Happily, the first reader said it wasn't "too" anything.)

The thing is, everything I wrote before that affected me that way too. It grabbed me and refused to let go. I've spent a lot of time over the past month thinking about those stories:

- In an SF/Horror novel, I had a Jewish kid mine the bones of his ancestors in Siberia for calcium to construct colonies on the moon.
- I rode wild on a strong horse in a good cause with Texas Rangers. I had a Colt in one hand and a Winchester 30-30 saddle carbine in the other as we rode through the Texas panhandle and all the way into the central Pacific coast of Mexico.
- I helped modern police detectives solve murder mysteries in southern California and Louisiana, then did more of the same with a pulp-fiction private eye on the left coast, and I even tagged along with mobsters in Brooklyn.

And every one of those (and several more) was fun to write. Every one of them was exciting to return to each day, like I was hanging out with really great friends. And that's the key.

Writing has to be fun or I won't do it.

No story idea has struck me as being fun in the past month or so, and writing for writing's sake is no longer enough.

Take my last few novel starts for example. They bored me almost from the first word. But because of my self-inflicted goal of writing at least one novel per month, I pressed ahead on them anyway.

Of course, that was a mistake. Bad Harvey. I won't do that anymore.

I want to write something that grabs me with the first word and drags me through the story whether or not I want to go.

But don't get me wrong. I won't be sitting around waiting for "inspiration" to strike. I don't believe in it.

Literally everything is a potential idea, and I know how to look for them. I'll be looking and listening, anxiously. And when a really good one comes along, trust me, you'll be the second to know.

In the meantime, I'm not going to stress over it. I've done too much of that already. As a friend pointed out awhile back, I'm a prolific writer when I'm writing, but that's only true because the stories take me away. So I just have to pick the right stories.

Have I said thanks for hanging in there lately? Well, just in case, thanks for hanging in there. I do appreciate you.

Back soon. Now to the good stuff.

### **Of Interest**

For those of you who love magic realism, the University of Texas at Austin has now digitalized an archive of Gabriel García Márquez's work. You can browse it at <https://hrc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15878coll51/>.

See The Passive Guy's take on "How Indie Presses Are Elevating the Publishing World" at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/12/how-indie-presses-are-elevating-the-publishing-world/>. The guy just knows what he's talking about. If it's too long to hold your interest, scroll down to where Passive Guy takes over. Great stuff.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 800 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 800

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX (done)

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3260  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 178813  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 632575

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Passive Voice](#) [Leave a comment](#)

## [The Journal, Wednesday, December 20](#)

[December 20, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Probably thirty years ago, right out of the blue, I received an email from a young filmmaker at UCLA. He requested permission to make a short film based on my flash fiction story “At Confession.”

Then several years later, so maybe fifteen or twenty years ago, a different filmmaker wrote me with the same request. And it was about the same story. How cool is that?

So imagine my thrill when lightning struck for the third time early this morning. Oh, and if you’re a lover of classical music, you’re going to like this.

Have you ever heard of Stanley Grill?

I hadn’t, yet the man is a composer whose music “has been performed the world over – from Ecuador to Poland; Toulouse to Tokyo; Brooklyn to Vienna – by such artists as Camerata Philadelphia, Camerata Arkos, Duo+ Ensemble, Englewinds, the Pandolfis Consort, Diderot Quartet, the Bronx Arts Ensemble, One World Symphony, violists Brett Deubner and Ralph Farris, and violinist Jorge Avila.”

To be honest, I had never heard of any of those artists either. But then, like most of us, I stay in my niche, or niches.

I can talk writing in any of three forms: long fiction, short fiction or poetry. I can talk military in two forms: Vietnam War era specifics and particular aspects of the US Marine Corps that never change (discipline, code of conduct, honor, and more). And those are pretty much my main niches.

I enjoy some classical music, but not to the point that I can even match a composition to a composer. On the other hand, I can, if offered the title of a poem, name the poet most of the time.

That niche thing again.

Composer Stanley Grill emailed me. In part his email read “Dear Mr. Stanbrough, I am a composer. Recently, I’ve been on a hunt for contemporary villanelles, as I’m starting to compose a song cycle, for small chorus, using the villanelle as a common thread. While on this hunt, I came across your poem ‘Roses?’ and would like to obtain your permission to include it in the cycle.”

