

News from SF writer Lance Robinson

No, I was not in cryosleep for 14 years

In the 1980s at the University of Regina, in Regina, Saskatchewan in Canada, the English Department required students to “audition” for the creative writing course. The story that I wrote for my audition—eventually, a few years and a few rewrites later—became my first short story publication.

It appeared in 1990 in a literary fanzine called *Riverside Quarterly*. See [fancyclopedia.org/Riverside Quarterly](https://fancyclopedia.org/Riverside_Quarterly) for a brief history of this interesting publication.

Between 1990 and 2005, I published a handful of stories in small press magazines. Then life happened—back to university for PhD studies, my daughter was born, then my son, then we moved to Kenya—and I set the creative writing mostly aside.

In late 2019, with the kids getting older, and a change of scenery moving back to Canada, I felt the urge again. And here we are. Immersing myself in writing once again feels like coming home.

Writers of the Future

The *Writers of the Future* contest has been running since 1983, when it was established to help foster up-and-coming science fiction and fantasy writers. Winners

are selected on a quarterly basis, with the first, second, and third place stories from each quarter being included in an annual anthology. The twelve winning writers are also invited to the annual award ceremony and intensive, week-long workshop taught by well-known authors, usually held in the Los Angeles area.

Many of the past winners and finalists have gone on to successful writing careers: Dean Wesley Smith, Dave Wolverton, Robert Reed, Nancy Farmer, and Nnendi Okorafor to name a few.

In 1988, the parallel *Illustrators of the Future* contest was launched for artists. Every year, the twelve winners of this contest will each create an illustration for one of the winning stories from the writing contest.

Every quarter, thousands of aspiring writers submit short stories or novelettes to the contest. In September 2023, the winners for the 3rd quarter for Volume 40 were announced. I still find it difficult to believe that I won first place.

I’ll be attending the annual award ceremony in Hollywood in April, and soon after that, *Writers and Illustrators of the Future Volume 40* will be available for purchase. When it is, I’ll post information in future issues of this newsletter, on my Facebook page, and on my website.

Coming soon

My short story "Money, Wealth, and Soil" will appear in the May/June issue of *Analog Science Fiction & Fact*.

And my story that won first place in the quarterly *Writers and Illustrators of the Future* contest will appear in Volume 40 of the annual anthology, to be released around May.

I have also started to assemble some of my previously published stories to release them together as a collection. I'll have more news on that later in the year.

What I'm working on now

Over the past year I have been focusing on short fiction, and in addition to the "coming soon" stories mentioned above, I have a few others out searching for appropriate homes in magazines and anthologies.

Lately though, I've been feeling the urge to create something longer. And so, I'm in the early stages of writing a prequel to my *Writers of the Future* winning story. I don't know yet if it will be a novel or a novella, but



I do feel the worldbuilding behind that short story will be fertile ground for a novel or even a series.

I must admit to some trepidation though. Finding time on weekends and evenings to write short stories is one thing; writing a whole novel is quite another. But I've made the decision and there's no turning back now. Stay tuned.

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