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Issue 3



A little later off the press than intended (not that there is a deadline for this), but I have made sure it is full of interesting news and articles as always.

Personal issues needing to be dealt with have slowed me down quite a bit in this period (don't you just hate it when 'life' forces you to take detours?), but I am gradually getting back into the groove, and I am currently focussing my writing on Book 7 of the Forgotten Wings series (The Throne of Hades) and a new short story collection.

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Does sex in fantasy stories have to be fantasy sex?

All sex scenes in creative literature are fantasy! As writers, we are not here to offer our readers boring encounters. Who on Earth needs that? We have to engage imagination and passion. Pump up the excitement. Guild it with magical romance. This is true for whatever type of fiction you write.

It is just that in fantasy stories, we may need to go a little ... further.

Introduction



Let me start this article with a disclaimer: I am not the most sexually experienced girl in the world. However, I write fantasy stories and that means that somewhere along the line my characters are just going to have to do the 'dirty'. The question I have asked myself is to what extent sex in fantasy stories should be unusual, strange or even down right 'fantastically' weird?

My own take on this is that it's a fantasy therefore my characters can do weird things if I want, and secondly, I prefer writing sex scenes that have that 'different' edge to them.

Notice in the above I've just said 'sex' which covers both heterosexual and gay relationships as far as I am concerned; I make no real distinction in regard to the concept of fantasy sex as to the orientation of the characters.

So, let's move on to the issues.

Do we need graphic sex at all?

Let's start with the obvious. **All sex scenes in creative literature are *fantasy*!** As writers, we are not here to offer our readers boring encounters. Who on Earth needs that? We have to engage imagination and passion. Pump up the excitement. Guild it with magical romance. This is true for whatever type of fiction you write.

It is just that in fantasy stories, we may need to go a little ... further.



Three-dimensional characters need to have sex in three dimensions, in a way which aligns with their physical, mental and cultural characteristics. A demon is a demon and sex with a demon is not going to be fifteen minutes in the missionary position!

Okay, we are adults. We've read the sex manuals on reproduction when we were kids. We went out and did it. Then we explored and did it some more. Yes, we all went beyond the 'standard' sex manuals. It's what we do. So, what I am saying is 'normal' sex already covers a reasonable range of sexual practices. Some 'deviations' are now practiced widely enough for the majority to barely raise their eyebrows.

And here, dear readers, is the point where I am **not** going to give you a list! Go on, make your own up.

So, if normal sex has such a wide range of activities what is Fantasy Sex going to cover? Well so far, I have written scenes including:

- With my heroine Sapphira in her demon form (this involves an extra-long tongue, super flexibility, and even, should she dare to choose to use it, a snake-like dislocating jaw for opening her mouth up really wide))
- An angel (lie back on those wings girl!)
- A Ghost. Yes, really, this works and turns out to be a great plot device!!
- Medusa and a resurrected Titan
- A vampire prostitute specialising in snuff encounters
- Oral pleasure from a mermaid
- Having sex in two different bodies/places at the same time

I will get around to a number of others too. How about with a Zombie? Sounds gross and impossible but I've already had an idea, so this will probably turn up at some point.

So yes, I think there is a need for graphic sex within modern fantasy literature. The trick is to keep it in context and in proportion. *What that proportion is might just define what you as an author are actually all about.*

The strange and exotic aspect

Of course, it does not have to be vulgar. Fantasy is about developing excitement and growing the reader's imagination. Fairytale figures and other-worldly locations all add to the effect.



You would not be surprised to learn that one trick of writing sex scenes is to leave in blanks for the reader to finish off. Set the scene and then close the door of privacy on the characters.

Yes, the other side of graphic sex is hinted sex, and that is a lot easier when you set the strange and exotic aspects up first.

And then there's ... Abominable Anatomy!

'Tentacle sex!' I hear you cry. Well yes, sort of. I've already told you about Sapphira's long tongue whilst she is in her demon form. In general terms, unusual anatomy in Fantasy Sex allows the introduction of new and strange organs to replace / surpass the normal human phallus.

Think tongues, horns, tentacles, ugly things with eyes and teeth where the penis should be ... whatever. Make your own list again! In general terms we are talking anatomical variations used for penetration purposes.

We can also make variations on the female genital side of things: move them around the body, more teeth – yes dear reader, do you own yet list again! Clearly, it doesn't necessarily mean an actual vagina either, just that whatever is receiving the phallus (and obviously certain male orifices quite adequately do this too) has some fantasy properties or complete weirdness.