INSET If you aren't sure what a villanelle is, see <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/text/villanelle-poetic-form>. (Perhaps the most well-known villanelle is Dylan Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night.")

I responded (of course) that I would be honored, a phrase I do not use lightly. There is no greater payment than a request from an artist to include my work in a new composition, whatever the artistic genre. Certainly there are more useful payments — for example, actual money is good — but none greater.

Now perhaps a film producer will pop into my inbox sometime with an email that reads, "Dear Mr. Stanbrough, I am a Hollywood producer. It seems historical action-adventure westerns are making a comeback, and I recently stumbled across your excellent series about Wes Crowley. May I..."

Yeah. I'd be honored AND giggly.

\*\*\*

I finally finished coding and installing a new Become a Patron page on both websites. There are four levels — Patron, Patron Plus, Patron Writer and Patron Saint — and each has a stack of rewards beneath it.

Take a look if you're interested. The pages are identical on both sites.

I thought about setting up a Patreon page, but I'm not going to do that. I'd rather work directly with the few who follow me.

\*\*\*

I have to ask, please don't send me any liberal political commentary, either in comments on my websites or in personal emails. How and what you believe is up to you, as well it should be. But the First Amendment does not come with a clause that guarantees an audience. Thanks.

Back soon.

## **Of Interest**

To learn a bit about composer Stanley Grill, see <https://www.stangrillcomposer.com/>.

To learn a bit more about yours truly back when I was labeled (by others) a "New Formalist," see [http://www.webexhibits.org/poetry/explore\\_classic\\_villanelle\\_make.html](http://www.webexhibits.org/poetry/explore_classic_villanelle_make.html).

Wow. See "Five Shots At Your Own Sales" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/five-shots-at-your-own-sales/>. Read it carefully. Twice.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 670 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 670

Writing of “”

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 3930  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 179483  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 633245

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)

## **The Journal, Thursday, December 21**

[December 21, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

From The Passive Guy:

Barbara Walters: “But what would you do if the doctor gave you only six months to live?”

Isaac Asimov: “Type faster.”

\*\*\*

I started the day with a good walk, which was more wandering aimlessly about in the desert out back. Then back home for breakfast and to work on the copyedit.

Those of you who wrote regarding the villanelle that Stanley Grill will include in his composition, thank you. I appreciate the kind thoughts.

Here’s the poem, in case you want to see it:

***Roses?***

When pink and red entwine, their dreams to share,  
and climb as one, combining strength and grace,  
then will the scent of roses fill the air.

The pink, its petals soft, its scent a rare  
and gentle one, will take its rightful place  
when pink and red entwine, their dreams to share.

No longer will the wind easily pare  
the strengthened petals from the coral face;  
then will the scent of roses fill the air.

The red, upon a stem that's long and fair,  
will learn humility and grow in grace  
when pink and red entwine, their dreams to share.

No longer will the pride outweigh the care  
that 'neath the sun, all have an equal place;  
then will the scent of roses fill the air,

and each of them, with petals strong and fair,  
will give and take with ease and grow in pace  
when pink and red entwine, their dreams to share;  
then will the scent of roses fill the air.

\*\*\*

I've long held that whatever a poem "means" to the reader is correct. The poet's original intention seldom matches the reader's take. (I've long said when you write a poem and give it to a hundred people, you've written a hundred poems.)

If you read the column on WebExhibits.org from yesterday, you saw one reader's take on the poem. It was a nice interpretation, and I wouldn't begin to tell that person he or she was wrong. What it meant to him or her is as correct as what it means to anyone else.

But what that columnist took from the poem is not what led me to write it. My intent was to attempt to illustrate that by and large we all begin with equal value, no matter our race, gender, nationality, etc.

We don't even have to set aside our differences; we have only to accept that others are a great deal more like us than they are different. And if we work together.... So there you go.

As I mentioned to a few of you, the composer said he would send me a track of the composition when it's finished. I'll share it here.

Back soon.

## Of Interest

Go read the comments on “Five Shots at Your Own Sales” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/five-shots-at-your-own-sales/#comments>.

Then follow up with “Talking About Sales Blurbs” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/talking-about-sales-blurbs/>. You won’t be sorry.

