

# LELITA BALDOCK

AUTHOR

## Writing Newsletter

**January 21 2021**

Hi again from my cozy little office. We are in lockdown here in the UK, and my husband and I are also caring for our beautiful cat (she needed knee surgery over Christmas). So my office is now half cat-tent, and I am writing this to the peaceful sound of her sleepy purrs. All in all it's not bad!

Big edition for you this week. I have an interview with Dan Coonan, author of *Presidential Spirits*. We talk writing, inspiration and getting started and he shares his top tips for aspiring writers.

There are some words on creativity and finding inspiration, even in these unsettled times.

I also talk with my own editor, Lucy Skoulding, about her journey to becoming an editor and what her work has taught her about proof-reading and supporting authors.

So, lots for us to get through – let's dive right in!

Cheers,

Lelita



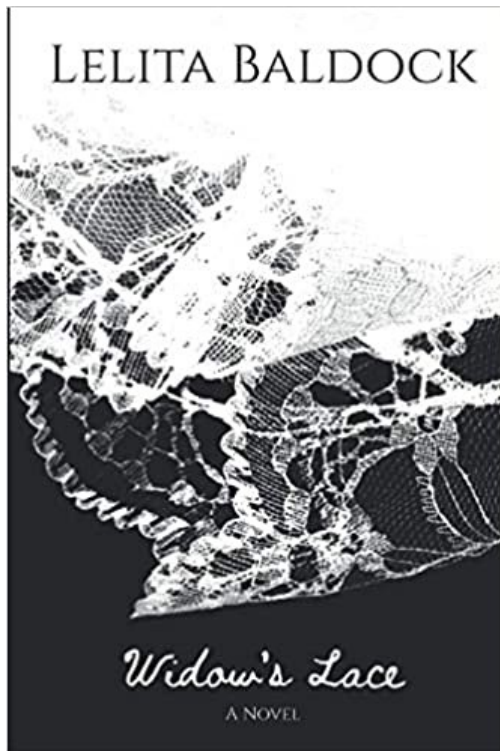
**Lelita Baldock**

Author – Writer - Editor

# What I'm excited for!

## ***Widow's Lace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition**

The official second edition of my debut novel, *Widow's Lace* is out this week. I had some challenges with previous editors, but now I have found a super-star! Lucy Skoulding has helped me tweak this new edition and I am so proud to release it to the world. She features later as we talk about her own journey into the world of editing.



**A hundred year old mystery, the widow left behind, a fallen soldier, an unnamed body and a young student determined to find the truth.**

"I'm hooked and I want to read more from Lelita Baldock! This debut novel is just captivating, it has multiple layers of worth. As a historical fiction the novel impresses as it transports the reader to multiple times and stunning places. The narrators are endearing and as for the characters they are fascinating and charming. This novel really had me hooked; *Widow's Lace* is a wonderful piece that evokes intense feelings of anticipation and hope, and it's hard to put down!" - Rebecca Cousins, Good Reads Reviewer

Grab your copy through Amazon.

<https://www.lelitabaldock.com/>

## ***Rebecca's Choice* on blog tour**

Heidi Gallacher's historical fiction *Rebecca's Choice* is going on blog tour. Check the dates and keep an eye out for this stunning novel.

