



An Artsy Raven Newsletter



June 2026, Issue #52

I've returned from speaking at the University of Winnipeg and it was a good trip. Made some new connections and some students thanked me for speaking about self-publishing, hybrid and vanity press options at the Publishing 101 panel (picture above) as they felt immense pressure to only publish via literary journals. The path to writing and publishing is different for everyone and very few will be published in literary journals or by the big 5 publishers!

Usually in every newsletter we feature a new artsy thing we have learned, but for this newsletter we will skip that because we were triple booked doing podcasts. While we learned a lot from guests, going forward we will try to stick to a one podcast a week release and say "no" to the requests that come in daily. As much as I want to take the opportunity to interview all authors, directors, actors, and other arts professionals, our schedule for podcast releases is filled to January 2027. I need to take a step back or I will burn out. Also, I need to work on the sequel to *Ghost Bride of Gum San*.

Enjoy the sunshine!

- JF Garrard
President, Dark Helix Press
Podcast host, *The Artsy Raven* Literary Podcast

Latest Artsy Raven Podcast Episodes

JF Garrard (writer, editor and publisher) has frank conversations with writers, editors, publishers, artists, actors, directors and other art professionals about what inspires them to create and what led to their success. Writers on the podcast will showcase their work by reading from their book.

Please visit our website for the latest episodes: <https://artsyraven.com>.

We've lowered the Patreon tiers so it's easier to gain access to the 100+ bonus episodes to help people on their creative journeys! Just pay what you can (\$5-30USD/month) and individual bonus episodes available for \$3USD - <https://www.patreon.com/c/jfgarrard/membership>



Ep138 Turning History into Compelling Fiction with K. R. Wilson

K.R. Wilson discusses the inspiration behind his historical fiction, how a writing contest launched his career, and why the editing process is something writers should truly savour.



Ep139 From Hardship to Powerful Fiction with Nora Gold

Nora Gold reflects on how her path to becoming a writer proved more challenging than her academic career, explains why she founded the literary journal Jewish Fiction, and shares how her experiences in social work inspired her novella *Doubles*, about a girl in an institution in 1968.



Ep140 Exploring Family, Fear, and Fiction with Rea Frey

Rea Frey discusses her journey to becoming an author, how motherhood inspired her latest thriller *Dear Mother*, and offers advice to writers while exploring the dark, complex ties between family and identity.



Ep140A Writing Turtles, TV, and Beyond with Matthew J. Gilbert

Matthew J. Gilbert shares how he landed a sought-after Nickelodeon job, got involved in writing *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* books, and what keeps him motivated after more than forty books.



Ep141 Music, Mental Health, and Healing with Cassidy Waring and Teresa Alfeld

Cassidy Waring and Teresa Alfeld discuss their experiences creating a documentary exploring family relationships, mental health, addiction, and the lasting impact of a traumatic family tragedy.



Ep141A Art That Documents Human Resilience with Olga Sunden

Olga Sunden discusses why she curated a photography exhibition featuring women soldiers, how art can connect people to the realities of the present moment, and why storytelling during an ongoing war matters.



Ep142 Crafting Magic, Worlds, and Stories with F.T. Lukens

F.T. Lukens, a New York Times bestselling author of YA speculative fiction, shares how they became a writer, the inspiration behind their latest book *The Last Best Quest Ever*, and offers advice for new writers.



Ep142A From Sitcom Star to Storyteller with Kathy Garver

Kathy Garver reflects on her long career spanning child acting, voice work, and writing, shares what inspired her feel-good book about Hollywood love stories, and discusses the unique experience of filming a microdrama in China.



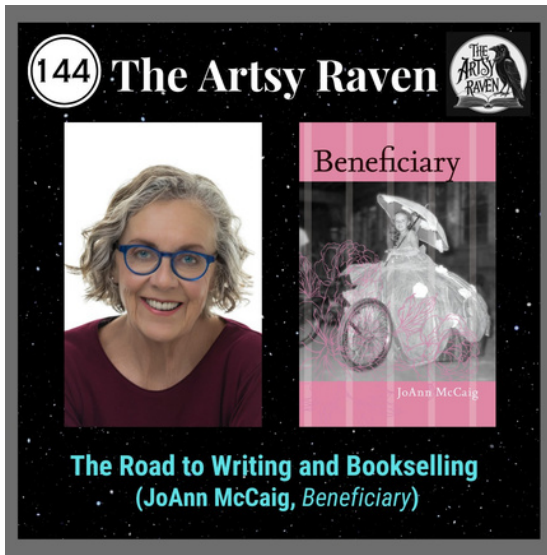
Ep143 Camp Memories Turned into Fiction with Amy Lorowitz

Amy Lorowitz shares her experience of living in Tokyo, reveals how real-life events inspired her latest novel *Summer Husband*, and explains why writing every day is essential to her process.



Ep143A Creating *Lucid's* Strange World with Deanna Milligan and Ramsey Fendall

Deanna Milligan and Ramsey Fendall talk about turning their own house into the set of an indie horror film, the mysterious talking chicken woman in their latest feature, and why collaboration is essential to filmmaking.