See the Passive Guy’s take on The Digital Reader’s “Far Too Many People Are Still Using “Password” as a Password” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/12/far-too-many-people-are-still-using-password-as-a-password>. PG mentions some very neat password and test tools.

And just for a laugh, read PG’s “Type” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/12/type/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 530 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 530

Writing of “”

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4460  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 180013  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 633775

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, December 22](#)

[December 22, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, once again I’m prompted to file another edition of the Journal mostly so I can pass along some information.

See “A Christmas Gift” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/a-christmas-gift/>. I already signed up. There are 8 videos in the lecture. The whole lecture takes a little over an hour. Given the number of gems Dean drops, this will be well worth your time depending on your level as a writer.

I watched the whole thing so I could give you a more comprehensive report. Even with all that I’ve done in the past few years, from the vantage point of my current slump, I still picked up a few things that will be very useful very soon.. They were mostly reminders, but a couple of things I haven’t done.

It’s 22° here this morning. By 9 a.m. it was 32 but still officially felt like 22. It was 11° in Flagstaff where one of my sons lives, but to me when it gets below about 25° it’s all the same.

Today I’ll probably barricade myself in my house. I might get out to check the mail at the PO later, but I’ll definitely make a lot of headway on the copyedit.

I’ll update numbers tomorrow. I almost forgot to post this.

Back soon.

Categories [Daily Journal](#)

## **The Journal, Saturday, December 23**

[December 23, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

I’m psyched. Even yesterday, in 20° weather, I was thinking what a wonderful day it is to be alive. The same holds true today.

I have some great things coming up in the new year. They have nothing to do with traditional new year’s resolutions — those always are losing propositions for me, invitations to fail — but the things I’m looking forward to do have a lot to do with writing (of course).

And they’re made bigger and better and more fun by the fact that, other than a few vague ideas floating around in my brain pan, I have no idea what they are.

I almost wish I could go back and write the Wes Crowley Saga again. Not because I want to retell that story, but because I long to be that involved, write something on that scale, enjoy the characters that much.

I have considered writing about Wes’ son or daughter, but I can’t. He and Coralín set them up to become doctors and lawyers and the like, and that just isn’t my bailiwick.

Maybe I'll happen on a story idea that will carry me that far again. Who knows.

But then, that's the magic of it, isn't it? That "who knows" part. Especially when you're just writing blind, writing off into the dark, letting the characters entertain you with their story. (It *is* their story, you know, not yours.)

That's the magic of it and the sheer joy of it. And I wish you much magic and joy over this Christmas holiday and in the new year.

Back soon.

Of Interest

A couple from James Scott Bell:

See "Channeling Your Childhood Heroes" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/12/channeling-your-childhood-heroes.html>.

And then see "Writers Need to Be Amphibious" at <https://killzoneblog.com/2017/12/writers-need-to-be-amphibious.html>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 270 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 270

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 4950  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 180503  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 634265

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [James Scott Bell](#), [KillZone Blog](#), [Professional Writer Series](#)

**[The Journal, Wednesday, December 27](#)**

[December 27, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

## Hey Folks,

On Christmas Eve I created a test site I can use to try out new things before making them live here or on HarveyStanbrough.com. I was able to use a cloning engine, so I basically just moved HarveyStanbrough.com over there. Took about an hour to create a whole website. The technology amazes me.

Anyway, while I was messing around on that test site, I noticed a few “drafts” of posts. I don’t use the Draft feature on WordPress, at least not intentionally, so I clicked one to have a look.

Turns out it was an early draft of a Journal entry I posted back on April 18 of this year.

In it, I talked about a short story I’d finished: “Beats All.” It worked as a short story, but it also wanted to keep going. So that’s one possibility for my next novel.

Another possibility is an extended version of an SF short story titled “Going Back.” Even as I finished that one it began haunting me. The idea of it grabbed me, and a year and a half later it’s never let go.

It might also be one of the very few purely original ideas I’ve ever had. I’ve never seen it written or filmed anywhere else. Not even close.

If I turn that one into a novel I won’t even need to read over it first. I’ll write an opening, then just keep writing until the story ends. The concept is just that strong.

So that’s kind’a what I’m doing as my current copyedit winds down. Mentally clearing the decks, getting ready for my return to the writing ‘puter. It feels like it’s been years. It’s definitely been too long.

