

*Sub-Creation* author Anna Jakubiec recently Skyped with one of our editors, Beth Potterveld. Anna's pieces "Time Traveler Tuesdays" and "Paramortus" can be found in the Fall '13 issue of *Sub-Creation*. We chatted about how she got started as an author, writing both prose and poetry, how the idea for "Time Traveler Tuesdays" came about, and a bit about what she's reading and writing now. (The following interview has been edited for length and readability.)



*How long have you been writing?*

I started writing when I was around eleven years old. I was reading the *Redwall* books, and I thought, "I would like to write this book. It's already been written, but I'll do my own version." So I did the equivalent of fan fiction where you change everybody's names for the *Redwall* books by Brian Jacques. I never finished that story, although I had quite a bit of it planned and it included cannibalism.

*So that got you started writing, and you've been going at it ever since?*

Yeah, I probably started writing more seriously when I was twelve or so because I had an idea that I started posting on a website for homeschooled writers. And when I had more of an audience, I actually put the effort into finishing something. So that's probably when I started taking it more seriously, and thinking, "Hey, I could keep doing this. This is fun."

*You submitted both prose and poetry to Sub-Creation. Do you write one more than the other, or do they help you express things differently? Why do both?*

I definitely write more prose and have more ideas for prose to write than poetry. I write more poetry than I release to the public as well, though. I feel like most of it is kind of the free verse every high-schooler puts down. It's a way of releasing emotion, but not really something you hone into a technical art. And that's how I feel about most of my poetry. Although, if I really like a poem, then I'll put more effort into editing it. It's more like if this is an idea that I like, that comes to my head and I want to put the effort into it, I will. It's not something I pursue as actively.

*What aspects of the ideas will make you want to latch onto it and continue putting effort into it?*

Mostly just the sound of the words. If I can come up with a really good alliteration, I want to keep with that. That's the main attraction. Like I said, I can write down any high-schooler "These are my emotions" in broken lines. I can do that all the live long day, but if I come up with really good poetic devices, that makes me want to expand it.

*Sub-Creation is a genre fiction journal, so what interested you in writing genre pieces?*

I was thinking about this, and I was thinking about how I never really sit down and go, "I'm going to write genre fiction." But I do sit down and say, "I'm going to read genre fiction. Where is more genre fiction? I need to read this." So it's probably just because that's what I enjoy reading. That's the genre I want to contribute to, because it's the most fun to me. I want more of it in the world, and it's

always been the most engaging for me to read. The possibilities that it opens up for are also the things that are most engaging to me in writing.

*Makes sense. I really did enjoy your pieces. You brought “Time Traveler Tuesdays” into WhInklings before submitting it to Sub-Creation, and there we mentioned you had some lovely images and memorable characters. Is that what drives you to write out these stories, or is it plot, or something else?*

It’s usually characters. With “Time Traveler Tuesdays” it was definitely characters, and there were things from the plot that were offshoots of stories that I had had before that hadn’t quite worked out. The element of time travel is always something that I think is a great starting point for any plot, so there’s that. But it wouldn’t get written if it weren’t for the characters that I was interested in developing. I love different aspects of everything: I like the plot and I like images and I like time travel and those elements, but it’s the characters that actually get the story written.

*Emily, the main protagonist in “Time Traveler Tuesdays,” the time traveler, is very fun and from an older time period. Has she been a character in your head for a while and just finally found a story to plug her into? Will she make other appearances?*

She had not been a character that had been around for a while before I started the story. Not for a very long time. Like I said, there had been elements of the plot that had been offshoots from older stories, so as I’m thinking about those, I guess some of them might have been earlier incarnations of her, but not entirely. She sort of came into being completely whole like Aphrodite or something. Just, “Here you are.” Which is great, because then I had to do less work. As for further stories, I was so pleased to have that story self-contained that there’s part of me that hesitates to write more, but if I have a good idea, I’ll go with it.



