

Like

Tweet

Pin

+1

in



Irene Latham's

ADVENTURES IN INK

Books for Dreamers, Seekers, & Thinkers

Hello, Friends!



I'm feeling thankful as we head into the final stretch of 2022, and I hope you are, too!

Many things have happened in my life this year, and here are the highlights:

2 more books ([AFRICAN TOWN](#) and [BE A BRIDGE](#)) with [Charles Waters](#), which meant us getting together A LOT!

Teaching poetry (with Charles!) at [Highlights Foundation](#) retreat center in the Pocono Mountains for the first time. Beautiful!

FINALLY being awarded an [Alabama State Council on the Arts](#) Fellowship for Literature. (It was my 9th time to apply!)

Becoming an ambassador for Africatown, Alabama. So grateful for the love [AFRICAN TOWN](#) has received from [Oprah](#)(!), [NPR](#), and some of the descendants themselves. (Have you seen the documentary film about the *Clotilda*/Africatown on Netflix [DESCENDANT](#)? Joycelyn Davis who wrote the Introduction to our book is prominently featured. Don't miss!)

Dipping into my own family history and joining [DAR](#) (Daughters of the American Revolution), as it turns out my ancestor Andrew Ralston fought in the Revolutionary War (in Pennsylvania). (Lo and behold, 26 years ago we named one of our sons Andrew. Cool, huh?)

Taking a week for myself at a monastery to experience silence and to write until my fingers bled (not literally, but boy did I write! To the tune of 10 hours a day...)

Celebrating 2 sons being in love with beautiful young women... and our other son taking the entrepreneur leap into his own business. *Whee!*

Several sweet road trips with Paul and our traveling-champ-furbaby Rosie, to places like Marathon, Florida; Eureka Springs, Arkansas; and Blue Ridge, Georgia.

Helping my mom through chemo, radiation, and (finally!) relocation (instead of 6 hours away, now I can take her supper!).

Unexpectedly selling a new poetry collection that will release in 2023 (!) ahead of several others that have been in the pipeline much longer. It's called [THE MOON IS A MUSEUM: POEMS ABOUT THINGS LEFT ON THE LUNAR SURFACE](#). (Shout-out to my fellow NASA, Apollo, and Artemis junkies!)

My weekly [ArtSpeak](#) poetry practice, especially the Picasso inspired series that resulted in 16 haiku/miniature poems. (I am really loving SHORT poems lately!)

The challenges/rewards of the [Haydn Cello Concerto in C](#). (In cello years, I am now a high school student preparing for college auditions!)

...and books. Always always books!

Looking for a Great Read? Check out some of my favorite books from 2022!

INSIGHT

Like many, I have a love/hate relationship with technology. Some days I long to be off the grid, away from the noise, the distractions, the stress of constant contact and information. Other days I'm so grateful technology allows me to research and learn with the click of a button. It makes things so much EASIER. For instance, from my phone I can tune my cello, listen to recordings, have a lesson with my teacher (who now lives in another state), and record myself playing during a practice session. So great!

Also great: the "Focus" feature on my iphone, that allows me to schedule daily chunks of time where I get NO notifications. This has been a wonderful help in my finding my sweet spot with tech.

Other digital things I love:

[Sounds True](#) - offerings on awareness! acceptance! spiritual growth!

[Chirp](#) - my favorite audiobooks site.

[Headspace](#) - meditation and mindfulness training continues to have a huge positive impact on my life.

[Canva](#) - I love how easy it is to make beautiful digital content on this site. :)

[Etsy](#) - yes, unique gifts. But if you're crafty (like me!), there's so much inspiration! Speaking of...

INSPIRATION

This year I jumped out of my comfort zone and into the world of video. I started posting a [Tuesday Two-Minute Writing Tip](#) on Youtube and offered my first-ever digital course for writers. Neither of those things "stuck," but I learned so much and loved the connections that came from those experiences!

In my writing life, I chose the road less traveled (by me) and completed my first-ever novel for adults. (It's a big, sweeping alternate history love story!) Now I #amquerying, searching for an agent

to represent that work in the marketplace. Anyone who's ever walked this path knows it is a slog. My socks are soaked, I've got blisters, and the heel of my boot is held together with tree sap. But I'm still walking...

Another big shift for me this year has been "retiring" from in-person school visits and going all-virtual (a gift of the pandemic!). (I'm still available for other speaking engagements at libraries, conferences, etc., but not schools.) I mention it because I know many of you are just like me: passionate—and overcommitted. It's such a seductive thing when people are asking you, inviting you to do something you're good at and have enjoyed for many years. But, I'm learning to listen to my body (if you can't say NO, it will say no for you!) and to honor that voice inside that knows time is our most valuable asset. The voice that says, "do what you want to do now, not later." And sometimes we learn what we truly want to do by shaving away the things we DON'T want to do. So, for direction, I've been thinking about my ANTI-Bucket List -- a list of those things that I don't care to do ever again.

What's on YOUR anti-bucket list?

Each day I feel I'm getting closer to living my life in a way that is more ME. And you can, too. It just takes snail trails and sticking with it ([just ask Esther!](#)) and not being too hard on yourself when you get off track—simply rerouting. ([a kind of Kindness!](#)) How? By remembering "No," is a complete sentence. By pausing before responding to invitations. By allowing the storm of feelings to sweep through, trusting that afterwards, there's always always some bird out there singing.

You—!—can be that bird...for ourselves AND for others.

Attention Birmingham Friends!

You're invited to join the MISS FANCY festivities **10-1 pm on Saturday, December 10 at Avondale Park** when they unveil and dedicate the life-sized statue of Miss Fancy. I'll be there with the good folks at [Thank you Books](#) signing copies of [MEET MISS FANCY](#), and thanks to the good folks at the Avondale Library, there will be a MEET MISS FANCY storywalk through the park! Bring the kids and grandkids and celebrate this bit of Alabama history.



IMAGINATION

So many things spark my imagination: art, books, history, #lakelife, good food, tough times, YOU!

Right now I'm thinking about things like:

What will be my 2023 ArtSpeak theme. Suggestions, anyone?

How my [2022 One Little Word "whimsy!"](#) has impacted my year, and what word to choose for next year

All the books in my house that I haven't read yet (In 2023 I am going to read ALL those books!)

The bake-off I'm hosting for Christmas (Thanks, Charles, for the idea!)

How to continue my writing self-education (Recently two writing craft books have really prompted

growth: [Story Genius](#) by Lisa Kron and [Self-Editing for Fiction Writers](#) by Renni Brown and Dave King.)

...and how I lived so long without a [book sleeve](#). I gifted myself one earlier this year (featuring snails, ala [SNAIL'S ARK](#)), and think every book lover needs one!



Thank you so much for reading this newsletter! I'm grateful for you. Keep shining your light! And know how very much I appreciate your love and support of my books and my life.

**Love,
Irene**

p.s. Thanks to Anne Frank for these beautiful words: "I don't think of all the misery but of the beauty that remains." ♥

©2022 Irene Latham Books | PO Box 122 Oneonta, AL 35121

[Web Version](#)

[Preferences](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by [Mad Mimi](#)®
A GoDaddy® company