

DEBORAH O'TOOLE

Spring Newsletter, 2023

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Hello dear readers,

The winter of 2022/23 was a hard one, with plentiful snowstorms, rainfall and bitter cold, the numbers for which often surpassed local records. In late February 2023, we experienced a massive storm that put down a ton of snow. It was hard to dig out of, but it has since melted.



I'm looking forward to summer this year, when we will hopefully take many camping trips. It's not such a hardship as we have a fifth-wheel trailer that contains its own master bedroom, bathroom and kitchen. It's great to get away from the hustle and bustle of the city. My better half also purchased a Razer ATV late last year, which also makes it enjoyable as we travel the trails in one of our favorite spots, Soapstone Basin in the Uinta-Wasatch-Cache National Forest.



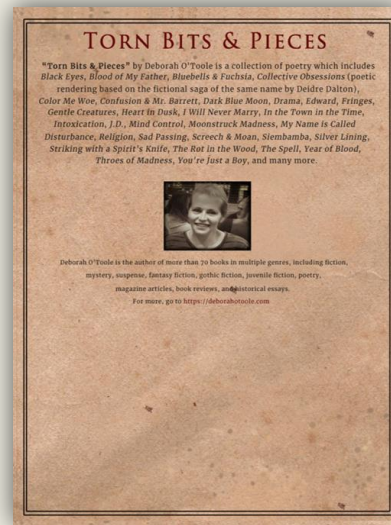
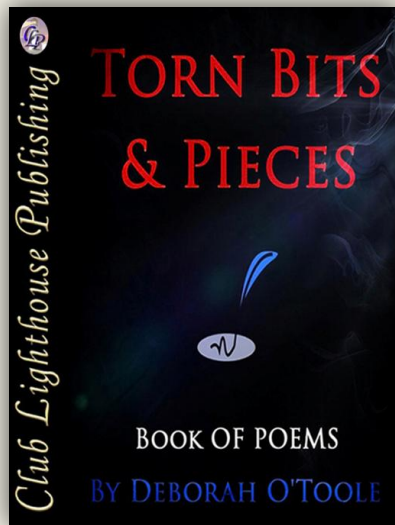
However, I always take my "book" bag with me when we camp. It includes pens, paper clips, sticky notes, spiral notebooks, printed material from the current book I'm writing, research notes, my iPad and the current book I'm reading (not writing).



As I will likely be in the midst of Limb of Iniquity when summertime rolls around, it will definitely come along for the trip.

~ TORN BITS & PIECES ~

Torn Bits & Pieces was released by Club Lighthouse Publishing in February 2023. The book of poetry is now available in electronic and paperback editions from the publisher's website and Amazon.



The poetic collection includes *Black Eyes*, *Blood of My Father*, *Bluebells & Fuchsia*, *Collective Obsessions* (poetic rendering based on the fictional saga of the same name by Deidre Dalton), *Color Me Woe*, *Confusion & Mr. Barrett*, *Dark Blue Moon*, *Drama*, *Edward*, *Fringes*, *Gentle Creatures*, *Heart in Dusk*, *I Will Never Marry*, *In the Town in the Time*, *Intoxication*, *J.D.*, *Mind Control*, *Moonstruck Madness*, *My Name is Called Disturbance*, *Religion*, *Sad Passing*, *Screech & Moan*, *Siembamba*, *Silver Lining*, *Striking with a Spirit's Knife*, *The Rot in the Wood*, *The Spell*, *Throes of Madness*, *Year of Blood*, *You're Just a Boy*, and many more.

~ IN THE SHADOW OF THE KING ~

In the Shadow of the King is now complete, after the second marathon editing session crossed the finish line on 22nd March 2023. The book came in at 672 pages in (*with a file size of 3.89 MB and 260,767 words*). Now that it's over, I feel somewhat bereft. I lived and breathed the story for so long, it was disconcerting to be without it once it was complete. I was literally ensconced with the book morning, noon and night for more than a year. Letting go was difficult, but now I'm all good.

The typical stereotype of Henry VIII as a grossly obese man wielding a chicken drumstick in his later years is belied by this oil-on-panel portrait of him (picture on left). It was painted between 1515-1520, when he would have been in his prime at

twenty-four or twenty-nine years old. From the collection at [Anglesey Abbey](#) in Cambridge, England, file #NT 515572.



Food is mentioned in certain scenes from [In the Shadow of the King](#). The meals referred to in the book adhere strictly to cuisine common to the time period (1509-1550). I've gathered quite a few "Tudor" recipes along the way. For more, visit the page for the upcoming book [The King's Table](#) (to be released when [In the Shadow of the King](#) is available later this year).

When I reached a frustrating impasse with [In the Shadow of the King](#), I would go outside to sit on the back steps and have a cigarette. I know it's unhealthy, but my head cleared and then filled with ideas for the next scene 99.9% of the time, thereby allowing me to resume my writing pace. This weirdness occurred three of four times a day, even if it was raining or snowing outside.