Anyway, for now, back to the copyedit. Should finish in today.

\*\*\*

Five days left on the Smashwords End of the Year sale. All of my books — nonfiction, novels, short fiction and collections — are on sale for 50% off. To take advantage of it, visit <https://www.smashwords.com/profile/view/HEStanbrough>, make your selections, and enter promotion code SEY50. Enjoy!

Back soon.

## Of Interest

From Robert A. Heinlein via The Passive Voice, see “A human being” at <http://www.thepassivevoice.com/2017/12/a-human-being/>. I love this quote.

From The Digital Reader, see “Tech Tools for Authors #2” at <https://the-digital-reader.com/2017/12/26/tech-tools-authors-2/>.

Dean’s doing it again. See “Want to Be Challenged Into the New Year?” at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/want-to-be-challenged-into-the-new-year/>. This is an extremely good offer for anyone who’s considering taking a couple of his online workshops. What could be better than buying two of his workshops and getting all the benefit of those, and as a bonus getting Dean Wesley Smith free as your first reader?

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 440 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 440

Writing of “”

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 5390  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 180943  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 634705

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Dean Wesley Smith](#), [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [The Digital Reader](#), [The Passive Voice](#)

## **[The Journal, Thursday, December 28](#)**

[December 28, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, those of you who’ve hung on through my madness will receive a double reward today, or at least that’s how this edition of the Journal is intended.

In preparation for my own return to writing fiction, I decided to take today (and maybe the next couple of days) to do two things:

First, I'm revisiting some of the lectures and workshops I've taken from Dean. After that, I'll be prepping by setting goals and a schedule. More on that in coming days. My intention is to begin fresh on January 1.

Because I have a couple of short stories that I've already written but believe would make good novels, I decided this morning to listen to Dean's "Short Story to Novel" lecture.

I'm listening not so much for "how-to" advice, but more for the philosophy of it. Sort of the "why-to."

And without giving away any major secrets (the lecture is only \$50 and very well worth it) here's what I re-learned:

A short-story-to-novel development might be a good idea if

you feel like the story needs to continue, that even though it wrapped, there was more to the story (this is how I felt as I finished the short story "Beats All"), or

you feel you'd like to read or explore more of the story (this is how I felt as I finished the short story "Going Back" in June of 2015), and

the idea of revisiting the story concept is intriguing to you. If the idea bores you, don't do it.

Maybe in some way that will help you.

And now for the second half of the double reward. A day or two ago a friend asked my opinion on using pen names. What follows is my advice to her, excerpted and expanded:

### **Topic: The Use of Pen Names (or Not)**

In the "old days" of traditional publishing, a lot of prolific authors used pen names, mostly because they were turning out a lot more work than the tradpubs could or would handle.

Maybe a writer was putting out several novels per year, but the publishers would buy and publish only one novel per year per author.

In that case, a pen name meant an extra income. Two pen names meant two extra incomes, and so on. For that reason, many prolific authors used dozens of pen names.

So with that as a backdrop, when I started writing fiction, I thought it would be cool to have a different pen name for each major genre.

So my more "literary" fiction, the Hemingway-like stuff, was written by Nicolas Z "Nick" Porter. My magic realism was written by Gervasio Arrancado. The crazy, edgy, horror stuff was written by Eric Stringer, and the science fiction was written by Ray Severeid.

(These are actually more than pen names. They're personas. You can still read their bios at <http://harveystanbrough.com/my-personas/>.) And I wrote under several more pen names.

Then I realized we're in a new publishing world today. The writer has to build a name, a reputation. If you use several different pen names, you dilute and fragment that.

Of course, you could just make sure readers know the pen name is also you, but then why have a pen name at all?

This matters so much that I went back and rebranded all of the novels by Nick Porter and Ray Severeid under my own name. I left Confessions of a Professional Psychopath with Eric Stringer. Frankly, I was afraid to take it away from him. (grin)

In today's world, pen names aren't necessary unless you have a valid (to you) reason to conceal your identity.

For an extreme example, say you're a Sunday school teacher or youth minister for your church. You can probably get away with writing in most genres—SF, action adventure, crime, etc—under your real name. Maybe even romance.

But if you bend your hand to writing steamy erotica, you might want to use a pen name for that.

Otherwise, they aren't necessary.

