

By Larry W. Timm

This Writer's Journey: ~~Proposed title: "Why did~~ Did I push Push Send?"

By Larry Timm

—My ~~left index~~ finger retreats from the keypad. I ~~raise take a few breaths into~~ the paper sack ~~held~~ in my quivering ~~right~~ hand and inhale a few quick breaths while I, ~~then~~ stare at the taunting words—*Your message has been sent.*

“What did I just do?” I feel vulnerable. -

—I just pushed Send.

—My book proposal is traveling toward an agent's in-box —is probably already there—and - ~~And~~ I can't stop it. Images of the Hindenburg drift across my mind. ~~“Whuaduna?” I remove the paper sack from my face and ask again, “What do I do now?”~~ A couple more quick breaths.

“What do I do now?”

—My palms are sweaty. M ~~but~~ my mouth is dry. ~~And~~ I'm talking to myself.

The Jig Is Up

I glance toward ~~gaze at~~ the front door, certain the FBI will soon burst through, guns blazing, and ~~be sledgehammering through and~~ arresting me for impersonating a writer. Oh, my poor family. I see imagine the street lined with news crews, and yellow crime tape flapping in the breeze. I am ~~wearing an visualize myself in~~ orange jumpsuit and flip-flops. I hate flip-flops.

“Is it hot in here?”

—It won't ~~can't~~ be long before Oprah comes out of retirement and has my wife sitting on the couch next to her for one of those emotional tear-soaked interviews. She'll turn to my wife, a ~~concerned look on her face~~. “Have you heard from your husband, the ~~the big~~ imposter, since he's been sentenced to life without publishing?”

—“No...” My wife will dab her eyes with a crumpled tissue. “They won't let him write.”

—~~Ooooof course not.~~

Shame stares me in the face —and ~~...and~~ it has bad breath. I ~~quickly~~ discard the paper sack.

—How could I send such garbage to an agent?

“Why didn't anyone stop me?” ~~I mean.~~

Did I undangle all the participles? Catch all the floating body parts? The agent will read it and laugh, but ...in the wrong places. Suddenly ~~I feel like~~ I'm back in second grade, waiting for the teacher to decide between my picture of the purple stick elephant and ~~little~~ Johnny's dumb sunset painting. How many times do you see purple stick elephants? Sunsets are so daily!

—“I'm glad I sent my story out.” I say while banging ~~I bang~~ my head on the table. “But why did I send ~~THAT~~ that story?”

—Why *suspense*? Maybe I should have written something Amish or speculative...or both. Perhaps a book about Amish Vampires. I'd call it *Buggy Bites*. Or maybe something about a group of old spinsters from an Amish sewing circle called *The Jilted Quilters*. No. Wait. I've got it! Romance! Yes? No. My wife will remind me I should write what I know.

—Why do I go through this? Because I AM A WRITER! That's not a confession, it's a conviction. I'm an ambassador for the Almighty, a steward of story.

—I believe that, as a Christian, I don't decide whether or not I'm a steward. I only choose whether or not to be a good one. I keep that truth in mind as I work toward the moment when I push Send. It motivates me to prepare, polish, and promote my books. I write, rewrite, sweat, and fret because my Lord and my readers deserve my best. I have so much to learn. I sometimes struggle with correction, but I try to let red ink and rejection challenge me to be better. My Lord has entrusted me with a great responsibility and I don't take that trust lightly. It's why I'm a member of ACFW, go to conference, participate in my local ACFW chapter, work with a freelance editor, and study the craft.

—In addition to stewardship, I believe writing Christian fiction is an act of worship. I don't bow *to* my stories, I bow *with* my stories. I present them to God as offerings of worship. My writing is an instrument, not an idol. I hope I always remember that.

—But I also get to walk with God and experience the power of creating. I get to form stories that can have an impact. I feel the same humble honor when I sit to write that I do when I stand to preach. It amazes and excites me to think that what I write may become a part of the stream of influence that God can use to strengthen, restore, or save another soul. Wow! That's why I work hard. That's why I push Send.

—Writing is what I do, but it is not who I am. I'm a child of the King. My writing does not make Him love me more. I'm also a husband and father. No matter how many books I write, none of that will change. I am truly blessed.

—My wife and children often give me books about writing as gifts. And inside those books I'll find a handwritten note that says, "To: Larry/Daddy...From: Your biggest fans! We love you and believe in you. Always—no matter what! XXOO...Mommy, Jayne, Josiah... Mark 9:23"

—I write for them too.

—So, if you'll excuse me, I have the humble pleasure of pushing Send. What an honor, indeed!

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Michael,

—There is so much more I wanted to write, but space does not allow. I would love to write an article on “Writing as Spiritual Warfare.” I am captivated by the idea that writing a story with a godly theme is one way I, as a writer, can fight against the lies of the devil. It’s one way I can shine light into the darkness. It’s one way I can swing the sword of the Spirit. Stories were often used by prophets to expose evil. Our Lord Jesus used stories also.

—I would be honored to write such an article. And I would love to try to fulfill any other writing assignment you might assign to me in the future.

—I hope you and yours have a very Merry Christmas.

Larry Timm

PS> I am sending my photo also...sorry it’s so big, but I can’t figure out how to shrink it. Don’t let it scare you...ha ha. I have it on a disk from JC Penny portrait studio and am allowed to use it.

Larry’s Bio and photo:

Larry Timm is a husband, father, speaker, and writer. He is the full-time preaching minister with Gracepoint church in Peabody, Kansas. A graduate of Ozark Christian College (Joplin, MO.); he’s held ministries in Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. He enjoys being a part of the ACFW chapter that meets in Wichita, Kansas.