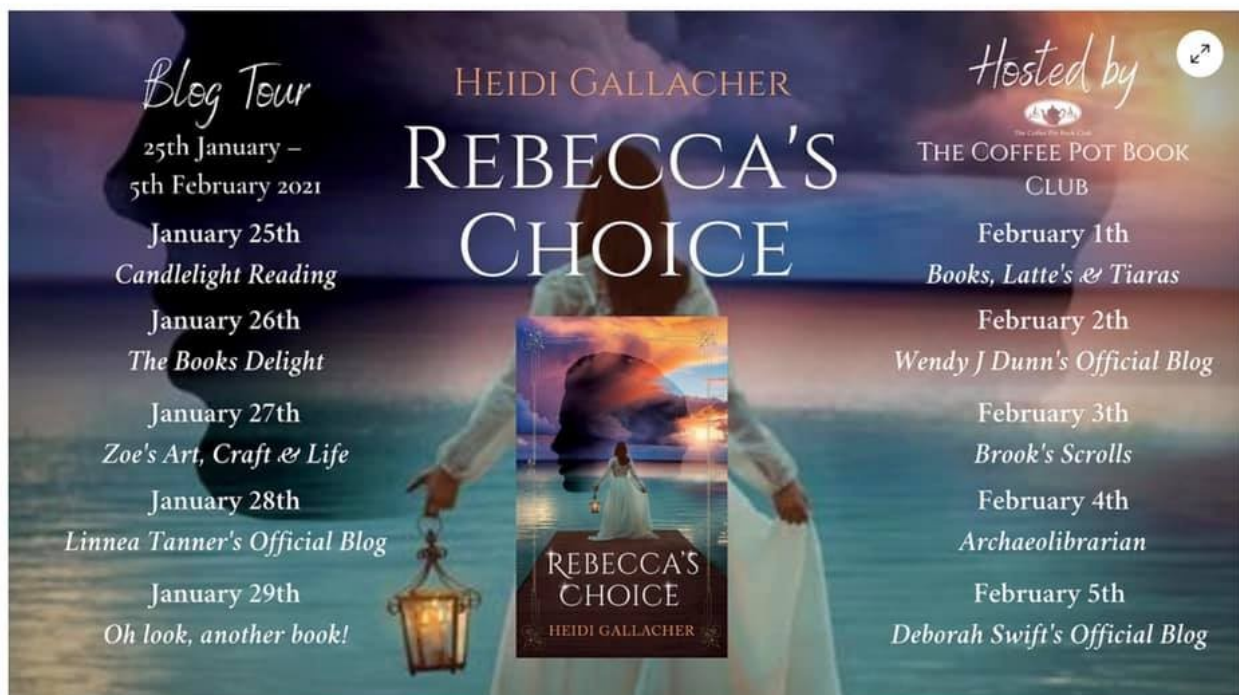
### **'Can Rebecca find the love and passion she craves within a Victorian world that seems to be conspiring against her?'**

It is 1887 and Queen Victoria is on the throne. Businessman and meteorologist Geoffrey de Roussier is passionate about his weather station and railways, yet little of his passion seems to filter through to his shy, naïve young wife, Rebecca.

Following his tragic demise, Rebecca discovers that Geoffrey's railroad investments have failed, leaving her penniless. As the past threatens to engulf her, Rebecca realises she has to make a choice. Gwilym Llewellyn, Geoffrey's trusted friend and advisor, has an emotional debt to repay to Geoffrey and meets Rebecca to offer her a solution. Meanwhile Rebecca has found passion in another direction ...

One man will save her from destitution, the other will offer her the love and excitement that she aches for. Whom will she choose?

Available now through Amazon.



*Blog Tour*  
25th January –  
5th February 2021

January 25th  
*Candlelight Reading*

January 26th  
*The Books Delight*

January 27th  
*Zoe's Art, Craft & Life*

January 28th  
*Linnea Tanner's Official Blog*

January 29th  
*Oh look, another book!*

HEIDI GALLACHER  
**REBECCA'S  
CHOICE**

*Hosted by*  
THE COFFEE POT BOOK CLUB

February 1th  
*Books, Latte's & Tiaras*

February 2th  
*Wendy J Dunn's Official Blog*

February 3th  
*Brook's Scrolls*

February 4th  
*Archaeolibrarian*

February 5th  
*Deborah Swift's Official Blog*

## Featured Creative – Dan Coonan, Author



When I first began to work on this interview, the quote “You are never too old to become who you were meant to be,” came to me. Later, when Dan and I were discussing his advice for authors, it was the very quote he listed for me.

### **His journey is why.**

Coonan’s debut novel, *Presidential Spirits* was published by Goose River Press when he was 57 years young. Writing had always been a part of his life, working in various professions across the United States of America, always taking chances, because, as he says, “I love the chase”. It took until his 50s for him to dive in and give his dream of authoring a novel a go.

“Writing has been an essential element of my career from the start. I wrote for the Law Review in Law School and of course wrote every day in my seven years of practicing law – legal briefs, contracts, letters, etc. I wrote campaign materials when I helped run a congressional race. I wrote extensively as an Athletic Director. We started an Athletics magazine at Santa Clara and I wrote much of the content along with my Media Relations staff.

“I started writing political commentaries four years ago and have had many of those published.

“But my “writing career” really began at age 57 with the publication of *Presidential Spirits*.”



## The influence of others.

"I have really wanted to be a writer – an author specifically – since 6th grade," Coonan says, "I had a phenomenal teacher who spent an hour a week with our class for Creative Writing. I loved that time and his methods – as well as his feedback. I realized then that this is something I wanted to do"



## So what held him back?

"Convincing yourself in the first place that you can actually pull it off. That takes supreme confidence bordering on arrogance, perhaps. That was the hardest part for me.

