**January 11, 2018 Too Full to Write / David Ellis https://toofulltowrite.com/2018/01/11/author-interview-dawn-greenfield-ireland/**

**Dawn Greenfield Ireland Author Interview**

Hi there Dawn, fantastic to have you over here to discuss your screenplay, novels and Non-Fiction books, along with enlightening us further about your writing experiences and endeavours.

Let's start with your latest Sci-Fi novels “Prophecy of Thol” (a parallel world/creatures adventure) and “The Last Dog” (a dystopian excursion). Please tell us more about their plots and themes, the nature of the Sci-Fi worlds they inhabit and the ideas that led to their creation.

[Prophecy of Thol](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/prophecy-of-thol/) had been through so many name changes as the rewrites occurred over the decades. Yes, decades. In this published version, which is my favorite, the main character is a normal teenage girl who studies metaphysics (crystals, auras, etc.).

D’laine begins having nightmares after coming out of an 8-month coma. The nightmares never change. She is visited by four distinct other-worldly characters every single night: one is a young man in his late teens, the others are two horrific monsters and one ominous robot.

Her world is turned upside down when she is pulled into the parallel world – she is now living in her nightmare where danger abounds with the many deadly creatures in the exotic world.

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[The Last Dog](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/the-last-dog/) is set in 2086 with a theme of governmental control. I think this came about while I was still grieving over losing my dog Shasta after 16-1/2 years. She had been my steady companion and her death hit me hard.

When this story idea came through, I was in the process of trying to take a nap. All I can say is that it was a direct download into my brain, and as much as I wanted to take a nap, the dream was a persistent, nagging, running thought. So, I got up and started writing the entire outline.

What it boils down to is the love of family and what they would resort to when their puppy is confiscated by the government after a world-wide catastrophe claims millions of humans and canines.

Abby is the last dog in an almost childless world.

Furthermore, you have a Cozy Mystery novel series too – “The Alcott Family Adventures” with “Hot Chocolate” and “Bitter Chocolate” published so far and another novel in the works. Can you please tell us more about the protagonists and antagonists of this series, along with its particular plot and themes that steer it towards the Cozy Mystery genre.

[The Alcott Family Adventures](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/hot-chocolate/) focuses on a family who have made their money through their chocolate business.

As a self-professed chocoholic, I thought of my late mother who had a serious chocolate addiction going on – she had Hersey’s chocolate bars stashed all over the place.   
  
I thought [Hot Chocolate](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/hot-chocolate/) would be a fun way to treat everyone to a great little story with eccentric characters who grew up with chocolate – as their livelihood, and as an indulgence.   
  
Everyone loves the family I have created, their relationships with the large cast of characters, and the recipes in the back of the book.

*Without the wealth from Alcott Chocolates, the story would not be set in Houston’s ultra-wealthy River Oaks.*

*Bernie Alcott, the founder of Alcott Chocolates, and the patriarch at 92, is a wily character who constantly gives his middle-aged daughters fits. He may be old, but he’s not dead yet, and always proving that trouble doesn’t stop with at a specific age.*  
 *These ultra-wealthy sisters are not like the socialites one might read about in the news. These gals have their own agendas.*

Many people tell me that I have a conversational style of writing. This is very apparent in [Hot Chocolate](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/hot-chocolate/) and [Bitter Chocolate](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/bitter-chocolate/).

I have had a wild imagination my entire life. When I started writing fiction, there were no holds barred. A lot of my friends and acquaintances end up in my books.

*The books have a very large cast. When I was writing Bitter Chocolate, I hired a guy to create a family tree of the characters. It is a great reference to see the relationships and connections of the characters. You can download the family tree for free from my website.*  
 *The family tree has been updated for Spicy Chocolate (to be published within the next 30 days) with color coding so people can see the original cast in Hot Chocolate in one color, who was added in Bitter Chocolate in another color, and the newcomers in Spicy Chocolate.*

You also have some Non-Fiction books published, the most notable of which include – “The Puppy Baby Book” and “Mastering Your Money”. Please tell us more about all of your Non-Fiction books and your reasons for writing them.

My non-fiction books are styled after my many years as a technical writer.

I came up with the idea of [*The Puppy Baby Book*](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/puppy-baby-book/) in 1999 when I was having somewhat of a meltdown over one of my son’s escapades. Shasta was on her dog bed and I was looking at my sons baby books when I turned to Shasta and said: “I wish I had a baby book for you!”