Note: Dean does offer a lecture on pen names. It costs \$50. I haven't bought it because I assume he'll spend a lot of time saying what he says publicly in his blog posts, that pen names by and large are not necessary.

If you're interested, visit <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/lecture-series/> and scroll down to "Pen Names: How and When To Write Under a Pen Name." That will get you the description.

Back soon.

## **Of Interest**

I didn't read Dean's post today until after I'd written the stuff above this. Talk about timely! See "Getting Ready for 2018" at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/getting-ready-for-2018/>. And especially the segment on "How to Set Fiction Writing Goals in 2018." Really great stuff.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 750 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 750

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 6180  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 181733  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 635495

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Topic](#)

## [The Journal, Friday, December 29](#)

[December 29, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

*You'll also see a post almost identical to this one on December 31 from the Pro Writers blog.*

First, let me recommend you read the comments on Dean's post from yesterday. There are some ideas for goal-setting and challenges there that might resonate with you. For your convenience, I've linked to it again in today's "Of Interest" section.

What follows is the thought process and rationale that helped me set my own goals and challenges for the upcoming year. I'm including it here in case it might help some of you.

I've been wrestling with my commitment to writing new fiction.

My word choice here is intentional. A "commitment" is different, to me, than a "resolution." Resolutions generally rattle around in my head for awhile, drop an ulcer into my gut, and then flail off into the eternal past like yesterday's good news.

I'd rather make a commitment, something that isn't just a fashion-of-the-day fad. Something that requires (from me) a stubborn determination.

Okay, so as I wrestled with this over the past few months and more intensely over the past few days, Critical Mind said, "Hey, go slow, dude. You've been off for awhile." So I thought about setting a goal to write one new short story per week, nothing more.

Seriously? That would probably be wonderful for some folks. After all, that's 3 – 6 dedicated hours per week of putting new words on the page. As such, it's certainly nothing to snort at.

But I don't have children to raise or a day job that consumes my existence. So what in the world would I do with the rest of my time?

I know me. I'd waste it.

Besides, I'm one of those guys who understands if I've done something once I can do it again, barring physical limitations. For example, I'll never run 3 miles in under 18 minutes again, but I did 46 years ago. (grin)

Okay, so it's time to get real, and nothing is more real (even in today's warped Bizarro world) than math.

- Back in 2015, I wrote 686,146 words of fiction, an average of 1880 words per day. (I wrote 719,084 words overall).

- In 2016, I wrote 702,838 words of fiction, an average of 1926 words per day. (I wrote 976,298 words overall).

- But this year I wrote only 453,762 words of new fiction. That's an average of only 1243 words per day. Overall this year I will have written around 640,000 words, less than my fiction-only output in either of the preceding years.

So how can I use this information? Well, I'm setting new writing goals for 2018. Duh. And I like (very much) to better my personal best.

So my subconscious said, "Y'know, we've easily hit 3000 and even 4000 words on most days when you let us play." (We hit more than that on other days, but not so easily.) "So we think our new DAILY goal should be 2500 words."

"Okay," said I.

Sensing a trick, my subconscious said, "To be clear, we are not allowed to stop until we've written at least 2500 new words of fiction."

Well, that's only two to three hours per day. Every day.

Okay, that still sounded reasonable, but with one modification.

I said, "Deal, but I'll take a day off without guilt when life intervenes or when I just want to."

My subconscious grumbled a bit, then backed off, its little arms crossed over its chest. "Whatever," it said.

But that's all right. My modification was necessary, so that's that. For example, I have some camping to do (my funny friend says "cramping") and some family visits coming up. Things like that.

Plus (as I told my subconscious), what matters with this kind of goal is the average. After all, the target word count is a minimum. Any words over 2500 go into the bank and count toward the average.

Folks, I'm establishing goals to drive me to the computer, not to drive me to drink. It's all about production, not pressure.

If I can manage a little more on average (2740 words per day), I will have hit that elusive goal of 1,000,000 words of fiction in 2018. Wouldn't that be nice?

And Dean, my unintentional mentor, recommends what he calls a "fall-back goal." I get that.

So even if I fall short, if I write at least 2055 words per day on average, I will have written 750,000 words of fiction. And that's not too shabby.

At that point, my subconscious was convinced and fully on board. And my conscious mind shut up and went to sit in her assigned corner. (Yes, she's female. Do I need to explain?)

