

BLOG BYTES



by Kristopher Zgorski

Lois Winston's *Killer Crafts & Crafty Killers* blog (<https://anastasiapollack.blogspot.com>) has a URL that ties it to the series character she writes about, but the content extends way beyond that niche. Winston—well, actually, Anastasia Pollack, the character created by Lois Winston—regularly posts excellent interviews with both mystery authors and the characters they invented. Each interview is sure to provide some surprising insight. The blog also features essays on a multitude of topics both writerly and more “fun” based (fashion, food, etc.). Whenever Lois attends one of the many crime-fiction conventions that populate the year, she writes a nice recap of those events for fans who were unable to attend. Since her Anastasia Pollack cozy series focuses on crafting, visitors to the blog can always count on finding some instructions or inspiration about the latest trending craft projects. There's an archive of past posts, and while Lois Winston recently announced that she would be reducing her posts to once a week (on Wednesday), visitors are still sure to be presented with some quality blog content each month.

Another fun and informative website is *Almost an Author* (<https://www.almostanauthor.com>). From the title, it's clear this one is aimed at unpublished writers, but honestly there is wonderful content for practitioners of all levels. The Genre tab at the top of the website breaks things down into tips and posts that are geared towards certain genres (everything from Mystery to Fantasy and so much in between). The Craft menu tab includes inspirational posts about all stages of the writing process, so there's sure to be something to fit your needs no matter when the struggle hits. The Career tab drills down into postings that deal directly with the business side of the equation and it provides so much useful information in smaller, manageable segments designed not to overwhelm. There are several other tabs, but another favorite is the Tour tab, which basically contains interviews with writers talking about their most recent work, where other writers can hear tales of success meant to encourage anyone through the difficult journey to becoming an author.

The Insecure Writer's Support Group (<https://www.insecurewriterssupportgroup.com>) is a long-running website with a robust community designed to be encouraging and supportive of each other. There are some books and products for sale, but the free posts included on this twelve-year-old blog are filled with useful tidbits from others who have chosen to pursue writing as a vocation. Most posts go live on Monday, so visitors only need to carve out a time to stop by this website once a week, but there are Facebook groups and other resources for those who find they enjoy the community and information provided. There

are handy links to resources useful to independently published authors as well as a tab for publisher and agent information. This website is also a good place to check for the latest in writing contests that might be out there seeking entries.

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