The Birth of Venus by Sandro Botticelli (1486)

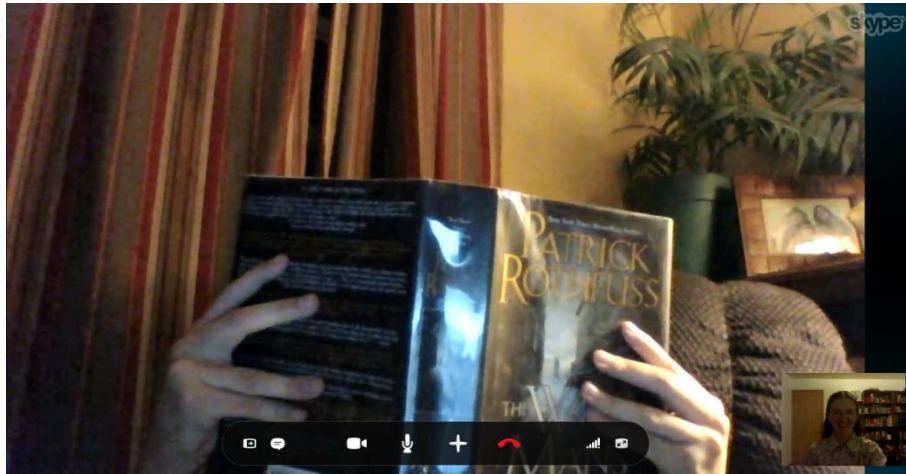
*So speaking of ideas, what was the inspiration for “Time Traveler Tuesdays”?*

Let’s see, my flash drive had stopped working and it had all my writing on it, so I didn’t want to work on any of those until I knew that I was going to get my flash drive fixed and intact and have all my stuff. And this was the first week of school, so I was desperate to do something to get my mind off the fact that I had started school and I was stressed. So I just decided to—I don’t know, it just sort of happened, actually. I guess I was thinking about ideas that had been abandoned, other time traveler stories, like I said. There was one particularly that had the idea of a pocket watch being the door to time traveling as opposed to a bigger contraption, and I wanted to go with that. And like I said the characters just sort of happened.

*You mentioned you’d done a lot of reading for pleasure this summer. What have you been reading and plan to read next?*

I have been reading *Discworld* novels by Terry Pratchett, because those are always fun. Hannah Ferraro [a fellow WhInkling] made me read *The Queen’s Thief* series by Megan Whalen Turner, and they absolutely destroyed me; I recommend them to everyone. There’re amazing. I took the first one to New

York (I went to New York City this summer on my birthday), and I finished it in one day when I was supposed to be paying attention to the Statue of Liberty. And then I was just complaining the rest of the trip because I hadn't brought the second book with me because I hadn't expected to finish the first one so fast. Those are great books. ... Right now, I am reading *The Wise Man's Fear* by Patrick Rothfuss, sequel to *The Name of the Wind*. They're good, although I am shocked that Kvothe has not been expelled yet at the point where I am in this book. I mean, he has because he's telling the story [about] the past. To anyone who hasn't read these books, the main character is extremely accident prone and sometimes deliberately accident prone if you can be that. I'm just amazed that he's alive, and somewhat proud of him for surviving. I've just been reading whatever I can get my hands on obviously. And there's still three stacks of books this tall [gestures wider than the computer screen can show], very tall stacks of books on my desk that I will have to pack into a box and not read during the school year.



*Have you been able to do any writing?*

I have done some writing as well, although not as much as I would like, because for about a month, my keyboard was broken. I could only type using an on-screen keyboard, which means you pick one letter at a time. The keyboards I tried to plug into my laptop also weren't working, so it was just a hot mess. But I have done some writing.

*Any hints as to what it is? Is it something Sub-Creation might see? Or WhInklings perhaps?*

Well, as of right now, it's probably nothing *Sub-Creation's* going to see. I've been working on a retelling of Beauty and the Beast for quite a while now. I've been working on that a lot, but it's still nowhere near together enough to be shown to people at this point. There are gaps all over that I need to fill in, that I'm going to fill in that just haven't happened yet. I was mostly working on the magic structure of that for this summer, and it's the best, let me tell you. The other thing I've mostly been working on this summer, [is just] for fun because I'm not sure if I could ever get it published because of copyright stuff. ... I don't know if it could ever go anywhere because of the fact that I'm using things like Jim Henson's *Labyrinth*, just weird things that are still under copyright laws. And fan fiction. I've worked on a little bit of fan fiction. Thor fan fiction.

*Nice. From original myths, or movies, or comic books?*

Sort of the films. It's an alternate universe with Sidhe-folk and the Seelie and Unseelie elves. It's strange, but I'm having fun with it. That's what matters. When it comes to fan fiction, that's really all that matters: that you have fun with it. Because otherwise, what's the point?

*Very true.*