"In college I got permission from the Dean to take a Creative Writing Course in the Arts & Letters College (I needed permission because I was a Business Major). The professor was a published author and screenwriter. She was very encouraging. I promised her I'd write a novel one day."

As Coonan says himself of his journey, "Looking back on it all, I am overcome with gratitude for all who helped along the way, and for the good fortune and blind luck that paved my way. Like my guy Satch says in *Presidential Spirits*, 'I'm far from done here. There are many chapters still ahead. And those chapters just seem to be getting better and better as we go along.'"

**Encouraged by others Coonan was ready for his next adventure. It was time to write that book. But what kind of book?**

"I love big epic tales full of passion and emotion and a little bit of something fairy tale-like that change a little something about the world and make you think. Stories like Frank Capra's movie *It's a Wonderful Life*."



**And the inspiration for *Presidential Spirits* specifically?**

"My novel *Presidential Spirits* was inspired by WP Kinsella's novel *Shoeless Joe*, which was adapted to the screen in the movie *Field of Dreams*, and by Woody Allen's movie *Midnight in Paris*."

"I should also say I was also inspired by our country's political divide and the debilitating state of our politics in this country."

**What does he love most about writing?**

"So many things. Being creative in ways unlike I had ever done before personally or professionally. The emotional release of sitting down at the end of each day and writing for two hours. It's one of the best parts of my day. And then of course seeing that it touched so many people, and receiving notes and emails or messages on my website from people I didn't even know."

"And, perhaps more than anything, the journey. I'm always up for an epic journey. And that's what this is – scaling three separate and equally challenging summits: writing it, finding the right home for it, and marketing it."

"I got great advice to write the novel you would most like to write. I am most proud of the fact that I somehow managed to do that."

**And who is Coonan's favourite author?**

Harper Lee, author of *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

**Why?**

"Because of the success she achieved, particularly given her background and circumstances. The topics she confronted at the time she addressed them. The impact her words had and still have. The mystery surrounding her. That this world-renown success was achieved by a woman.

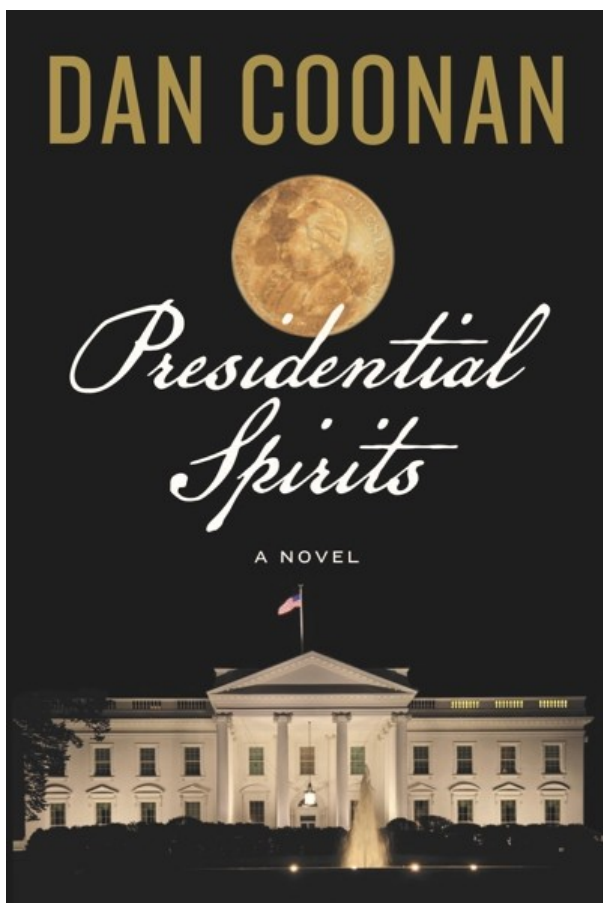
"And on top of all that, how she kind of embodies both the American dream and the mythology of romance of the dream so many millions have of setting out to become an author. And she crushed it, and then walked away."

**Dan Coonan's novel *Presidential Spirits* is available now through the following sites:**

<https://dancoonanauthor.com/>

<https://www.amazon.com/Dan-Coonan/e/B087V41PTB>

<https://www.gooserveriverpress.com/>



# Review of Dan Coonan's Presidential Spirits

From the United States



David Wechsler

★★★★★ **When's the movie coming out?**

Reviewed in the United States on January 16, 2021

**Verified Purchase**

Dan Coonan has written an incredibly unique and thoroughly enjoyable novel. I can't say enough about it. Yes, it leans a bit to the left but so what. It combines fantasy with inspiration, history and humor. I am an avid reader but rarely post a book review. I can't think of too many books that were more enjoyable to read than this one. With what is going on in our country today, I can't think of a better book to uplift your spirits and give us hope for a better tomorrow. Why Presidential Spirits isn't on every best seller list is beyond me. When's the movie coming out?

