

## News from SF writer Lance Robinson

---

### Writing a Novel in Reverse

Writers often divide themselves into two types: *plotters*, who plan everything, map out all the story beats, and imagine the characters before they start to actually write, and *pantser*s, who write by the seat of their pants and only try to apply a structure to their stories after they've gone on a journey of discovery. In reality, though, the difference is more of a spectrum than an opposition of two mutually exclusive categories.

I'm definitely more on the plotter end of the spectrum, but I'm still discovering things as I write. One problem that I often discover once I get into writing a story, is that my plans for it just aren't working. Or that my plan is like a map of a newly discovered land with elaborate detail at the starting point and destination, but nothing more than fuzzy blobs interrupting the blank terra incognita in-between.

Here be the writer's dragons.

In the novel I'm working on, my approach to this problem is to write it in reverse. I wrote the climax, then I thought about what needed to happen before that to move the story to the point at the beginning of the climactic scene, and I wrote *that* scene. Then I tinkered with the "map", then figured out what was needed before that, and wrote *that* scene.

I'm still more of a plotter than a pantser—the plot isn't changing much as I work backward toward the beginning of the story. But I am discovering little by little who the main character is and what makes him tick. It's not autobiography, but there are bits and pieces of me in him.

And in case you need a hint about the sci-fi elements in the novel, they include: Earth 14,000 years in the future, a government that sentences political prisoners and heretics to decades-long cryogenic freezing, and an ecological catastrophe cascading from fungal networks in soil to the whole biosphere.

### Other Tidbits

I'm alternating a between working on the novel and working on short stories—six to eight weeks on the novel, four to six weeks on short stories, then back again. Several short stories are with magazine and anthology editors right now, and I'm hoping for some news back from some of them soon.

The *Story Works Round Table* podcast invited me to be part of a panel of science fiction writers. We talked about the unique gift that science fiction offers, our favorite authors, and more. It was a fun conversation. <https://storyworkspodcast.com> — look for Episode 314.

## Social Media

I've started to shift my social media attention. I've abandoned the platform formerly known as Twitter, and I'm giving a bit less attention to Facebook and Instagram, in favour of Bluesky. If you want to follow me there, I'm at:

[bsky.app/profile/lancerobinsonwriter.com](https://bsky.app/profile/lancerobinsonwriter.com)

## Award Eligibility

The nomination period for the World Science Fiction Society's Hugo Awards is open until March 14<sup>th</sup>, and for the CSFFA's Aurora Awards will be open from March 1<sup>st</sup> to April 5<sup>th</sup>. If you're a Worldcon member and/or a CSFFA member, here are some of my eligible publications.

"Money, Wealth, and Soil", published in

*Analog Science Fiction & Fact*, May/June 2024. Category: Novelette.

"Five Days Until Sunset", published in *L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future Volume 40*, May 2024. Category: Novelette.

"The Gig of the Magi", published in *Chasing New Suns: Collected Stories*, September 2024. Category: Short story.

*Chasing New Suns: Collected Stories*, September 2024. Category: Anthology/collection.

If, in deciding on nominations, you would like to read just one of my stories, I humbly invite you to consider "Five Days Until Sunset" in the Best Novelette category. Message me if you'd like a copy.

## How to Support an Up-and-Coming Writer

If you've read my work and enjoyed it, please consider doing one or more of the following:

- Forward this newsletter to someone else you think may enjoy what I write.
- If you've read *Chasing New Suns*, write an honest review on Amazon, Goodreads, or some other platform.
- Go into a bookstore with the *Chasing New Suns* ISBN number (978-1-0688724-0-2) and ask them if they have it in stock or can get it.
- If you've read something of mine and liked it, don't be shy to send me a note telling me what you liked about it.



Visit my web page  
[www.lancerobinsonwriter.com](http://www.lancerobinsonwriter.com)



[bsky.app/profile/lancerobinsonwriter.com](https://bsky.app/profile/lancerobinsonwriter.com)



[www.facebook.com/lancerobinsonwriter](https://www.facebook.com/lancerobinsonwriter)



[www.instagram.com/lancerobinsonwriter](https://www.instagram.com/lancerobinsonwriter)



[lancerobinsonwriter.substack.com](https://lancerobinsonwriter.substack.com)

Email: [LRobinson@lancerobinsonwriter.com](mailto:LRobinson@lancerobinsonwriter.com)

Feel free to forward this newsletter to another science fiction fan.