



The Rough Draft

We are all works in progress.



Welcome To Your Monthly Rough Draft

Dearest Writer:

Wherever this Rough Draft finds you in our world this month, my hope is that you are healthy and safe and finding ways for your writing to be the harbor, not the storm.


I created the Rough Draft workbook because I've found that for both myself and the writers I work with, taking stock each month is what helps us create sustainable and flourishing writing practices. It's our necessary gut check: are we living the creative lives we want, or have we missed the mark?

Intention + Devotion = Flow

I firmly believe that in order to build the writing life you're longing for, it requires both intention and devotion--but not just to the writing itself. We take a holistic approach, looking at how everything in our lives impacts our creative bandwidth.

The following questions are meant to be done at the very beginning of each month. I invite you to either print this Rough Draft out each month or simply copy the questions into your favorite journal. This is your safe space to explore where you're at with your writing and where you'd like to go. What shifts need to happen in order to create more inner and outer space for your work? What's supporting you, and what's bringing you down? What steps can you take this month to court flow?

Be sure to keep an eye in your inbox for my monthly newsletters, which are always full of a variety of ways you can go deeper with your writing practice: think writing exercises, mindfulness tips for writers, tips from the trenches, meditation downloads, audio lectures, online meet-ups for community, and more. [Join here for instant downloads.](#)



We are all works-in-progress. Each day a rough draft.
Here's to revising what's not working...
and amplifying what is.

To your wild words,

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Note: You're reflecting on the month that just passed. The following questions are the same each month, so you can track your progress throughout the year.



On a scale from 1 to 10 (10 being freaking fantastic), how do you feel overall about this month in terms of your writing? Why?

What was the most memorable part of the past month--in writing or life in general?

What were the three biggest lessons you learned in the past month?



How much did you write this month? Include any time dedicated to your story--brainstorming, staring out your window, outlining, researching.

Are you happy with how much time you spent on your writing this past month? If not, why? If so, what elements were in place that allowed you to write this way?

What are three things you can do this month to increase or maintain the time you spend on your work?

1.

2.

3.



What promises did you keep to yourself this month?

What promises did you break?

What are your writing goals for the coming month? BE REALISTIC. Find your edge.



What are three concrete actions you can take this month to reach your goals?

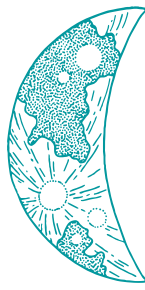
1.

2.

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What will you do to fill the well this coming month? Write it down and commit to it. You can't write on fumes--inspiration is high-octane gasoline, so FILL THE DAMN WELL.

Who or what are you especially grateful for this month?



What spiritual activities will you engage in this month to take good care of your mental and spiritual health? Meditation, yoga, tarot: whatever floats your spirit.

What is one good self-care act you can engage in this coming month that will support you and your creativity? Sleep more? Take a walk every day? Name it. Do it.

It takes a village: Who in your life will help support your writing practice and keep you honest? Contact them now and ask them to be your winglady.



SIDEWRITING

A FEW EXERCISES TO PLAY WITH WHEN YOU'RE STUCK

Exploration #1: Story Jinni

One of my early book deals came out of this simple prompt: "Write the first scene of a book in which a character has a problem." Problems are part of what makes a story GO. Your turn: Write the first thing that pops into your head, just like I did—I saw a jinni stuck in her bottle, and she couldn't get out. Hello, *Exquisite Captive*, the first of what became a fantasy trilogy with HarperCollins!

