Writers of the Future

"**Writers of the Future is a stamp of approval that the speculative fiction world quickly recognizes... Through [this] and especially the moments in which I've pushed myself outside of my comfort zone, I now have more open avenues that I can take to pursue my writing dreams.**"
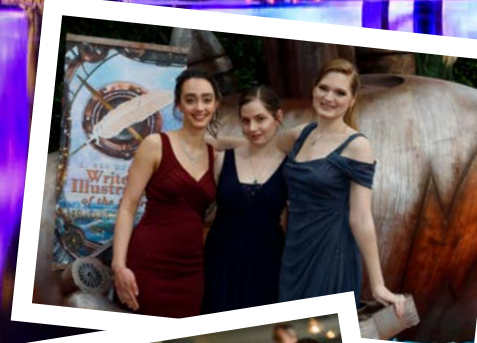
– **Elise Stephens**, winner, Writers of the Future

The times may be changing and challenging, and we're all adjusting to a new normal. But that doesn't mean we have to stop chasing our dreams. In April, the L. Ron Hubbard Writers of the Future Online Workshop was launched at writersofthefuture.com – for FREE. Three award-winning sci-fi/fantasy authors David Farland (*Runelords*), Tim Powers (*On Stranger Tides*), and Orson Scott Card (*Ender's Game*) have teamed up to teach a course on the craft and share valuable insights and tools. By the end of the workshop, participants should have a short story completed — with a chance of having professional authors read their work and win incredible prizes.

There have been over 4,000 participants from 55 countries— and YOU can be one of them too. At no cost and from the comforts of your home, you can pursue your passion and get your talent and your work recognized.

L. Ron Hubbard's Writers of the Future Contest is dedicated to helping people turn their dreams into reality. It's an opportunity for new writers of science fiction and fantasy to learn the ropes and have their work critiqued by masters in the field – and be discovered by a wider audience. Since its launch in 1983, the contest has had 428 winners, 1150 novels, nearly 4500 short stories, and 33 *New York Times* best sellers.

Ready to add your name to the list?

ELISE STEPHENS

At age 8, she knew she wanted to be a writer. In 2018, she won Writers of the Future, and her short story *Untrained Luck* was published in *Writers of the Future Vol 35*. She's now among the accomplished writers shaping the sci-fi/fantasy landscape for readers everywhere. Meet Elise Stephens, accomplished writer, award-winning author, and Writer of the Future.

L. Ron Hubbard presents **Writers** of the **Future**

Volume 35

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS

#1 Bestselling Sci-Fi & Fantasy Short Stories of the Year

Award-Winning Authors and Illustrators

accompanied by

ean Wesley Smith · Rebecca Moesta
ike Resnick · Rob Prior · Echo Chernik

ited by David Farland

Joining Writers of the Future

I attended Orson Scott Card's Literary Boot Camp in 2013 and he mentioned the contest. In April 2018, I met some WOTF winners and this fire just sprang up in my chest—I knew I wanted to win and I wanted it badly.

That winning moment

I blurted "Oh my gosh oh my gosh oh my gosh!" It was hard to believe—I kept waiting for something to happen that would make it no longer real. I was giddy and beside myself.

The Writers of the Future experience

My experience was overwhelmingly positive! My quarterly win put me in the final running for the grand prize, I didn't win, [but] there was so much excitement and genuine kindness among the authors and the community, the deflation was not long-lived. As someone pointed out, it's not about the grand prize. Every single winner there has made an outstanding achievement, and their careers are going to change for the better because of the win.

Biggest learnings from WOTF

I learned that a professional writer doesn't have the luxury to polish a draft forever. You do your best, then you send it out [and] write your next piece. You get better by writing new work, not by worrying and nit-picking the old stuff. (It's a lesson I'm still trying to absorb, honestly!)

Untrained Luck

Untrained Luck is dear to my heart. I wrote the first draft when my son was 11 months

old and I was discovering how wildly motherhood was changing my heart, my head, and my priorities. I was ecstatic when the story won WOTF because it meant I'd truly get to share it with the world.

Life after WOTF

I've been hard at work on a novel, *Grayhawk Rising*, which is a sequel to *Untrained Luck*. I realized that I might have people who loved my world and the characters of Mag and Lio as much as I did, so it was time to write a longer story for them.

The new online Writers of the Future Workshop vs the live workshop

The online workshop has such good content—it even contains steps and guidance to lead you in writing a short story--but without the crazy stress of writing one in a day! It's not quite the same as the live workshop, but it's pretty great, and you don't even have to get on a plane!

Upcoming projects

I hope you'll see *Grayhawk Rising* in bookstores sometime soon! I have another novel brewing, and this one is about paint that can be infused with emotions...

Dealing with writer's block

I have time set aside for writing each week. So much of a career in writing is about persistence, not "inspired brilliance." I definitely don't wait for inspiration to strike. I have to write with or without it!

The road to becoming a published author

It's a long one, and not for the faint of heart! It's vital that you believe in yourself enough to step outside your comfort zone, and maintain a constant willingness to learn and improve your skill— that keeps you humble!

Most valuable advice received

"Keep it interesting." Write things that are compelling - if I was pretty excited about the content, chances were that others would be, too. Simple, but it's also really sensible!

"Persevere". If you see something published and think, "I could have written better," the likely reason it was published is that the author kept on persevering. Eventually, the art finds a home, or the writer improves. Perseverance will help you on what is bound to be a long road.

There's no better time than now to start living your dream!

From Elise to aspiring writers:

"Finish your story. Even if you think it's terrible, you have to finish it before you show it. Once finished, show it to someone you can trust. When you get into the habit of finishing and sharing your work, you'll grow in confidence, which will prepare you for sending your stuff 'out into the world.'"