Okay, so for calendar year 2018

- my daily goal is 2500 words of new fiction per day;
- my stretch goal is 1,000,000 words of new fiction; and
- my fall-back goal is 750,000 words of new fiction.

And regarding my conscious mind's nagging admonition to go slow?

Well, note that these are all strictly word-production goals.

Some of those words will go into short stories, some into novelettes and novellas, and some into novels.

But I'm not setting specific goals in that regard. I don't need them.

I already know I can write a short story in a day or two, a novelette or novella in a few to several days, and a novel in two to eight weeks. And that feels plenty fast enough to me.

The challenge will be to write at least 2500 words of new fiction per day, period, and to take a day off without fretting over it when I need to.

This is incredibly freeing. What comes will come. The eventual form the story takes doesn't matter. All that matters is putting new words on the page.

And, you know, the average. (grin)

Back soon.

## Of Interest

Yesterday I mentioned Dean's post on "Getting Ready for 2018." You can find that one (with comments) at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/getting-ready-for-2018/#comments>.

But also see his revised link to Heinlein's Rules in that post at <https://www.deanwesleysmith.com/heinleins-rules-introduction/>. And if you'd like to see my take on Heinlein's Rules, click <http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Heinleins-Business-Habits-Annotated.pdf>. (This will download a PDF copy.)

For all kinds of other free downloads, click <http://harveystanbrough.com/downloads/>.

For a moment of Zen, see <https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/worlds-oldest-trees-2017>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 1030 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 1030

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 7210  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 182763  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 636525

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

## [The Journal, Saturday, December 30](#)

[December 30, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

As part of my prep for 2018, over the past month or so I've been developing a new way to brand my covers. Specifically, the author name part.

Here's the way my author name will appear on covers into the future:

# STANBROUGH

HARVEY

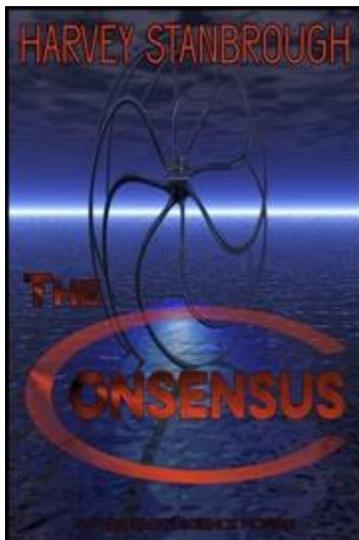
The background will blend with the cover. Of course, the font colors and the background behind my first name also are adaptable. You'll see this in a cover below.

Branding is all about making your work easier for readers to find. That's why one precept of cover design requires that, even in the thumbnail version, both the title and the author name should be readily visible.

Dean Wesley Smith and myriad others whose last name is much shorter than their first (or than their first and middle) have an advantage. When they line the names up right, the last name is prominent. (See any of DWS' covers to see what I mean.)

I could do something similar if I added my middle name. But the font for my first and middle name wouldn't be much smaller than my last name. The two combined, including the space between them, is only 13 characters. My last name is 10 characters all by itself.

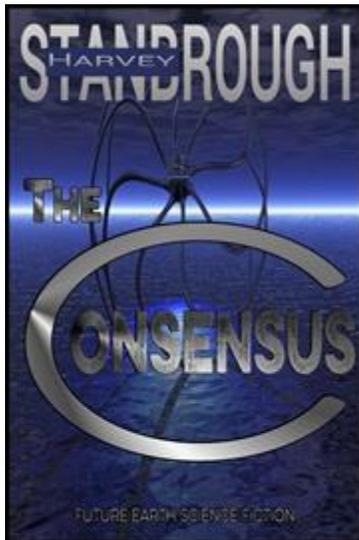
But I don't want to use my middle name anyway, so not a big thing. I just had to come up with some other way to brand my covers with my name to make my work easier for readers to find and recognize.



When I first published the novel, *The Consensus*, here's the cover I created for it. I felt something wasn't right about it, but I was in a hurry, so I let it ride.

As you can see, both the author name and the title are very difficult to read. Partly that's because of the font color, but it's also because of the font choice (for the author name) and the font size. Notice too how "squeezed-in" the author name looks. It doesn't look comfortable.

