



TulipMail *newsletter*

January 2019

Jen's Notes

Welcome to the first ever newsletter from TulipTree! I am so excited about the new things coming in 2019, I just had to start one more to help wrap my head around it all!

I kind of can't believe TulipTree just turned four years old a couple weeks ago. It's been a quiet start with some stumbles, to be sure, but over the past several months I've rededicated myself to TulipTree's possibilities. And as tends to happen, when you declare yourself open to ideas, ideas come. So, this year is all about trying out those new ideas.

For starters, as I was reading the entries for 2018's Stories That Need to Be Told contest, I was so struck by the powerful and inspiring feminine characters in so many of the stories that I decided to start a new contest and journal issue just for that theme: Wild Women. I cannot wait to read the entries for this contest. And the other two issues—New Writers and Genre—are ones I've wanted to do for a long time. As the early retirement of *TulipTree Review* has always been a sad topic for me, it's my hope that the contests will allow me to keep the journal in print from now on.

I also wanted a venue with free submissions, and one that was more active than just a new issue every few months, thus Story of the Week was born. It's off to a great start so I hope you check out the stories posted so far.

There are lots of new additions coming to the website, too. I have put contributors' bios on the TulipTree Facebook page, but I

want to make sure those are up on the website for all of TulipTree's books, so look for that in the near future.

And then there's this little baby you're reading right here. What I've found over the past decade of being involved in various writers' and critique groups is that our creative family is a necessary safe place for the weird and wonderful minds of writers, often when our immediate families don't quite understand. Thus, I want to contribute my energy toward encouraging and supporting other writers as best I can in as many ways as I can, and I find the time-honored tradition of a classic genre—the newsletter—is a great way to build such a community.

That's why part of this newsletter will feature each month an author whom others can learn from and be inspired by. Many writers have built successful platforms from which to sell their own books by creating blogs, podcasts, and other creative services where they also promote other authors. I love this idea because it's a not-so-vicious circle of helpfulness and support and promotion all at once. I hope readers are inspired here with new ideas for their writing and marketing, and I hope new connections can be made as the authors featured here are generally always looking for other authors to feature on their sites.

Finally, I want this to be a space to celebrate all of TulipTree's contributors and show off their new publications, celebrate their successes, and create a community—a TulipTree family, if you will. So, welcome! And feel free to reach out to me at jennifer@tuliptreepub.com.



Featured Author Blog: Kissing Authors and Astronauts

AMY RIVERS was born and raised in southern New Mexico and currently resides in Colorado with her husband and kids. Her graduate work focused on politics, psychology, and forensic criminology, topics she loves to incorporate into her personal essays and novels. Amy has been published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Inspiration for Nurses*, *Novelty Bride Magazine*, and *Splice Today*, as well as several fiction anthologies. She is the author of two novels, *Wallflower Blooming* and *Best Laid Plans & Other Disasters*. Her third novel, *All the Broken People*, will be released in March 2019.



Amy's *Kissing Authors and Astronauts* blog features a different author's story each week. Below is a recently published bit of inspiration from Amy's blog, written by best-selling author **CARTER WILSON**.

#WhatsYourStory Featuring Carter Wilson

You're never too old to chase a dream. Hell, sometimes you don't even realize there's a dream to chase until you're well into adulthood.

That's what happened to me.

It was sixteen years ago and I was firmly rooted in the world of real-estate consulting. My path had been pretty straightforward to that point. Went to school at Cornell and studied real-estate finance and didn't take a single English course, much less creative writing. Got my degree, went out to the real world, and, after a couple of years working in hotels, I applied my learning to the world of consulting.

Now, this isn't to say I wasn't a reader. In my 20s I truly discovered literature in a meaningful way for the first time (i.e., it wasn't forced upon me). I tore through book after book, rarely picking one up that wasn't at least 600 pages (I had no money, so I needed a high word-per-dollar ratio). But I wasn't writing. Didn't even think about it. It wasn't a dream.

One spring day when I was 33, I was taking a dreadful all-day continuing-education class for an appraisal license I once had. I'd describe the class to you but you'd fall asleep before my first mention of discounted cash-flow methodology. There I was, bored to tears, two hours left to go. To keep entertained, I decided to give myself a puzzle. I wrote the following sentence in my notebook:

Three people are murdered at the exact same time in the exact same fashion in different parts of the world. What's the connection?

My challenge was to find a storyline before the end of class that would answer that question. I couldn't do it. I went home, and the question still nagged at me. Over the next few days, I decided to work on the question, writing down potential plot lines that would lead to an answer. The process became more and more complex, so I began dedicating more [time] to writing down thoughts, which led to paragraphs, which turned into pages.

Ninety days later I had a 400-page manuscript.

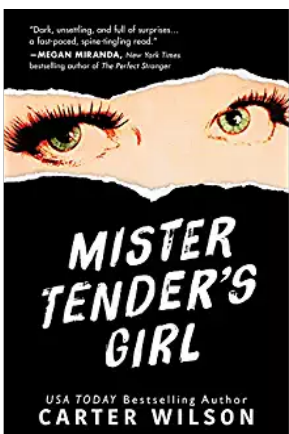
I had never done anything like this before, and even though it seemed to me some kind of wonderful epiphany, I still had no idea what I was doing. No concept of what to do with my manuscript, much less if I was even a good writer. I had to learn an entirely new industry from scratch, and the more I learned, the more it depressed me. I found out that very few writers get agents, even fewer get published, and only the top .01 percent make any real money at it.

