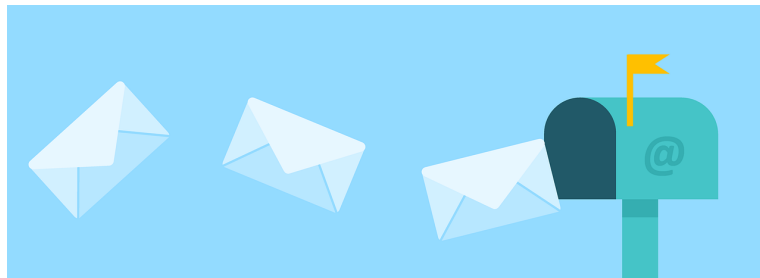

December 2025 News



From Diane Wordsworth <diane@dianewordsworth.com>
To Diane <diane@dianewordsworth.com>
Date 03-12-2025 6:23 pm



December 2025 News

Hello friends! How is everyone? Welcome to the December newsletter.

I know there are quite a lot of holidays being celebrated throughout December, and whichever one you enjoy, I hope it's a good one.

We celebrate Christmas. It's my favourite time of year. That's why I send Christmas wishes to each and every one of you.



scant news...

I don't have a lot of news this time other than a 'coming soon' on Patreon and the blog.

Regular readers of the blog will already be aware of the current health issues I'm having. Nothing serious and pretty much routine, but it does take a lot of time out of my working week at the moment.

patreon...

The Patreon has pretty much gone live this month. I'll be duplicating regular week-daily blog posts, book reviews, month aheads and monthly wrap-ups. But starting this month I have a programme of publishing for both free access and paid memberships to Patreon.

For the month of December, the only premium content on Patreon will be a weekly short story. Some have already been sent out with the newsletter, others have already been included in *Words Worth Reading*.

From January, premium content will include monthly writing prompts and writing ideas, followed by a 'take 1 idea...' with suggestions on what to do with it, plus other 'Wednesday Writing' features.

In the future, I'll also be serialising non fiction books, novellas and novels, either already published or while I work on them. These will also be on a premium basis.

Billed as 'something for the weekend' (previously 'Fiction Friday'), here's the short story schedule for the coming weeks:

- Saturday 6 December: *Happy Christmas, Santa*
- Saturday 13 December: *The Ace of Wands*
- Saturday 20 December: *The Girl on the Bench*
- Saturday 27 December: *New Year's Revolution*
- Saturday 3 January: *Dancing on Ice*

Each of these short stories will also be published on the website exactly 4 weeks later, but they'll only be on there for 7 days before disappearing for ever.

The stories will all be available to buy for people who don't subscribe to my Patreon and there will be links to the Books2Read store front. However, for as long as my Patreon is going, these stories will always be on there for paid members.

coming soon...



bookazine...

On 5 January 2026, *Words Worth Reading: Issue SIX* will be published. Inside this edition:

- complete brand-new short story: *A Day At The Races*, featuring Marcie Craig
- complete brand-new short story: *Valentine's Date*
- complete brand-new novella: *Stevie Beck and The Christmas Tree Mystery*
- complete brand-new short story: *Deadly Deeds in Morecambe Bay*, featuring retired ninja assassin Mavis Braithwaite
- Part 3 of *Catch the Rainbow*, brand-new novel instalment
- complete short story (from the archives): *New Year's Revolution*

I finally got my finger out and created a pdf for *Words Worth Reading: Issue TWO*, so that's up there now for newsletter subscribers. (See links below.)

short story...

And finally, once *Words Worth Reading: Issue SIX* has been released, the next short story to be published as a standalone will be the new Marcie Craig, *A Day At The Races*.

that's it for now...

That's all for now. Until next time...Happy New Year!

Diane

links...

Don't forget, you can read my (week) daily blog [here](#), access the full newsletter archive to date [here](#), and *Words Worth Reading* magazine [here](#). Follow me on Patreon [here](#). And all of my books can be bought [here](#).

here's your next story...



Petra was on a roll.

"Do we have to come boring Christmas shopping with you? Do I?" she whined.

Molly sighed. Her little girl was already growing up too quickly, already losing the joy of childhood. Oh, she knew it would happen eventually, knew it would come one day. And she really didn't want to stifle the teenager. But if she could just hold on to the child for just one more Christmas...

"No, you don't have to come with me at all, but I'd like it if you did. It would be nice to do something together as a family and I won't be able to control your brother all on my own with parcels and packages to battle with." Not to mention the weather, she thought to herself. "You'd be helping me out too."

"But if I don't come with you, you'll be able to get my present as well." The fifteen-year-old gave her mother one of those sarcastic little smiles, the kind that barred straight, white teeth in a flash before her pretty little face returned to that supercilious teenage mask.

"I've already got your present—"

"Have you? What is it? Where is it? Was it on my list?"

Too late Molly realised she'd walked into one of her daughter's traps, and she laughed. Perhaps her little girl wasn't growing up so quickly after all. It didn't take much for Petra to resort to childishness again if she thought she was getting something.

The children knew that Molly couldn't afford to get them very much since their father had left home and she'd gone back to work. The up-side, however, was that they had two Christmases, two birthdays each, and two summer holidays. And really, Petra was very good, helping out around the house a lot more than other girls her age – according to Petra.

