

WORD COUNT - 75.4K

ERS LEE

January

Newsletter



Hectic Start to a New Year

The new year starts with writing resolutions in place, but am I on track to fulfilling them?

Although the Christmas break was over for my peers, I had to go back home for three weeks, missing school. I thought this would be a great time to work on my second draft, but was it? This month I picked up speed through my eternally long reading list and sprinkled some craft books into the mix!

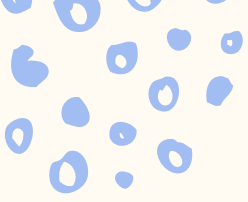


Book Snippet

Her flowery caeligara looked ravishing on her, like everything that tried to enhance her beauty only grew in beauty itself. Her wavy red hair flew in the air with every twirl like tongues of fire, and her emerald eyes glinted like the gem itself.

Their dance became an appeal to Fate. *We are made for each other!* They screamed with each synchronized movement. Esme hooked both her hands on the back of his neck, and he felt the sweat that slicked her palms. Mason chuckled and Esme blushed a shade that matched her hair.

-Chapter 6, Rainfall



Second Drafting and Such...



"How's the second draft going, Leo?"

The second draft is going well... I think. For three weeks of doing nothing, I accomplished less than I would have liked. Whenever I think about how little work I get done, I say to myself, "how devastated would you be if all that work got deleted?" I know I would be very devastated if I had lost the 12 chapters I wrote down.

Okay, weird way to start the article, but my brain is fried. Being away from school for so long also meant that I missed out on *a lot* of school work. To say the least, I have three tests worth of studying to do.

I don't have any funny segues, so I'm just going to say it straight and plain: Watching book review videos while doing chores is oddly therapeutic. I can't be the only one who thinks so, right? While hanging laundry, I built my book list with Haley Pham's book recommendations on Youtube, which were actually really fun to watch her go through.

This January was Ersa's birthday! She turns 14, which is crazy. I'm not sure if that's because she acts and writes so much more mature for her age, or because I remember the last time I sent her a birthday text and it feels like yesterday. Time passes way too quickly.

That was how my January went! I'm starting to take on a more informal newsletter writing style since I realized I should stop playing pretend and face reality: only 20 people read this (all are friends and family). Even though that's the case, I still like making these newsletters. They're reflective, and builds a good habit for when—IF I make it. Not to mention, they are fun! It's kind of like filtered journaling.



Monthly Song Lyric



"Never be so kind you forget to
be clever. Never be so clever
you forget to be kind."
- Marjorie, Taylor Swift

Story Genius and Other Craft Books

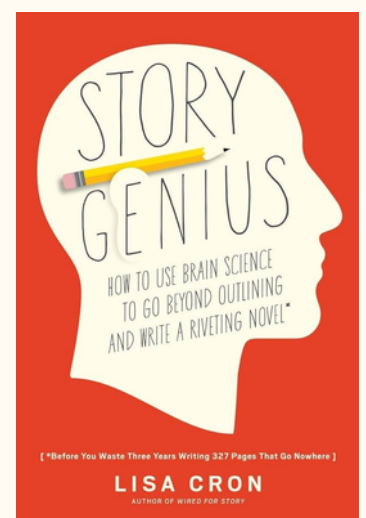
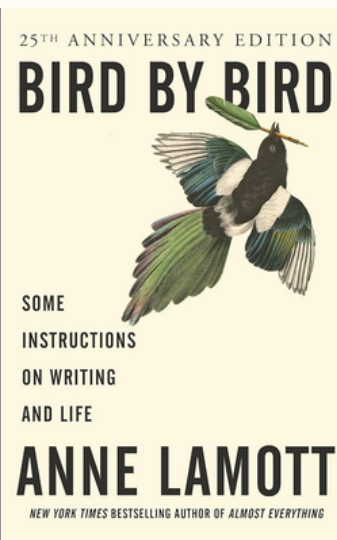
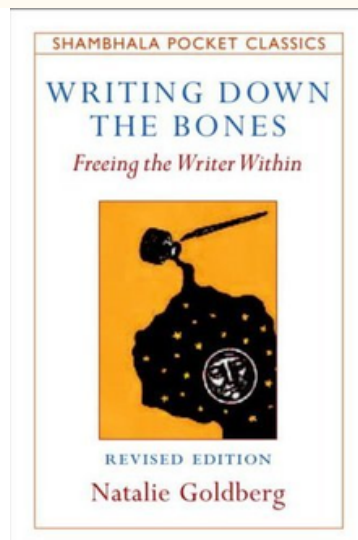
This month, I bought Story Genius by Lisa Kron, that promised to me by many websites and videos to help with my writing. I read the intro, and it seems to have a lot of promise in helping me connect with my story on a much deeper level, and curate inner conflict; what it takes for a reader to root for a character. It promises to give me the tools needed to create that spark that breathes life into a good story. These are all things I believe I really need, and plan on reading it soon, chapter by chapter, note by note.

Another great craft book I saw recommended was Writing Down The Bones by Natalie Goldberg, which encourages and empowers writers to keep writing, while arming them with the skills. The top thing that makes writers fail is giving up.

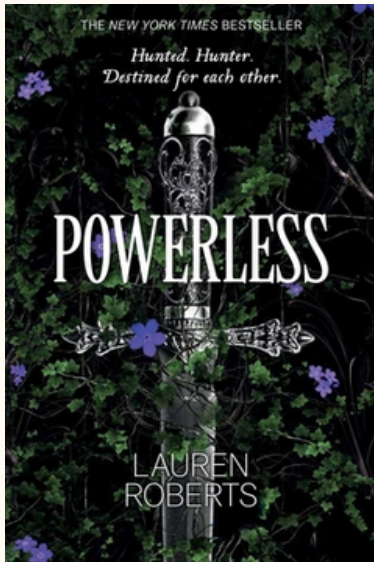
Other craft books:

Save The Cat (Story Structure)

Bird by Bird (General great advice)



Getting More Reading Done



Powerless by Lauren Roberts might be one of the best slow-burn romances I'll ever read. It is angsty, intense, and has characters you'll just fall in love with! I read it in about a week, which is fast for my snail pace reading, thus showing how good it was.

Divine Rivals by Rebecca Ross is exactly what it says it is: *divine*. This woman's writing style makes me want to turn into a slab of butter and jump onto a frying pan to melt, then be the omelette in an aesthetic Instagram post. I'm not done with it yet, but it's so good I am digging myself out of my makeup work just so that I can finish this!



Thanks for Lauren Kay

I owe my *LIFE* to Lauren Kay and her free materials. Her critique partner database has helped me get a great critique partner who has given me some great feedback.

Monthly Weird Word!

Sialoquent – the act of spitting saliva while talking.

Happy new year and see you next month!



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ALPHA READERS WANTED!

If anyone is interested in alpha reading *Threads of Fate* (critiquing and providing feedback), I will be eternally grateful! Just give me a quick email!