I think it was because of the sheer size of the book and all of the intricate details needing to be tracked, otherwise I could have blown through it at a faster rate. Pure fiction is much easier to write as opposed to peppering the text with real facts from history.

In addition, the official website for [In the Shadow of the King](#) has been revamped, much more to my liking.



<https://deborahotoole.com/king/>

In the Shadow of the King was signed with Club Lighthouse Publishing on March 25th, with an estimated release date of Christmas 2023. [More >](#)

Jerry was wonderful throughout all the writing. I was so consumed with In the Shadow of the King that I felt to be in a daze half the time. On a normal day, my first act in the morning would be to pour myself a cup of coffee, but during the writing I'd go straight to the computer and get at it. Jerry would often bring me coffee, knowing I was off into another world.

Other times, he would drag me out of the house and take me somewhere for lunch (our favorite spot being the Black Sheep Bar & Grill). Even at night, when my computer was off, I wrote by hand as he watched TV. I filled up two spiral notebooks. It's a wonder I didn't go insane. Whenever I'd get stumped, I would mess with the website or other graphics for the book. It seemed to be never ending!

❖ **And last, but not least:**

I was minding my own business one Saturday night in January, quietly handwriting on the couch for In the Shadow of the King, when I sensed Jerry staring at me from across the room as he sat in a recliner.

"What is it?" I asked him.

"I can feel your brainwaves and it's hurting my head," he replied calmly, and then returned his attention back to the football game on television.

Needless to say, I nearly fell off the couch laughing. I was finally able to say: "Now you have an idea what it's like in my head when I'm writing."

"I could have done without it," he responded dryly. "But thanks for sharing."

~ **IN PROGRESS** ~

I've had to push back release dates for my historical essays about Lizzie Borden and Michael Collins yet again. I've shifted both essays for conclusion sometime in 2024. The reason being? I'm completely immersed in the writing of one book, which is currently in progress:

❖ Limb of Iniquity (2023-24)

I'm estimating it will take me at least six months to one year to finish Limb of Iniquity, therefore leaving me little time to work on the half-completed essays until 2024.

As per my usual notation, storylines, estimated release dates and book cover designs may be subject to change.

~ BLOODLINE FLASH ~

Late last October, Barbara Cerda from Club Lighthouse Publishing created a haunting video about the Bloodline Trilogy, just in time for Halloween.



https://deborahotoole.com/Blood_Triology_for_Halloween.mp4.mp4

The Bloodline Trilogy - by yours truly writing as Deidre Dalton - follows the uniquely magical yet ominous journey of three women through time.

I was suitably impressed with the video, needless to say. It conveyed the exact nature of the storyline in all three books in the trilogy. I couldn't ask for anything better. :)

~ FULL CIRCLE ~

Jerry and I celebrated a milestone on November 5, 2022. On that day - 40 years ago - we were married in Taylorsville, Utah. We invited our respective parents over to our duplex for "dinner" and got married in front of them instead. We did go to dinner at Benihana that night, following the brief ceremony, which began my love affair with Japanese (non-sushi) food.



Sadly, Jerry and I parted ways seven years later, only to be reunited again in October 2018, when he sent me a friend request on [Facebook](#). We've been back together ever since.

Life has a funny way of coming full circle, I'm happy to say. It seems to go back to what was meant to be all along.

~ LEISURE ACTIVITIES ~

To be honest, I haven't had much leisure time in the last several months, mainly because I was preoccupied and working on [In the Shadow of the King](#) nearly every waking moment. I didn't even read for pleasure, instead being caught up in more than one hundred research volumes obtained for the book. Now that the novel is complete, I'm looking forward to a bit of down time.

We enjoyed the film *The Banshees of Inisherin*. I was rooting for the movie to win *all* of their academy award nominations, but sadly it did not happen. We also viewed the actual winner in its entirety (*Everything Everywhere All at Once*), which we did not find to be remarkable in the least. I suppose it's all down to a matter of personal preference, but I'd rather watch two men struggling with their friendship than viewing people as they run around in nonsensical scenes.

I also caught-up on overdue reading - for pleasure rather than research purposes this time. I managed to finish *The Ghost and the Stolen Tears* by Cleo Coyle, *Fairy Tale* by Stephen King, and *Spare* by Prince Harry. In addition, I'm anxiously awaiting the May 2023 release of *The King's Pleasure: A Novel of Henry VIII* by Alison Weir.

~ UNTIL NEXT TIME ~

Another newsletter will be coming your way in late autumn/early winter 2023, so keep your eyes peeled.

Meanwhile, visit my [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for updates, or go to my blog [Irish Eyes](#) to view recent posts.

Until next time - *happy reading* . . .

Deborah O'Toole 🍀

Saturday, 1st April 2023