Recently I was looking over some of my published works online, and that cover slapped me. Ugh. And only a few days ago I finalized my new author name logo. So I decided to rebrand the cover on the spot. That's it below on the left.



As part of the rebranding, I changed the font color to more accurately reflect the lighter color on the cover. I also increased the size of the title, and of course added the new author name logo.

What do you think? Is the cover better or worse?

So as I write off into 2018, I'll also be rebranding the covers of my novels and novellas, and of course branding all my new work.

Back soon.

## **Of Interest**

For those of you who listen to podcasts, check out "Smart Book Marketing Starts with a Solid Foundation" from Smashwords at <http://blog.smashwords.com/2017/12/smart-book-marketing-starts-with-solid.html>.

Linda Maye Adams, in her "2017 Writing Year in Review," talks about several workshops she took from DWS. You might check it out at <https://lindamayeadams.com/2017/12/30/2017-writing-year-in-review/>.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 490 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 490

Writing of “”

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the year..... 453762

Total nonfiction words for the month... 7700

Total nonfiction words for the year..... 183253

Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 637015

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9

Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27

Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4

Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Linda Maye Adams](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [Smashwords](#), [the writing life](#)

## **[The Journal, Sunday, December 31](#)**

[December 31, 2017](#) by [Harvey](#)

**Hey Folks,**

Well, here it is. The last day of the year. New Year’s Eve. But tonight, I’ll be sacking out at about my usual time.

Anyway, a new year (or a new any-time-period) begins again with pretty much every moment, doesn’t it?

Still, as they are with most of us, the first day of the year, the first day of each month, and the first day of the week are all well-ingrained demarcations for me. So tomorrow, we’ll all begin again, just as if the first official moment of the new calendar year is somehow magically more special than any other moment.

If I may digress for a moment, scientists say the difference between us and the other animals on this planet is that we are self-aware and they are not.

I disagree, vehemently.

The difference is that we are aware of Time and its passage and they are not. Wisely, they have chosen to ignore something upon which they can have absolutely no lasting effect. May we all come to the same conclusion sooner rather than later.

As it stands, I suspect some of them go so far as to watch us marking Time and wonder what all the fuss is about. I know my little girl cat does just that.

We humans, on the other hand, obsessively mark the passage of time down to the second. We thrum our fingertips on the counter as we wait for our Keurig to brew a cup of coffee. We watch the countdown timer on the microwave as we heat a ham and cheese sandwich for thirty seconds. We enjoy the new beginning marked by the anniversary of our birth even as we mourn the years gone by.

I first caught onto the whole time scam when I decided several years ago not to wear a watch anymore. After I took it off, almost miraculously, I suddenly stopped having to be anywhere at a certain time. Incredible, but true. It isn't a watch watch after all, you see. It's a slave bracelet.

I still obey the rules of Nature, just as if I had a choice — you know, aging, stuff like that — and I still mark the passage of Time, albeit not quite so frantically as I did before I tossed my watch aside. If I didn't, this Journal wouldn't exist.

Yet here it is.

I won't do a year-in-review thing since I've kept up with that at the end of each Journal entry for anyone who wants to see it.

May each of you and all of us have a banner year with our writing and with all of those things that are vastly so much more important.

By the way, if you'd like to see my villanelle, "Roses?" set to music by classical composer Stanley Grill, please click <http://harveystanbrough.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Roses-score.pdf>. I don't read music, but the arrangement is pleasing to the eye, like art.

That's it for today, and for this year.

Back soon.

## **Of Interest**

Nada.

Fiction Words: XXXX  
Nonfiction Words: 480 (Journal)  
So total words for the day: 480

Writing of ""

Day 1..... XXXX words. Total words to date..... XXXX

Total fiction words for the month..... XXXX  
Total fiction words for the year..... 453762  
Total nonfiction words for the month... 8180  
Total nonfiction words for the year..... 183733  
Total words for the year (fiction and this blog)..... 637495

Calendar Year 2017 Novels to Date..... 9  
Novels (since Oct 19, 2014)..... 27  
Novellas (since Nov 1, 2015)..... 4  
Short stories (since Apr 15, 2014)..... 182

Categories [Daily Journal](#) Tags [Harvey Stanbrough](#), [Professional Writer Series](#), [the writing life](#)