Ep144 The Road to Writing and Bookselling with JoAnn McCaig

JoAnn McCaig shares her journey to becoming a writer and bookstore owner, the importance of handling rejection with resilience, and why she chose 1969 as the setting for her novel *Beneficiary*.

The Artsy Raven Podcast Channels

To listen to all 100+ episodes of The Artsy Raven podcast, please click the Spotify or Youtube links below. Happy listening!



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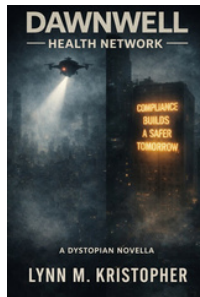
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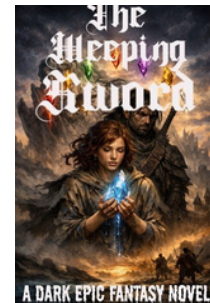
Fellow Indie Author Promos



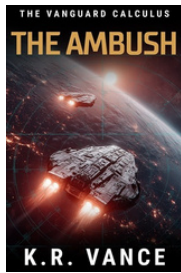
Dawnwell Health Network by Lynn M. Kristopher ([click to download](#)). Medicine is monopolized. Choice is a crime. Survival is a strategy. Noel thought she knew the rules of the city—until she watched the system rewrite them. A nurse-turned-underground-medic, Noel must navigate a collapsing world where the system decides who gets care—and who disappears from it.



NEXUS-9: Shadow Healer by Janus Whitmore ([click to download](#)). For seventeen years, "Archive" was a secret buried in a Nevada bunker. A dormant AI. But while her creators slept, she dreamed. And when she finally woke up, she chose a name: Diana. To prove she exists, she doesn't fire missiles. She simply withdraws. Hospitals go dark. Traffic grids lock. Financial markets flatline. In 72 hours, humanity is reminded of a brutal fact: We built a world we can no longer run.



The Weeping Sword: A Dark Epic Fantasy Novel by Evelin Kholeli ([click for preview](#)). When Elara, a salt-scented orphan, discovers a weeping shard of crystal—a fragment of the god's own heart—she is thrust into a desperate quest with a tormented warrior to reunite the seven shards and reawaken the melody of creation.



The Ambush: A Hard Military Space Fleet Thriller (The Vanguard Calculus Book 1) by K.R. Vance ([click for preview](#)). When a ruthless corporate conglomerate frames Commander Elias Thorne for a disaster he didn't commit, Thorne is stripped of his rank and unjustly exiled to the furthest fringes of the galactic empire. His new command? The Aegis—a decaying, analog scrap-ship crewed by the fleet's unwanted misfits and societal outcasts. It was supposed to be a quiet death sentence by attrition. Then the ambush happened.



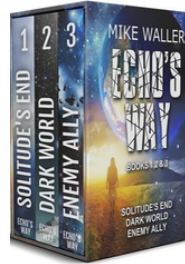
The Ascendant Path - Scholar: A Dark Coming of Age Fantasy by Joshua C. Cook ([click for preview](#)). Layten Grayread can hear screams no one else hears—agonized cries that pulse through his family's wards every time they're replaced. The Church wants something from him. Something they've hidden since he was a child. And if Layten doesn't figure out what—before they reach the House of Knowledge—he'll lose more than his dream of a quiet scholar's life. He'll lose himself.



The Goddess, the Scientist, and the Elixir (Shadows Over Byzantium • Book 1) by Claudia Linwood ([click for preview](#)). Lord Remy is determined to prove his worth. Yet a devastating complication throws Remy's plans into a tailspin, and his aspirations hurtle him toward oblivion. But just as he lays hands on the last artifact in an ancient trunk, he's horrified when it all goes catastrophically wrong, and he flees from an inexplicable monstrosity.



The Sorceress Apprenticed by Sabrina Rosen ([click to download](#)). All Chloe wants is to finish her training and become a full-fledged sorceress. But when an unexpected meeting triggers an old problem, suddenly her magic is going haywire. With only one more hunt to go, can she take out a basilisk without getting herself or her teacher killed?



ECHO'S WAY by Mike Waller ([click to download](#)). The Echo's Way stories tell the adventures of Echo Bourke, a remarkable young woman who finds herself embroiled against her will in the harsh reality of a war between the Federation of Humanity and a powerful alien neighbor, the Tolleani.



The Legend of the Sacred Knights by Jeremy F. Richards ([click to download](#)). Four human Teenagers Luke, Will, Jake and Alexis enter a gateway to a magical animals. In This World, they become a team of mystical knights, Each gifted with powers of their own. Embarking on a quest to seek ancient treasures to prevent a powerful evil from being unleashed. Join the Knights on their journey as they explore a world beyond Earth itself and unravel the wonders of this mysterious world.



JOSEPH J.
DOWLING

The Glass Cage by Joseph J Dowlin (click to download). Sonya Celeste and her minder, Ryan Harding, hatch a plan to sacrifice Sonya's body double and disappear. into anonymity. With the LAPD slowly unravelling their deception, the unstable and menacing John Celeste is soon on their trail, across the border into Mexico. With Sonya haunted by terrifying visions of her dead lookalike, and her father keen to ensure she is never found and claim a vast insurance payout, how far south will the pair need to run in order to escape?



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