That’s all it took. I grabbed the books, went into my home office and began the process. The Puppy Baby Book is a fill-in-the-blanks baby book to chart the puppy’s growth and progress for the first year, much like an infant baby book. This book has been selling since 2000. You can only get an autographed copy from my website.  
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The concept for [Mastering Your Money](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/mastering-your-money/) came about in the mid 1980s while I was working at Compaq Computer as a technical writer. A couple of my coworkers spent a fortune in bounced check charges because they didn’t know how to work a checkbook. I was explaining my system to one of them when she said, “You know, Dawn, you are a technical writer. You should write that down.”

I have to gloat a little here. The literary agent I had years ago could not see the benefit of Mastering Your Money. His thought was that people were not using in-hand checkbooks. They were using online banking. I disagreed. There’s more people using checkbooks than you can shake a stick at.

I sent the book file to another agent. His people said that since I didn’t have a degree in anything financial, or have letters after my name representing any type of money or financial “stuff” I was not considered an expert.

My feathers were so ruffled! I entered the eBook in the New England eBook competition and guess what? It WON the category! You can see the winners ribbon on the cover by clicking [here](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/mastering-your-money/).

I did what any snubbed author would do. I sent the email with the winners notification to both of those agents.

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[Writers Preparation Handbook](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/writers-preparation-handbook-3/) is also an online course accessed here: <https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/online-course/> This is for anyone who wants to write a book. Makes no difference whether its nonfiction, a novel, a manual, business book – whatever. This has specifics that will save a beginner time and effort to get the manuscript page formatted properly, give understanding why they should do things the way I outline them, and just make their lives easier.

[What’s Breaking Your Budget](https://dawngreenfieldireland.com/product/whats-breaking-your-budget-ebook/) is a spinoff from Mastering Your Money. I wanted to delve into the whole concept of a budget. Over the years I have discovered that many of the budget courses out there don’t cover nearly anything like my book does. I’m working on the online course, the audio book, and the paperback.

Finally, regarding your prolific book output, you have a screenplay that you have just published called “The Far Corner”. This screenplay was a finalist in the 13Horror.com 2017 Film & Screenplay Contest. What a wonderful achievement! Can you tell us the premise of the script and give us an insight into what drove you to tackling the horror genre with this script?

[The Far Corner](https://www.amazon.com/Far-Corner-Dawn-Greenfield-Ireland-ebook/dp/B078JP3JPH/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1514311583&sr=1-1) started out as a novel in 1989, originally titled *The Crowd*. I was around 50 pages into the writing when I felt it was more of a screenplay than a book.

In addition to being a finalist in the 13Horror.com script competition (11/2017), it was also a Finalist in the Reel Writers Script Competition (8/2015), and a Semifinalist in the Screencraft Script Competition (8/2015).

13Horror.com published it as a script in paperback form, so anyone who wants to read the script can get their hands on it.

Here’s my synopsis. Short and to the point: The Far Corner is an intense psychological/supernatural horror narrative about a crowd of creatures who try to protect a woman -- from one of their own.

The judge from the Reel Writers competition had this to say:

“Jim Henson's Creature Shop could go wild with this. The slimy excretions of the creatures are so wonderfully disgusting that each time a creature touches Jenna with its be-gooed finger, it evokes an intense and -immediate- desire for soap and hot water. This script presents a world in which these incredible, paranormal events can happen. And happen often enough that people can make a living solving the mysteries created by these circumstances. This fictitious world has tremendous potential for expansion into a series.”

The judge from ScreenCraft had this to say:

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“THE CROWD is an intense psychological horror narrative with some appealing, fresh elements. Tonally it’s reminiscent of movies like THE SIXTH SENSE or GOTHIKA or even JACOB’S LADDER, but here, the protagonist isn’t seeing ghosts, but she’s seeing bizarre animal-like creatures, one of which is a half-man, half-lion terror. It’s a highly new, disturbing and original idea that certainly has the potential to captivate horror purists and studio readers. It’s just one of those scripts that you can’t stop reading simply because it’s so distinctive. It has a tightly woven structure, interesting characters, a distinct and original voice, and an ending that just feels right.”

I have the script entered into a couple of competitions in 2018, so we’ll see if anyone chooses it as a winner.

What would you choose as your own personal mascot or spirit animal when it comes to you and your style of writing?

Two animals come to mind: a wolf, and a panther. My black cat, Midnight, has a very distinctive face that always reminds me of a black panther.

If any of your novels were to be made into films (or even a TV series), who would you cast in the lead roles?

Prophecy of Thol would most likely be unknown actors. For Hot Chocolate, I would love to see Sally Field as Lila Mae Alcott.

If The Far Corner ever got there, I’d say Mulder and Scully because it is very “X-Files” like material.