Molly tried again. "Surely you haven't already got all of your own presents?"

"I have to get Dad something. And Gran. But I've got all the others."

Molly smiled. "Really? Have you got mine? What have I got?"

Petra laughed. "Honestly, Mum. And you wonder where I get it from?"

The girl chewed on her bottom lip and curled a lock of hair around her right forefinger. Molly braced herself for the bribe she knew was about to come.

"Can Sofia come as well?"

Was that all? Sofia was Petra's best friend from school.

"I don't have a problem with that. But Toby will probably want to bring a friend too."

Molly sighed again, this time at the prospect of two boisterous ten-year-olds to control. But then she thought it might actually be quite a nice day out for all of them. The true spirit of Christmas.

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As it happened Toby didn't want to bring a friend after all.

"Just cos Petra's a big sissy girl who needs someone to hold her hand doesn't mean that I do too."

The usual sibling bickering was often highly amusing, but Molly hoped it wouldn't stress her any more on what was already going to be a tiring day. Petra, however, as it happened, was far too busy being all grown-up in front of her friend to retaliate –

beyond poking out her tongue.

They arrived bright and early and Molly managed to park up without difficulty. She was surprised, though. This was a Saturday morning after all, only two weeks before Christmas, and there was hardly anyone about.

Sofia said: "They probably do all their shopping online now. That's what we did."

Not a bad idea, thought Molly. But she actually enjoyed Christmas shopping. It was all part of the fun. Tramping around cobbled streets wrapped up against the cold, listening to a choir singing or a brass band playing, people you don't know smiling at you, wishing you a Merry Christmas, the smell of mulled wine, and chestnuts roasting in an open oven. That's what it was all about, and The Shambles was the best place to do it in too. You could always find something special. They each found Molly's mother something nice, apart from Sofia of course.

"Who fancies a hot mince pie with cream?" Molly shouted.

"Me!" sang both of her children. However, when Sofia pointed out that she was watching her waistline and sweet stuff gave her zits, Petra started to falter.

"Look," said Molly. "It's only one mince pie and I promise you we'll work it off later – though with the walking we've done so far, we must already have something in the bank." She'd spotted a poster on a wall earlier and decided it would be the best way to end what had turned out to be a fantastic day.

They took their packages to the car and hid them safely in the boot, went and had their hot mince pies, then Molly led the way back through the crowds that had gradually increased, back through The Shambles to the castle.

"Wow!" exclaimed Toby when they got there.

"Cool!" said Petra.

Sofia grinned at Molly. "An outdoor ice rink," she said.

Yes, the health and safety party poopers hadn't closed this one down.

They hired some boots and followed everyone else around the rink in circles to the sound of the latest, and many of the much older, Christmas hits. They giggled when one of them lost their balance and helped each other up off the ice when they fell over. Molly knew that she would ache all over in the morning, but she didn't care. It was worth it just to see the children being children again at Christmas.

"Don't leave the ice rink without telling me first," she called, as the three of them wobbled off to explore and make new friends.

Left to her own thoughts and devices for a while, she found herself wishing she had a grown-up to share some of the fun with too, someone to share this special day, someone to hold her hand, someone to catch her when she slipped. A little voice inside her head whispered: "Be careful what you wish for," and she shook herself. Been there, done that. Didn't work. And besides, she had the children to consider.

Molly skated off to find herself a hot chocolate. There were booths and kiosks placed all around the rink perimeter so she didn't even need to leave the ice.

The girls and Toby all seemed to reconvene at once, Petra and Sofia babbling on about two boys they'd met, and Toby dragging a new friend behind him.

"Mum," he cried, trying to also concentrate on staying upright. By the amount of ice on his clothes and the number of wet patches, he'd already come a cropper more than once. "This is Luke. His dad's a photographer for the local paper." Molly caught sight of an apologetic looking man trailing at the heels of Toby and his new friend. "He's the same age as me."

"His dad or Luke?" laughed Molly.

"Luke's dad wants to take a picture of us all. Can he, Mum? Can he?"

Molly met the eyes of Luke's dad over her own son's shoulder.

"May I?" he smiled. "You're all wearing such wonderful colours, I thought when I first saw you it would make a smashing photo."

"Why not?" agreed Molly.

"Cool," said Petra. "Will we get a copy?"

"Sure," said Luke's dad. "If your mum lets me have her phone number."

"If she doesn't I will," said Petra. "It's about time she had a man in her life again."

"Petra!" admonished Molly, feeling herself flush.

"Really?" teased Luke's dad, meeting Molly's eye again.

Be careful what you wish for, Molly reminded herself. Seeing her discomfort and embarrassment, though, Luke's dad set about arranging the photograph, making a huge fuss of them all.

Molly hissed out of the corner of her mouth to Petra: "That was very naughty. He might not even be single."

Petra smiled and poked her tongue out again, then made a great show of giving Luke's dad their phone number and Molly's mobile number.

"I'll let you know when it appears in the paper," said Luke's dad to Molly, who was making leaving noises now.

"Thanks."

"Oh, and by the way..."

"Yes?"

"I am."

"You are what?"

"Single," he winked.

the end



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