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Ask Dr. WEB-Write

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Jo's Ten Commandments For Writing A Best Seller By S. Joan Popek

1. Thou shalt not provide divine intervention to save thy protagonist's skin because thee can't think of any other way to end thy manuscript. (Or for any other reason. Your protagonist must save his or her own skin--always!)
2. Thou shalt not sprinkle commas or other provocative punctuation marks indiscriminately around thy manuscript. (Know the rules and put 'em where they

belong or just don't put 'em!)

3. Thou shalt know the difference between dialog and dialect. (If you are confused, your reader will be too.)
4. Thy shalt not put thy faith in the false idol of spell checker. (This all powerful god doesn't know the difference between Cain and Cane, but you should. Put your trust in your true savior--proofreading.)
5. Thy shalt ignore the evil presence of Writer's Block. (When you feel you have been attacked by this nemesis of authors, fight him by writing something--anything! Oh yeah, and a little garlic around the neck wouldn't hurt either.)
6. Thou shalt worship at the alter of Literature. (Read-read-read. Study the Masters.)
7. Thou shalt submit thy work consistently and constantly. (No matter how much you write or how good you are, if no one reads it, no one will buy it.)
8. Thou shalt not ignore thy Muse. (She's the best friend ya got. Give her a cookie occasionally, and tell her how much you love her every day.)
9. Thou shalt delve into thine own mind and fear not what thee sees there, but rather embrace the uniqueness of thine own imagination. (There are no new ideas, only new ways of expressing them.)
10. Thou shalt love thy editor as thyself. Thee shalt not call him or her an uneducated idiot with the imagination of a cockroach. (Even if it's true, we don't like to be reminded that we are not the divine beings writers think we believe we are.)

I wrote these commandments with my tongue stuffed firmly in my cheek, but the pearls of wisdom are in there. Use them if you like. Take these commandments and hang them on your wall or line your trash can with them--your choice--but no matter what you do with them, keep writing.

Happy writing,

S. Joan Popek

About Dr. Web-Write

S. Joan Popek is an age challenged grandmother with one foot placed firmly in the Dark Ages and the other in the Twilight

Zone. She was born and raised in New Mexico. She still lives in Roswell, NM (Yes. That Roswell. The UFO capital of the world) with her husband, Joe. She is the mother of five and the grandmother of fifteen.

The Fiction Works, published S. Joan Popek's first collection of short Stories, "THE ADMINISTRATOR," as an e-book. The Fiction Works also plans to release it in audio book form with dramatic readings soon. Visit Online at www.fictionworks.com.

Reviewer John Hamilton, said of the THE ADMINISTRATOR, "...a wild ride through one woman's incredible imagination and polished writing skills."

Until recently, She was an editor for The Roswell Literary Review and Millennium Science Fiction & Fantasy Magazines.

Her first published fiction appeared in The Roswell Literary Review and Millennium Science Fiction & Fantasy (Before she owned them). Since then has published many short fiction stories in various magazines such as: Eternity, THE EDGE, Exodus, Anotherealm, Chaotic Reflections, Pulp Eternity, The Special Editors' Edition of Goddess of the Bay and others. One of her stories will soon be featured In "The Best of Eternity, Volume 1".

Her nonfiction credits include Fiction Writer , Writer's Digest, FYI, Southern New Mexico Magazine, Southern New Mexico online Magazine, Writer's Hall, and The Candlelight Poetry Journal. She has had poetry in several national magazines including Feelings and Eclipsing and her work has appeared in several anthologies.

Many of her stories have won awards: "The Alien Feeder," placed in the 1997 Best of the WEB contest by Predators & Editors and in Eternity's Best of the Month contest. "The Prodigals" placed in the 1998 contest and many of Popek's other poems and stories have received acclaim in various magazines. Her poem "We Circle Their Sun" placed in the 1998 Predators & Editors contest and won honorable mention in the Alien Songs Contest/Anthology. in 1997.

Joan also conducts writer's workshops at various conventions and is especially fond of Flash Fiction. She is currently writing a

helpful guide for writers on the fine art of writing flash fiction.

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