What do you think most characterizes or defines your writing? Do you have any writing quirks or themes that constantly crop up in your stories?

Writing quirks… hhmmm. Characterizes or defines my writing? Don’t give me brain-lock thinking about this.

You’ll see dogs in many of my stories. And, family. Come hell or high water, family is very important and always wins hands down.

What do you find the most difficult thing about writing? And what do you find the easiest?

Difficult? Knowing when to quit.

Easiest? Coming up with ideas. Letting my characters tell me what they want to do.

Who are some of the authors, poets and/or historical figures that inspire you?

I’m a voracious reader across many genres—I read 2-6 books per week. My favorite authors are many, but I love Edgar Rice Burroughs, H.G. Wells, JK Rowling, S.E. Hinton, Erin Hunter, Lee Child, Sarah Waters, Justin Cronin – I could go on for days.

I adore Michael Bernard Beckwith. I loved Maya Angelo.

What sort of research do you do to write your books?

Everything from character professions, locations, facts, subject matter experts for specific things, to foods, houses, neighborhoods – everything you can think of.

Why do you write? What inspired you to become a writer?

I have always been a daydreamer. Back in 1979, I had a very long commute to work. A portion of that drive was over Addicks Dam/Barker Reservoir to the west of Houston, TX, which, at that time, was beautifully forested on both sides of the highway.   
  
I’m not even sure how I got to work in one piece from all the daydreaming, but I had a story developing in my head for several days, and I started jotting notes. I had no idea that I was going to write a book. I knew nothing about writing.  
  
But, from this story that kept building in my head, I made sure I had a lined tablet and a pen on the passenger seat. When traffic backed up, I’d write furiously. This was the birth of *Prophecy of Thol*, titled Second Chance in those days.

What keeps you motivated during creative slumps? How do you deal with Writers Block?

Slumps? What are those? My problem is I have so many projects lined up I don’t know how I’ll be able to get through them. I have file folders with slips of paper with ideas. I also have fully outlined projects just sitting there… waiting to breathe their own life.

You have access to a time machine. What advice would you give to your younger self?

Go ahead and get that degree.

How do you spend your free time when you are not writing?

*When I’m not on my laptop creating something, I’m reading, cooking or baking something, or watching Netflix or Amazon Prime content.*  
 *Several years ago, I began cooking on the weekends for the week ahead to make my life easier. I have continued this process, and I have to tell you, it sets me free to do everything else.*  
 *Whether it is a pot of soup, a roast, or spaghetti sauce, I use canning jars to store liquid items, and freezer bags for meats and things.*  
 *Just so you know, I’m going to document some of my life shortcuts and create a book.*

Tell us more about your upcoming projects. Are you working on anything specific or have plans in the pipeline?

I’m already 29K words into Gifts From Thol. I also have two more books lined up for my dystopian series, and one more chocolate book in the Alcott series. After that, *The Glow*, the third science fiction novel from the late 80s needs to get finished. Then my goal is to adapt eight of my 16 screenplays into novels, beginning with *My Monster*.

Finally, are there any nuggets of wisdom that you can impart to other aspiring writers?

1. Never quit. Stay away from anyone who does not support what you are doing. You can’t afford to let someone poison your budding career because we are very tender when it comes to negativity and our words.

2. Find and join a critique group. Not a book club or book reading group – they just read books. You need constructive criticism and people with experience with writing to help you along. You’ll get this with a critique group.

3. Find an editor! When you finish your book, do not use your Aunt Sue, an English teacher or anyone other than a book editor. After you make changes from the editor’s notes, consider a proofreader to make sure you have not left any stragglers on the page.

Goethe says it all:

*Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way.*

***Whatever you can do, or dream, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now.***

* Goethe

Midnight by boy cat. My mini-panther.



Here’s part of my twenty-seven feet of custom bookcases in the living room. My office is beyond the door.

My website: htps://www.dawngreenfieldireland.com

Social Media:

Facebook: dawn.ireland.18

LinkedIn: dawnireland

Twitter: @dawnireland

Instagram: @dawngreenfieldireland

Here’s a short bio:

Dawn Greenfield Ireland is the author of several award-winning books and screenplays. To date she has written seven novels (three contemporary mystery and four science fiction), 15 screenplays (comedies, dramas, one horror, action adventure and science fiction) three short scripts and five reality TV concepts. Her day job was an award-winning technical writer (34 years) that played a major role in her fiction writing – she is detailed oriented, stays within budget and never misses a deadline. She writes full time in addition to editing books for authors, and coaching people through the writing process.

I’ll have a new photo on Saturday ☺ and will send it.