**You can keep up with Dan and his writing through the below:**

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/DanCoonanAuthor>

**Instagram** <https://www.instagram.com/dannyfromthedock/>

**Twitter** <https://twitter.com/dancoonanauthor>

**Linked In** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/dan-coonan-0892565/>

**Personal website** <https://dancoonanauthor.com/>

**Youtube** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChTw3THUFq2zG15M87ddpgw>



# BONUS!

## Dan Coonan's top tips for aspiring writers.



### **1. Make sure you begin with a compelling concept you absolutely love.**

In my estimation, this is by far the most critical piece of the whole puzzle. Everything flows from that. You'll need an ungodly amount of day-in and day-out motivation and perseverance to pull this off, and you'll be embarking on a bit of an emotional roller coaster. but all that will be so much easier if you genuinely love the concept and believe in it.

Before I began writing this novel I started writing another. That lasted about a week, until I realized I didn't love the concept quite enough. I then started searching for something bigger and more epic, thinking if I was only doing this once I may as well really go for it. Once I settled on this concept I never once had writer's block (Can you tell? It's nearly 400 pages. :) And each time I sat down to write I felt a rush. Additionally, I think every writer experiences some degree of self doubt at times, wondering if the work is really what you think it is. If you start from a place of really firmly believing in it, perhaps those episodes are not as frightful.

### **2. Fully commit. Go all in.**

This in my mind is the second most important concept, and perhaps why so many of these projects never reach completion. After I had written a few chapters I spoke to a friend who is a very accomplished novelist and asked for advice. She very sternly instructed me to "treat it like a job, and show up at your job." I took her advice. Of course, I have a job that is all-in too. But outside of that I probably wrote or researched for an hour or two six days a week for a year and

a half - mostly at night. I'd pour a cup of coffee when the rest of the house went to sleep. For my novel it needed that level of commitment.

### **3. Set goals for yourself. What exactly are you seeking to accomplish? Be specific.**

Like anything in life I think it helps to have an idea of what exactly it is you are attempting to pull off. Are you looking to sign a lucrative book deal with a major publisher (in which case you'll need advice from sources other than me) or do you just have a great story you want to complete and get published in some form and then see where it takes you.

When I developed the basic concept of the setting and plot, I thought hard about what I was looking for with this challenge. I listed five elements that I hoped to pull off with my writing of this story. I hung a sheet of paper up in the room where I had the story boards for this so I could see it often and be reminded of it.

These are the goals I set for myself as I started writing *Presidential Spirits*. I hoped to be able to achieve each of these for readers.

I felt if I focused on those elements and could pull that off, I'd be happy with it, and if anything more came of it then that would be great. I wasn't motivated by the thought of earning money or achieving great commercial success. I just had a story and message I like that I hoped to tell in a compelling manner.

### **4. Grab them from the get go.**

Take the advice of all the literary agents who tell you establish the intrigue from the very first page - preferably the first paragraph. I wouldn't say I necessarily did this in my novel, or at least not as overtly as I'm now suggesting. But as I went through the process I saw how critical this can be to get it published, get an agent, get reviews, blurbs, etc. I wanted to develop a bit of a back story that was important to my plot, and I wanted to do that more gradually. However, when I write another one - and I will - I will absolutely establish a hook right away - so long as the story lends itself to one. That's crucial, particularly if the author is seeking commercial success.

### **5. Don't be shy about telling people about it.**

When I started I wasn't sure I had what it takes to pull it off, or do it in a way I'd be proud of that wasn't cringeworthy, so I kept it a bit of a secret for a while. Only later did I start to tell some close friends and others I wanted advice from.

Those conversations not only had the effect of making me fully commit to it - its harder to turn back if you've told people about it - they inspired me time and again to really try to make this something special. People love hearing about

someone taking this plunge, particularly when they can sense the enthusiasm you have for the project.

In more than one of these conversations I got really good advice that I used in writing it, and started to get a sense of what aspects of the story might be more appealing to various readers.

Perhaps just as importantly, these people can perhaps be some of the first readers of your drafts, but also people who might actually buy the finished product and tell their friends to do so as well. I made a point of writing down every time in the last two and a half years everyone I have had a discussion with about it - dozens and dozens of people. As this got released I reached out directly to all of them to let them know.

