



Hello,

I'm re-starting the Writing from Near and Far newsletter by offering you **travel memoir writing related resources, ideas and avenues for publication**. I've added a resources tab to my [website](#) where I've put information about relevant [publication venues](#) for travel memoir writing.

I'd also like to share an inspiration for my travel memoir writing:

Last year, my family and I took a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Eastern Europe for six weeks. There were so many highlights—my brother in law's traditional Bulgarian wedding in a remote village, my daughter's instantaneous love of Bosnia, swimming in the Adriatic overlooking the ancient walls of Dubrovnik.

I didn't know where to begin in terms of writing about this experience.

However, listening to the travel memoir stories read aloud in the [There She Goes](#) podcast sent me immediately to my notebook to blast out two drafts: one focusing on an incredibly long bus ride that investigates the personal story of my own aging and anxiety, and one focusing on our time in Bosnia, drawing upon my early study and thwarted plans to live in Bosnia in my mid-twenties.

Finally, another avenue of inspiration for my writing has been essays from the online magazine [offassignment](#).

Reading excerpts from their [Letter to a Stranger](#) column sent me to my notebook again, uncovering a memory from twenty years ago. I wrote the story of my relationship to the stranger who worked in the kebab shop downstairs from where I rented a flat in London.

Not only did I enjoy this unique style of writing—directly addressing the ‘stranger’ in the style of a letter—I also really enjoyed living inside that long-ago memory for a while.

I hope you have also had some travel memoir writing inspiration recently (**if so, please hit reply (writing@jillianschedneck.com) and let me know about it!**).

Best Women’s Travel Writing vol 13 is open for submission, deadline September 30, 2024, for publication in 2025. I’m so excited to work on my latest travel memoir pieces and submit!

Recent stories and links about travel memoir writing that I admired:

1. There She Goes podcast: I have been loving the stories in this podcast. I’ve actually rationed my listening to make it last longer! The stories have that great mix of personal story mixed with the drama of being in a new location and very much follow the arc of the travel memoir story formula I write about in my how to guidebook. This one has been my favorite story in the podcast series so far.
2. Many of the books listed in Wanderlust Magazine’s best travel books of 2024 look very intriguing. In particular, I like Storm Pegs: A Life Made in Shetland, Slow Trains to Istanbul, Children of the Volcano, On the Shadow Tracks: A Journey Through Occupied Myanmar. From reading the descriptions, it sounds like these books have a compelling personal angle and I’m keen to check them out.
3. This story by novelist Rebecca Makkai caught my attention. Published in Oprah Magazine, I thought it was a great example of the way immersing oneself in another culture can bring about new personal insights into one’s life and family.

4. Here is some excellent advice about submitting to The Best of Women's Travel Tales.

Question for you:

What's a trip you took recently (or a long time ago)? What angle do you want to take to write about it? (**Please hit reply** (writing@jillianschedneck.com) **and answer. I'd love to know!**)

Writing prompt:

This prompt is based on the Letter to a Stranger column in offassignment.

Think of someone from your travels who meant something to you, but you never learned their name or interacted with them in a personal way. Yet, when you think back on that stranger, you realize the encounter was meaningful to you.

Here's a personal example I haven't written about yet to give you an idea:

In Mostar, it was incredibly hot and my family and I were waiting for our train to Sarajevo that evening. We sat under Mostar Bridge and watched a middle-aged man practice diving from a great height off to the side of the bridge. He was being coached by one of the professional divers who typically took up space on Mostar Bridge, drumming up customers to receive diving training and pay their fee to jump off the bridge.

I am grateful to this would-be diver for providing my family and I with entertainment while we sat in the shade of Mostar Bridge. We spoke about his diving technique and imagined what brought him to this endeavour. We waited to see the culmination of his efforts in a dive off the actual Mostar Bridge, but alas, he never appeared in the centre of that bridge to take his climactic leap, even after so much

practice. My family and I contemplated where he might have gone, when or if he might do his big dive in the future.

I feel like I have enough material there to write a letter to this stranger that reveals more about my family and I and that moment in our trip.

Who's your stranger? Address your letter directly to them.