

Ann's Historical Fiction #11

02/28/25

Writing while stressed

Overload from without and within

TL; DR. Cut yourself some slack. Whatever is stressing you can wreak havoc with whatever writing plans/schedule you normally keep. That's okay. Do what you can, and it will work out in the end. At least, that's what I keep telling myself.

Most of you wonderful readers know that I am also running a start-up nonprofit, Science is Elemental. A nonprofit has very different rules from other businesses, but it is still a business, and takes considerable time, care, and creative energy. Lots of creative energy. It has become harder and harder for me to write as I devote so much of my efforts elsewhere.

And then there is the political climate here in the U.S. I won't delve into the particulars, and my heart goes out to all who have had their lives upended in just the first few weeks of this administration. Did I say climate? Crisis might be a better term.

My writing time and energy, already limited by the nonprofit, is being crowded out by worry and doom scrolling. I know I should stop, but it's hard. I feel this urgent need to both delve into the current situation, and look away, trying to ignore horrible ramifications.

Band together. Help each other. Find joy in the world, despite the chaos. Be good to yourself. I must believe the writing will work out.

Genre: Historical fiction, with a bit of fantasy thrown in for good measure.



Historical Novel Society Conference

I put my hat in the ring for a speaking role at the conference but did not get it. Now I must decide if I want to go in person, or just do the virtual program.

Cons: It's not free. It will cost about \$600, not including travel costs to Las Vegas. Also, it's in June. Vegas can be a tad warm that time of year. Finally, I just found out that good friends might be in my neck of the woods at that time.

Pros: I've only ever done the virtual conference. It would be really cool to network with other writers. Email me at ann@annshistoricalfiction.com with what you think I should do!

Not NANO, but still writing the book

In my last newsletter, I described my dilemma about whether to participate in NaNo 2024. I did not.

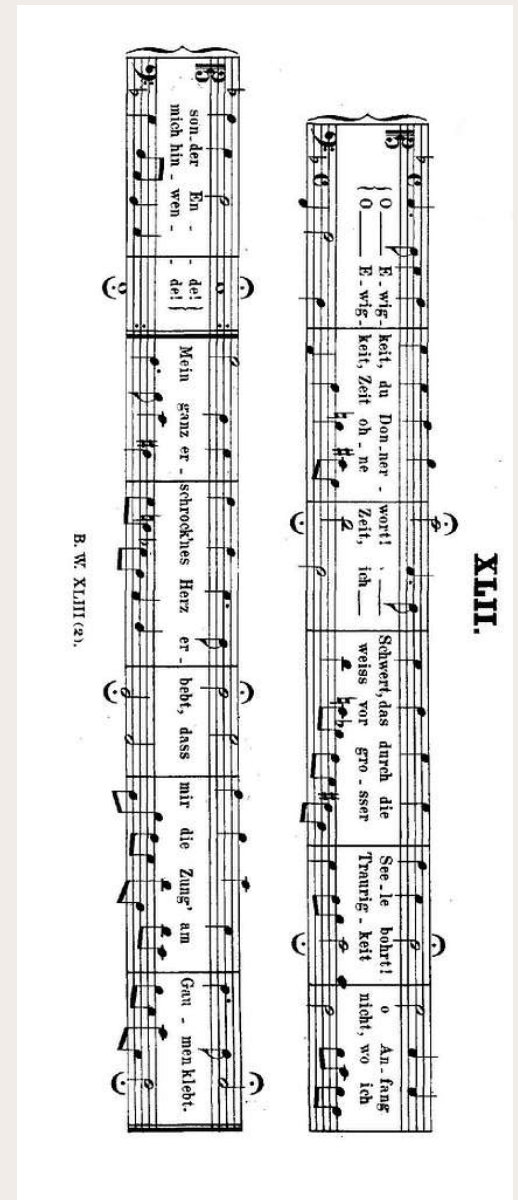
Nor, as I describe on page 1 of this newsletter am I writing at the same level of effort that I have been since I started in 2012. There just seems to be so much else taking up space in my brain.

However, I am writing. Just a little bit of the time. If you read my last newsletter, you know that I completed the research (as best as one can before actually starting the project) for a novel about Johann Sebastian Bach's second wife, Anna Magdalena. As of this writing, I am up to 7100 words.

Okay. That's not much to write home about. If I were doing Nano, I would get this many words in just the first three days. But it's 7100 words more than I would have if I weren't writing at all. So, I celebrate them.

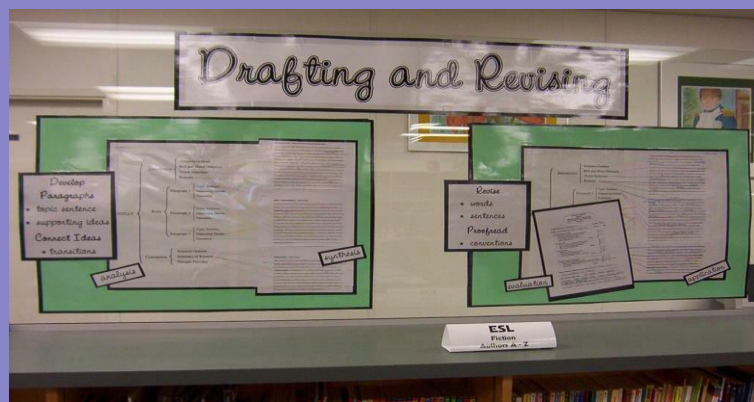
More than that, I think it's making a difference in my writing. Because I am taking it more slowly, I am also delving more into the inner life and feelings of the main character. Anna Magdalena is coming alive for me in a way I think she would not if I were racing through writing for Nano.

Maybe this is all for the better.



PC: <https://itoldya420.getarchive.net/amp/media/anna-magdalena-bach-bwv51342-1894-f1a513>

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Ragtime!

New music for me

It's not always easy for my teacher to find music for me that is both challenging but not too hard. I have not mastered the higher positions on the violin, and to some extent, due to very small hand size and joint issues, I will always have trouble with them.

But recently, he came up with a beautiful solution to the problem, "Country Club," by Scott Joplin. Yes, the guy who wrote "Entertainer," the theme to the movie, "The Sting." And, yes, I am dating myself. If you've been following my musical journey, you know that I play classical music (baroque and classical, by era) and traditional Irish tunes. Joplin's ragtime is a completely different sound.

So where is the challenge in the piece? Syncopation! For those like me who had to look it up, syncopation is a disturbance or interruption of the regular flow of rhythm, or placement of rhythmic stresses or accents where they normally wouldn't occur. It makes the rhythmic aspects of the piece a bit more challenging.

If you want to hear the music, try this [link](#).



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