## **6. Writing a novel requires scaling three distinct and equally challenging mountains.**

I focused so much on the writing of the novel - which is an enormous task of course, but had not thought nearly as much about the publishing or selling part. Those are each monumental tasks as well, requiring skill sets and knowledge very different from the ability to write well. And each can be enormously time consuming.

Plan on devoting a great deal of time and effort to getting the manuscript in a condition to be published - with an editor, beta readers, multiple drafts, proofreading, etc., and then finding the proper place for it in the publishing world - literary agents, traditional and indie publishers, self publishing, etc. That can easily take up to a year or longer.

Finally, marketing and selling the book is an entire universe unto itself. No matter what mode of publishing you are employing, selling it will necessarily require an enormous amount of time, effort and creativity. I might have to break that out into its own "Lessons Learned" essay.

By the way, I have thoroughly enjoyed all three of these challenges - and that all circles back to #1 above - really loving and believing in your story.

## **7. Be prepared to accept criticism - some of it very hurtful**

I think every writer has a good sense that they are putting themselves out there rather nakedly to be judged, and that will inevitably lead to criticism - and so much of that in our culture these days with the internet and social media can be brutal. I think that just comes with the territory, and it needs to be accepted rather than feared or lamented. Listen to it, learn from it if there's anything constructive in it, and take it all with a grain of salt - just like any praise you get.

If that's not good enough for you, consider the words of Teddy Roosevelt, my favorite character to write for in *Presidential Spirits*:

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."

If you tend to let criticism bother you, like I do, and like so many others by the way, keep this image and quote close by at all times. I love Teddy. I wound quite easily, but recover quickly. This quote helps immeasurably in that process. The benefits of being true to yourself, having the courage to put yourself out there, and living your most consequential life far exceed the noise you'll get from detractors.

## **8. Chronicle the whole thing.**

You're a writer. Make a record of every aspect of this journey. Take a photo on your first day of the blank screen in front of you. Record your thoughts at the start, and after chapter one, and every time you make a change in characters or plot, etc. Having that record can not only provide inspiration but solidify your commitment as you go along. And you might find in the end that some people are just as interested in the process you went through than the finished result of that process .

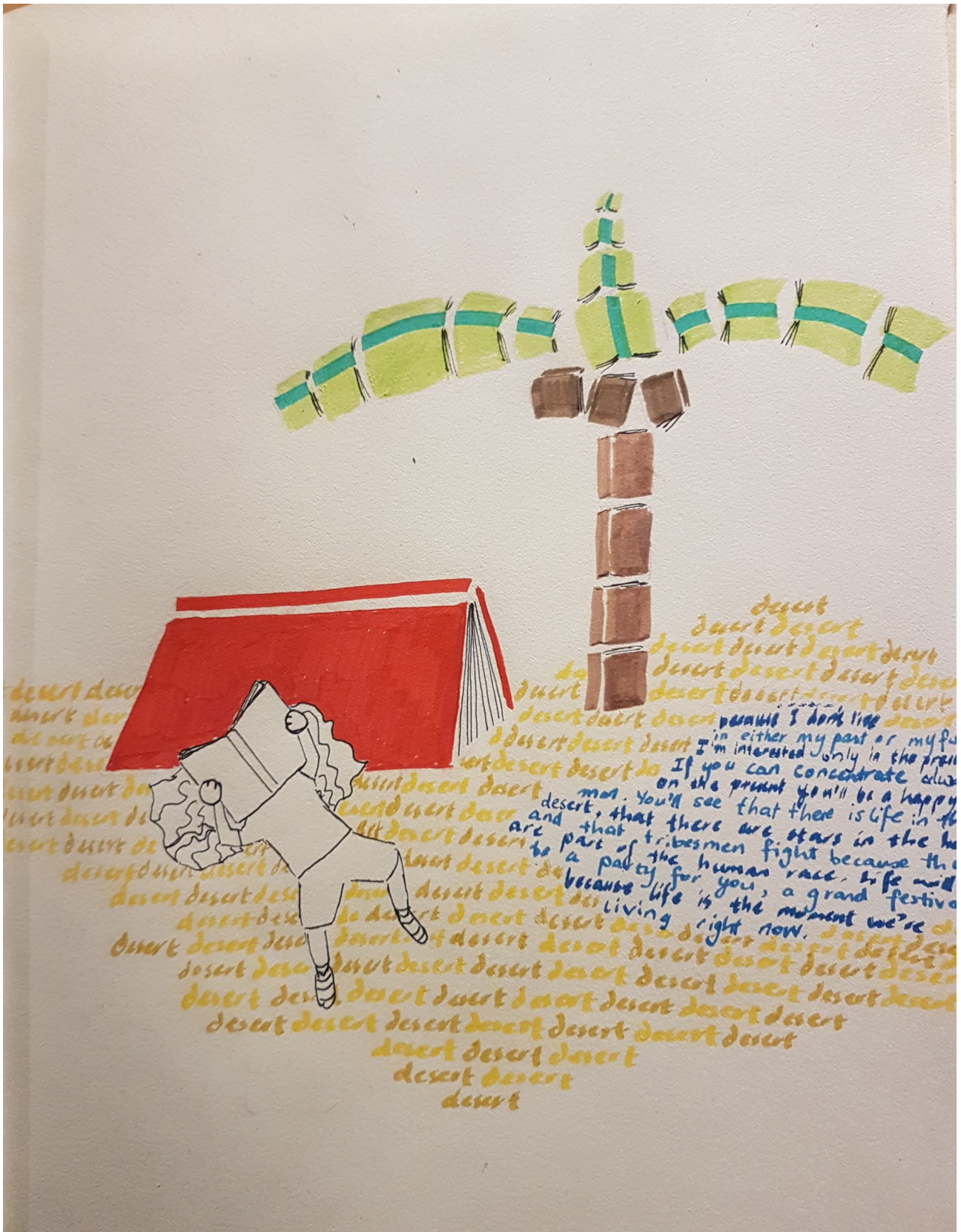
Once again, I'm clearly no expert, but these are some of the things I learned in helping me pursue my own little passion project.