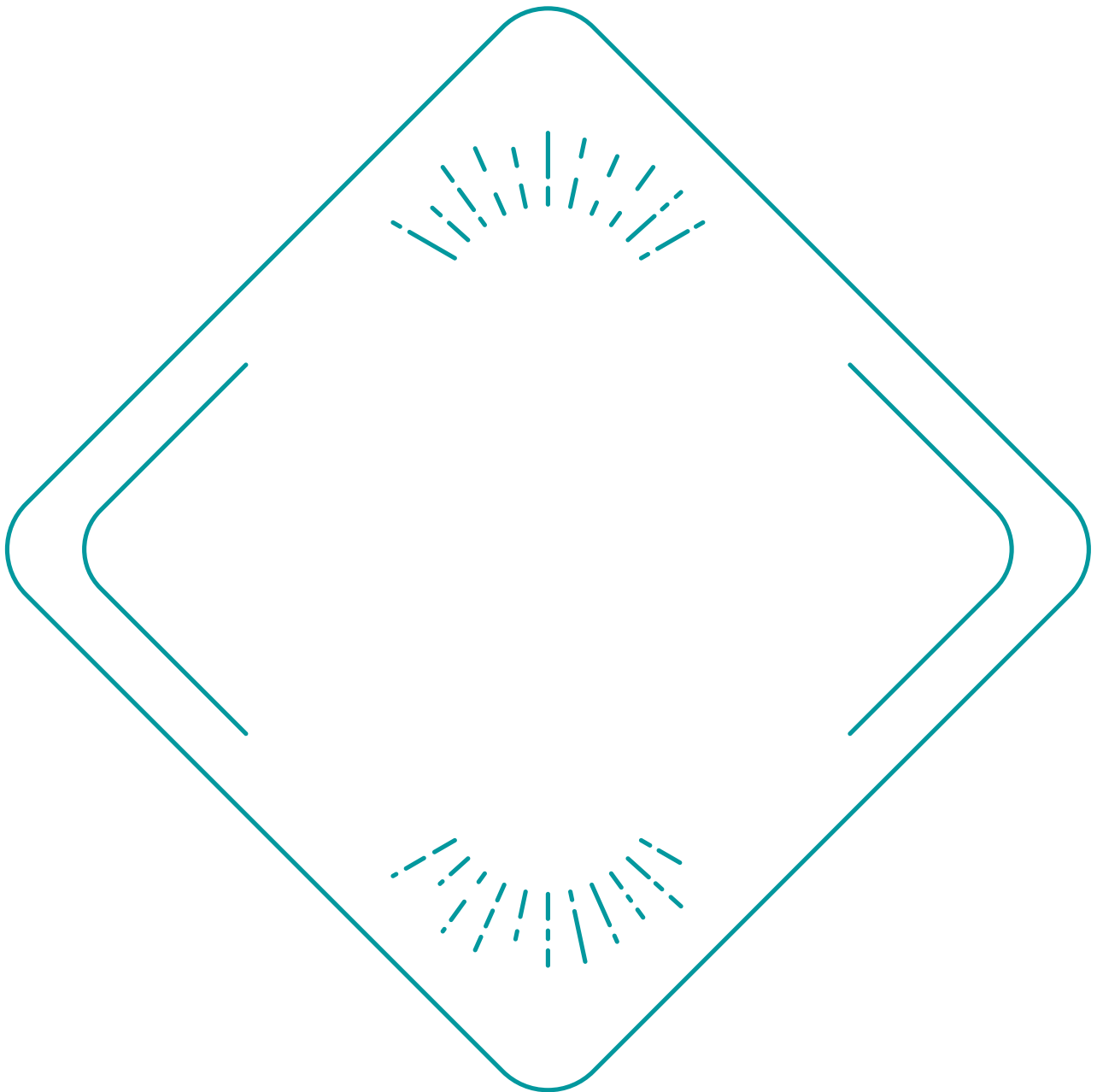
Exploration #2: Getting In Your Character's Skin

Take a scene or chapter from your WIP and re-write the whole thing in verse. Why? Poetry is most excellent for working with emotion and sensory details because it's all about conveying feeling and clarifying a moment through imagery and the five senses. In approaching a tricky scene—and especially one in which you don't feel connected to your characters or the emotional heart of the events—prose poetry is an invitation to truly re-vision the work. Unlock important information, deepen writing on a microscopic level, get in your character's skin. Need some inspiration? My favorite novel-in-verse is *The Watch That Ends The Night* by Allan Wolf.

Exploration #3: DJ Your Story

This exercise has three parts. First, create a playlist for your story—think of it as your book's soundtrack. No story? No problem. Make a playlist of the vibe you're feeling right now. Want to write an anti-hero story? Find the most villainous music you can. Once you have your playlist, sit down, close your eyes, and let your imagination fly as you listen to it. Jot down images, scene possibilities, feelings, setting, action scenes—anything that comes to mind. Now, write the scene that has come most clearly to you, with or without the music playing in the background.

My Mantra For The Month



"What more can I do with wild words?"

Mary Oliver



Are you looking for a writing coach to help you on your journey?

Let's Connect



heatherdemetrios.com

Resources, Offerings, Blog,
Mindfulness for Writers, and
Inspiration



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Heather Demetrios is a critically acclaimed author, writing coach, editor, and teacher. Her books include *Little Universes*, *Code Name Badass*, and *I'll Meet You There*. Thousands of writers meditate with Heather on her Mindfulness For Writers Insight Timer page. She is the founder of The Well, a women's community and resource for writer wellness. Visit www.heatherdemetrios.com to learn more about Heather, her books, and her offerings for writers.



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