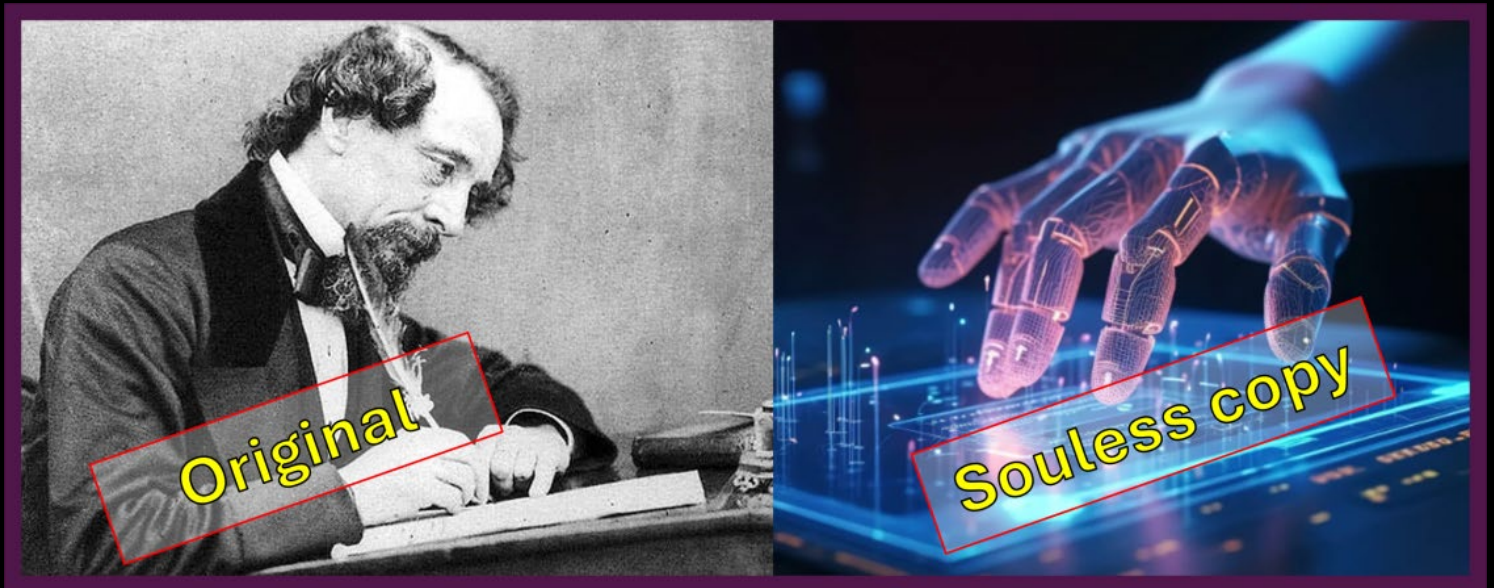


The rules as I see them

This is just my list. When it comes to sex writing ... all together now ... make your own!

- Sex should involve at least one human (mostly human is close enough!) character for the reader to easily relate to.
- Don't worry about whether it is straight or homosexual activity that is going on. That's defined by the personality of the characters involved and the readership you are aiming for.
- Keep the level of sex proportional to other events in your story. Fantasy books need plots, character developments and other forms of action. So, keep your smut (classy, exciting and well written though it undoubtedly is) in its place and have your characters clean up their act when they leave the bedroom! Sex can have a place in the story, and you can even make it a central plot device, but always ask yourself if you were actually intending to write what is essentially a 'dirty' story! Remember that 'strange and exotic' scene setting can often work as well as or even better than diving straight into graphic weirdness.
- Don't forget the love.
- Don't forget the angst. *Come on, you know you shouldn't have done that with him/her/it/them ...*

Scriptura Magnifica



**Don't let Artificial Intelligence
take away our creativity**

Undeniably, AI has stirred up the literary world. In general, authors are very much against this intrusion into their livelihood/hobby, but perhaps the public is not yet so concerned. I say in general, because there are some 'authors' who say that AI allows them to finally get their ideas written as stories. To these people I say simply: You are not writers. You are at best failed muses, and are nothing without the machine that pours out its worthless words for you. Ah, I use the adjective 'worthless' for these words, and that obviously lays bare my feelings on this subject. I call them this because they are stolen: the phrases, sequences, character behaviours, and all the bits needed to complete a few sketchy ideas.

- Stolen.
- Contaminated.
- Simply not worthy to be read.