**See more from Dan Coonan's extensive blog: <https://dancoonanauthor.com/>**



## The art of self-expression

A beautiful piece by last edition's featured creative, poet Alyse is also an artist. This one really moved me. In the artist's own words, "This is based on the idea of oasis. The words in the water are from Paulo Coelho's novel *The Alchemist* and the rest of the 'sand' reads desert."





# What inspires you to write?

**Does inspiration grab you and physically shake you? Do ideas dance gently across your mind? Is there an intense surge through your core that demands release? Or do you just wake up one day knowing exactly what to write?**



Chances are there is a little of all of these behind the desire to write a story. Or at least it's that way for me. But if I had to boil it down to one thing that acts as a catalyst for the stories I create it would be the setting.

By setting I mean the locations in which the story takes place: Middle Earth in *Lord of the Rings*, Rome in *The Da Vinci Code*, New York in *The Great Gatsby*. For me, the interplay between the events and the location of a tale is one of the most powerful drivers of narrative and realism within a novel.

I first came to love the use of setting when I was working as a high school english teacher during my 20s. The class and I were studying Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*. The time and place, isolation and references to the landscape drew us into the world of the play and made the events feel as though they were unfolding before us.

I started to actively notice the locations of the novels I read, and movies I watched. And more and more I came to see how important the setting really is. Just look at the title of *Sex and the City*, and the uproar when they held the movie premier in London and not New York.

More than this however, I came to see how much different places I visited in my own life impacted my experience. I have loved to travel since I was a child. At the young age of six I remember watching the cargo docks pass under the car as my dad drove us into Melbourne over the Westgate Bridge. It filled me with a sense of awe and wonder, the sheer size and scope of the waterway, the enormous cranes and cargo ships lit up for the evening, twinkling against the dark canals below. Now as an adult every new place I go to leaves me with a

different vibe: the largess of London, the age of Rome, the romance of Paris (to name some stereotypes as an examples).

But what I gravitate to more are the smaller places. Towns built of stone in deep valleys, fishing villages on rugged coasts, windswept glaciers, cottages surrounded by purple lavender, tropical beaches that smell of rotting fruit and garbage. These are the places that activate my writing brain.

So it's no surprise that the idea for my first novel, *Widow's Lace*, came to me as I travelled along the Finniss River in South Australia. A tributary river of the Lower Lakes, the Finniss is a small, reed lined river that winds it's way inland from the Murray River. The quiet of the Finniss; only the sound of the reeds rustling, insects humming and the occasional caw of a river bird, set me to musing about living alone on her banks. This became the catalyst for *Widow's Lace*.

I experienced a similar moment of inspiration when travelling in south Devon in the autumn of 2019. It was late in the season and the smaller towns were closing up for the winter. Summer houses along the beach were boarded closed, cafes only open for lunch, yet the sun still shone bright and clear on the blue waters of the bay and the rolling green hills of the surrounding farms. The idea peculated for about 6 months, resolving into the crime fiction that is my second novel, *The Unsound Sister*.