It took a year and about eighty rejections to land my agent (the same agent I still have today). That first book never sold, so I wrote another. That one didn't sell, so I wrote a third. And so on. It was my fifth book that finally sold, nine years after that day in the continuing-education class. Throughout the process I learned how to excel at my day job and write books on the side. I learned the beauty of rejection, and how it made me a stronger and smarter writer. I learned about patience in storytelling. Most of all, I learned about the business of writing. The wondrous, erratic, frustrating, anxiety-laced, satisfying business of writing.

No school could have taught me any of those things. I unearthed a dream I never knew I had, which might just be the best kind of dream.

Since the day I began my writing career, I've published five novels (all thrillers), with a sixth scheduled for publication in July 2019.

My most recent novel, *Mister Tender's Girl*, was published in February 2018 from Sourcebooks Landmark. Inspired by the real-life Slenderman crime, *Mister Tender's Girl* tells the story of Alice Hill, who, at fourteen, was viciously attacked by two of her classmates and left to die. The teens claim she was a sacrifice for a man called Mister Tender, but that could never be true: Mister Tender doesn't exist. His sinister character is pop-culture fiction, created by Alice's own father in a series of popular graphic novels. Over a decade later, Alice has changed her name and is trying to heal. But someone is watching her. They know more about Alice than any stranger could: her scars, her fears, and the secrets she keeps locked away. The book is a story about Alice having to confront her past in order to survive her present.



If you'd like to share your story on Amy's #WhatsYourStory feature, visit her at www.amyrivers.com/blog.



Contributor News

JIMMY E. SEARLES (“Strato-Christmas ’66,” *Stories That Need to Be Told 2017*) submitted a new short story (a chapter from an as yet untitled book he is writing) called “Debeaker Boy” to the San Miguel Writers Contest and won top prize in Creative Nonfiction, one of only four categories. His win includes an invitation to attend the awesome San Miguel Writers Conference & Literary Festival, which will be held February 13–17 in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, with an all-access pass for workshops, guest speakers, and so forth. He also earned the opportunity to pitch his book to a well-known professional literary agent. Plus, they are providing him



room and board in a beautiful B&B for the conference. He will be reading an excerpt of his story as part of the conference program. You can read “Debeaker Boy” and learn more about the conference at the San Miguel Writers Conference [website](#).



COURTNEY LEE HALL (“toes / touching sand,” *Stories That Need to Be Told 2018*) recently released her first poetry collection, *Weathered*. This emotionally moving chapbook tells a tale of a weathered heart influenced by a life lived at sea. Poems are set to simple charcoal drawings, echoing songs of lament, of longing, and of love. Turning pain into beauty and slumber into awakening, *Weathered* is a feel-good, pocket-friendly read to be picked up time and time again.

Courtney was born and raised on the east end of Long Island, NY. She is a teacher of plant medicine, works on numerous farms, and spends her free time in the nearest body of water, her poetry reflecting. She loves exploring the depths of language and the mind, and she is inspired by the smallest specks of nature that we tend to pass over. Through her words, Courtney bridges these lost elements into raw emotions remembered. She is currently working on her second chapbook entitled *Petals*.

You can purchase *Weathered* [here](#).



Contributors and Future Contributors: If you have been published in a TulipTree collection or on the website, please send your news to jennifer@tuliptreepub.com!

To be a future contributor, check out www.tuliptreepub.com for currently open calls for submissions!

Writerly Events

Writers' conferences can be a great source of inspiration and writing know-how. They're also a wonderful way to connect with other writers. If you have a favorite, let us know and we'll feature it in a future issue of the newsletter. Here are a couple that I have personally attended and found worthwhile.

Northern Colorado Writers Conference ~ Fort Collins, Colorado May 3–4, 2019

As a member of NCW I enjoyed several NCW Conferences. Located in Fort Collins, Colorado, the conference offers a wide range of workshops led by talented and well-published authors as well as agents, editors, and other industry professionals. You can also opt for a variety of master classes, and you can sign up for an agent consult to pitch your work or simply discuss your questions about the publishing process.

Learn more at <http://northerncoloradowriters.com/conference/2019-conference>.

AWP Conference & Bookfair ~ Portland, Oregon March 27–30, 2019

This huge national conference is held in a different city each year. (I happened to catch it when it was in Denver several years ago.) You can find countless publisher booths sporting their books while the many workshops are taking place over several days. With the incredible number of workshops offered, there's sure to be something for every kind of writer!

Learn more at https://www.awpwriter.org/awp_conference/.



Book Giveaway

I'm giving away a copy of one of TulipTree's earliest releases, *My Favorite Apocalypse*! To enter, send an email to jennifer@tuliptreepub.com to put your name in the proverbial hat. The winner will be picked in a drawing and announced in the February issue of the newsletter.

Thanks for reading! We'd love to hear from you, so if you have ideas for newsletter content, questions about TulipTree or its contests or publications, or comments in general, send them to jennifer@tuliptreepub.com.