Pope Leo XIV has recently entered the fray, presenting the idea of **Magnifica humanitas** (Magnificent humanity), which the new technology is now putting at risk. That phrase is so brilliant that I had to follow it, to discuss **Scriptura magnifica** (magnificent writing).

To me, writing is not simply a mental process but something that goes much deeper and touches on the innate properties of what makes us human. Consider the words of **Ursula K. Le Guin** below:

"Beneath memory & experience...imagination & invention, beneath words, there are rhythms to which memory and imagination and words all move. The writer's

job is to go down deep enough to feel that rhythm...and let it move memory and imagination to find words.”

I think here that Ursula K. Le Guin was perhaps describing the connectivity of writing to the human ‘soul’, the source of true art and creativity. Defining what a soul is can perhaps be a little difficult, particularly if those reading are not of a religious nature. And more so if the explainer is equally agnostic. I almost certainly do not see a soul in the way that the current Pope views it. To me, my soul is the very core of what I am. It pains me when I do things against my nature, when I see myself failing in my duties or not doing what I know to be right.

A useful description of what a soul is can be found in Britanica.com: *Soul: in religion and philosophy, the immaterial aspect or essence of a human being, that which confers individuality and humanity, often considered to be synonymous with the mind or the self.*

Artificial Intelligence cannot know a soul’s pain because feelings are not within its capacity any more than true understanding of self or purpose.

But what, you may ask, of the future? Will AI ever become more ‘human’? Will it learn to be truly original and appreciate the meaning of what it writes? If that ever happens, we will be finished. We will be consigned to the waste bin of irrelevance and thrown out to be lost in the empty cosmos. We would have properly ‘*Darwined*’ ourselves!

Thankfully, we are not there yet!

For now, AI is knowledge disconnected, a tree not of wisdom itself but of poison, its roots unclean. The fruit may occasionally taste fine, but even then it will still rot away your soul. And the warning in this fairytale is simple: Eat the apple and fall into the slumber of irrelevance. Those who happily consume AI will become servants to it, slaves to the corporations that finance and support the pushing of this digitally mashed-up excrement. They will be those who lie far beneath the machine.

And that is how your soul will be condemned to hell: the hell of being useless and pointless.

So, I will keep writing. Keep fighting. It is not too dramatic to proclaim that the very soul of humanity is at stake. Don’t let Artificial Intelligence take away our creativity.

Experience



I have never felt ‘old’ but the reality is that I simply are not a youngster anymore.

The reality hits you with small things. Not being able to run like I used to. More aches and pains. Those lines in the mirror! The hair turning whiter than ever.



It is to be expected, of course. I was born well before the Internet was invented, in a world where there were no modern computers, and telephones still had wires attached! It was a time when steam trains still ran along Britain’s railways. When I first stated to write, I did so on a manual typewriter, on which I learned to touch-type with enthusiastic glee. To this day, I still thump my computer keyboard as if I am hammering each character onto paper via an ink ribbon.

I’m not obsolete or past-it though, just very nicely experienced. You see, younger writers have only ever been young, but us more mature creatives often have more ‘life’ to draw on.

I have lived a life that has grown not the digital age. And somehow, I have kept with it — *I am actually a PhD qualified engineering specialist, and still practicing my profession as I write this article up.*

As a writer, I craft tales of fantasy, a little sci-fi, and flavour it all with some magic realism. In these stories, I gleefully mix characters together to examine the illogical chemistry of love and romance.

And I will just keep carrying on writing my stories, worlds where I and my characters can be any age I want. And where you can understand a world operating without mobile phones.

That is the value of experience.

Life Lines (poem)



I am in my sixties, and I'm allowed to have lines.
On my face.
On my hands.
But you can only see the ones on the outside.

Don't forget there are lines on my heart too,
Marks written across my soul.
All life's traumas and headaches.
The work, the long hours of commuting.
Stress of mortgages and loans.
Worry for loved ones.

But if you were to look inside of me,
I hope what you see the most
Are the smile lines.
Because there has always been love in my life.

What I am working on right now

Two main pieces are currently on my desk. The first is Book 7 of the Forgotten Wings series (**The Throne of Hades**) and the other is a new collection of short stories, titled (unless I change my mind again) **Hiding Softly Among Us**.

I am hoping to end the Throne of Hades out by the end of the year and — hard work though it will be — Hiding Softly Among Us, in the spring of '27.



Current Bookshelf

All my books are available on [Amazon Kindle](#).