Once a story comes to me the idea of writing is exciting. I feel an energy in my arms and fingers and I want to start typing. So I do. The process isn't all smooth and dreamy, the act of crafting a novel requires much more structure, grit and focus. The vibe of a location may get me started, but it is dedication that sits me down day in day out to wrestle with my ideas and bring them to life.

Locations, cities, towns, beaches, rivers, forests, paths, staircases, buildings, stadiums, parks, squares: these are my catalysts, at least so far.

I'd love to hear yours. What inspires you to write, sparks your imagination and ideas?

Let me know!

## Meet Editor Lucy Skoulding

(She is awesome, I should keep her to myself, but I'm feeling generous!)



### Lucy in her own words.

I absolutely love coffee. It's kind of my constant, whatever I'm doing in the day, whatever's going on, I always know I'll enjoy a coffee as I wake up in the morning - although I try not to have too much off it, as easy as that would be. I'm also lucky enough to really love my work. I'm a journalist, editor and author and am about to start a masters in human rights alongside my work. I love creativity and the written word but I also love facts, stories and knowledge, so I think that's what ultimately drew me towards a career in editing and journalism. Oh and I'm very nosy. I love chatting to people and working with people! Everyone is in the same boat at the moment, but I'm looking forward to seeing all my friends and family again and to travelling once the pandemic is over.

### Her journey to becoming an editor.

I first started editing in 2014 while I was still at university, studying English Literature. A slightly different kind of editing, but I became Books Editor of my student newspaper, editing students' articles and publishing them pretty much every day.

After university, as I began pursuing journalism, I also started helping my step-grandfather pursue his lifelong ambition of writing a novel. I worked closely with him, editing each chapter, and ended up being named as co-author in his trilogy, *So Great A Man*. Most of my contribution was on the editing side, although I wrote some chapters too. He was so proud of his achievement, especially as someone who had been told he was bad at English while he was at school, and I felt elated to have helped him achieve that goal.



After editing those three books, I agreed to edit a long novel by a different author, a fantasy and historical fiction called *Conspirators: To Each His Own Agenda*, by Matt Gupta. While I was editing Matt's novel, in about mid-2019, I started having some conversations with friends and family about how much I was enjoying editing books. Having worked in several journalism roles by this time, where I'd edited articles extensively, and edited four novels, I decided I wanted to make book editing a bigger part of my career.

At the end of 2019, I was eating in a Battersea restaurant with my dad and stepmum when the idea for Starlight Editing was born (even the name was decided). I wanted to start an editing and proofreading business in which I predominantly helped new or early-career authors realise their dreams of writing a book. That sounds a bit cheesy but I think lots of people feel daunted by the idea of writing a novel even though they'd do an amazing job, so I want to help people that are feeling like this.

The first half of 2020, as I got used to working from home full time with the pandemic, was spent getting everything ready for the business - starting my Twitter page, building and launching my website, joining the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading. Then I began to knuckle down and find authors to work with. I had some amazing conversations and it was really exciting when authors reached out to ask me questions about my services. While conversations don't always turn into a contract, each one is a great learning curve.

I eventually got my first job since Starlight officially launched in the summer of 2020 to edit Lelita Baldock's second novel, a crime fiction called *The Unsound Sister*. Scrolling back through our messages now, we actually first chatted on 15th May! After editing *The Unsound Sister*, I started work on Lelita's first novel, a historical fiction called *Widow's Lace*. Towards the end of last year, I also edited a murder mystery and historical fiction called *Testament of Hate* by Derek Pearson, and I finished that editing process just after Christmas.

### **Why did you take up editing?**

I've known reading is important to me ever since I spent literally an entire day reading the fourth Harry Potter book on the sofa despite the fact the sun was shining outside at the age of 10. But, in all honesty, I wasn't sure I'd like editing before I'd tried it. I worried it would take the enjoyment out of reading novels. In fact, I've found the opposite. Like anything, I set myself editing goals depending on the rest of my working week and strive to stick to them but, more often than not, I find myself hitting this target and wishing I could carry on. Put simply, one reason I decided to take up editing is because I absolutely love it. The other reason is because I'm passionate about helping people achieve a great personal success in publishing a book. I also want to help improve diversity in the author world and I hope to work with both new and under-represented authors through my business.

### **What do you enjoy most about the editing process?**

Making the finishing touches on something that's already amazing. I feel very privileged to get to read the incredible writing my authors produce and call that my work. My job is really just the icing on the cake, just adding a little bit of polish to ensure what my authors send to publishers and agents is the very best reflection of their work and their abilities. My favourite part is seeing everything come together in the finished product.

### **What do you find most challenging about the editing process?**

It depends on what type of edit you're doing, but I think it's extremely important not to change anything crucial about what an author has written. You can't just go changing the tone or meaning or content of what an author has written without consulting them. If something doesn't make sense to you, or you think it could be better, a good editor will have a conversation with the author about this. What are they trying to convey at this moment? Do they agree it is a bit weak? How would they like to improve it? Editors are there to polish the writing, not do the writing. These conversations can be challenging or slow the process down but they are really important.

### **What are you most proud of in your career so far?**

Taking the leap to start a business of my own. I love being part of a team as a journalist and I'm definitely someone who quite enjoys following instructions. Growing up I never would have thought I could start my own thing but I was lucky enough to be encouraged by amazing people around me and ended up going for it.



### **What advice would you give to aspiring editors?**

It takes time and be prepared to put in the work. That sounds so generic but the time thing is so important. If you want to start as an editor or proofreader it won't happen overnight and you shouldn't be put off if you don't get any clients for a while. I'm still very much at the start of my editor journey and I know I need to put in the daily work to build a name for myself. The world of social media, websites and blogs are definitely your friend and it's worth taking some time to learn how you can best market yourself on these platforms. It's also a good idea to get involved with the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading - there's a whole community of editors and proofreaders, regular discussions, online courses, advice and more.

### **What has being an editor taught you?**

To be adaptable. Being an editor is definitely not a mundane, process-driven job. Each author will come to you with their own requirements, circumstances, problems and skills. One author may need particular help with grammar while another may be struggling with the overall structure of their novel.

### **What genre of writing do you most enjoy reading for fun? Any notable novels/ authors you admire?**

Crime or fantasy with some romance thrown in as well as some weird, quirky and bold characters. I love characters and the process of building a character, so I'll always enjoy a novel with great characterisation.

I've just read *Queenie* by Candice Carty-Williams - it isn't crime or fantasy but it's such an excellent book which tackles a lot of current issues all while the story is gripping.

### **If you could meet any author living or passed, who would it be and why?**

Sally Rooney. I want to know how she wrote two incredibly addictive and clever novels, one of which is already adapted for TV, and yet she's only 29! She seems awesome.

**Website** - <https://www.starlightediting.com/>

**Facebook** - <https://www.facebook.com/lucy.skoulding>

**Instagram** - [https://www.instagram.com/lucy\\_skoulding/](https://www.instagram.com/lucy_skoulding/)

**Twitter** - <https://twitter.com/EditorLucy>

# Bonus Two

## Lucy Skoulding's blog for aspiring authors.

### In her own words:

To mark a year of the business, I'm launching a fortnightly blog which I hope can help me achieve my long-term goals. Year after year, studies are conducted and stats are cited around the extreme lack of diversity among published authors. It's time for action. I want Starlight and my blog to focus on helping new and early-career authors to get published and, specifically, to help those from underrepresented communities.

Link: <https://www.starlightediting.com/blog-1>

## What I'm currently reading



### ***The Couple Next Door*– Shari Lapena**

'You never know what's happening on the other side of the wall.'

Cannot put this down! It was suggested as part of a writing group I have joined.

Absolute page turner. I cannot wait to find out what happens!

<https://sharilapena.com/>

# Writing Quotes / Inspiration

**“All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us”**

- JRR Tolkein

Sit with that one for a moment. You have the right to do what you want to do with this life. Make it your own.

**“A person who never made a mistake, never tried anything new”**

- Albert Einstein

So get out there and fail! Once, twice, again and again. Because ‘failure’ is really just learning by doing.

**“List of Books to Read Before You Die:**

**1. Any book you want**

**2) Don’t read books you don’t want to read**

**3) That’s it**

**4. Congratulations, you did it!”**

- @read-and-be-merry

Says it all really. Read and write and experience, for you!

**Are you an author, blogger, reviewer, editor, podcaster, or other writing content creator?**



**I want to feature you!**

This year I want to open up my newsletter to feature people from all aspects of the writing process – creatives, promoters, enthusiasts and more.

If you would like to feature in an upcoming edition of my newsletter, please email me: [lelita.baldock@gmail.com](mailto:lelita.baldock@gmail.com) and we can get started!

## **Coming Up Next**

Our next edition of the Writing Newsletter will be all about Indie Authors and Bloggers! Meet some of my favourites as we share tips and support to start your own publishing journey. Looking forward to sharing with you again soon.