

Update your passports and put in your time off requests, because Havok is going on tour! North to South, East to West, we're celebrating every corner of this rock we all call home. And yes, we do mean *celebrating*! From geography to history to culture, we want you to craft unforgettable stories that immerse us in the awesomeness of, well, everywhere on Earth. And don't forget your sunscreen and your Chupacabra spray. You never know what'll happen when you step out your front door! Note: This is a reference sheet only; check the Season Themes page on GoHavok.com to verify which months are open for submissions and which are closed.

THE AMERICAS

We're starting this world tour in the place many of you call home: America. It might have been the New World once, but North America, South America, and the Caribbean all have rich, diverse biomes and histories. Take us on a perilous dogsled race across the vast Yukon wilderness. Delve into forbidden caves beneath the Amazon River in pursuit of cursed gold. Harness Venezuela's Catatumbo lightning to power the future's greatest fighting mech. Or cause a bit of good-spirited Great Plains chaos with the trickster god Coyote.

AFRICA

When it comes to unexplored possibility, the Mother Continent is unparalleled. Sign up for a slapstick scavenger hunt through Ghana's 30-acre open air Kejetia Market. Jump back 200,000 years to the dawn of humanity at the heart of Ethiopia. Set up a Great Pyramid bed and breakfast without angering the spirits... or the local law enforcement. And don't forget about that time the Nile Crocodile Coalition nearly wiped out the legendary hydrus population.

EUROPE

A kraken, a vampire, and the Loch Ness Monster walk into an English pub. But that's just the beginning. Join Norway's prestigious penguin knighthood in the fight against the ever-present wolverine menace. Uncover the secrets behind Iceland's mysterious mosquito absence. But think very seriously before crossing the Celtic warrior queen Boudica.

ASIA

Who's ready to brave the bandits along the Silk Road? Or start a wild food fight at the annual Monkey Buffet Festival in Thailand. Escape Cambodia's Ta Prohm temple at all costs. Smuggle the world's last remaining fugu fish into Tokyo's illegal cyborg district. And scour the Genghis Khan's Mongolian tomb in search of his only surviving portrait. Shoot 3,000 years into the future to see whether China or the New Korean Alliance won the race to colonize Barnard's Star.

OCEANIA

One last stop on our whirlwind world tour. And in a region of 10,000 islands around Australia and New Zealand, you'll have no shortage of stories to tell. So, whether you're exploring the depths of fantastical seas or climbing the world's tallest island, be sure to give us everything Oceania has to offer. Join a Māori warrior as he faces off against the lord of darkness, Whiro. Protect the secret existence of the Otways Panther. Save an Antarctic outpost from its rogue artificial intelligence. Or hey, even challenge your over-confident BFF to befriend a Tasmanian devil.

SKY'S THE LIMIT

Think of this as the World Tour's open mic night. Your story can be set in any previous theme from this season, or somewhere around our planet that doesn't fit one of those themes. Who really lives at the North Pole? Escape the fierce merfolk who herd seals through the Arctic ice floes. Show us what threatens the completion of humanity's first international space mall. Is the earth really hollow at the center? Let's find out! Whatever the case, your story should include something unique about our humble habitat in the vastness of the universe.

WE NEED ALL FIVE MAJOR GENRES

The World Tour season lends itself to all our genres, but you may wonder how to combine *your* favored genre with these themes. The tips below should help. Also, we generally receive fewer submissions for the mystery, thriller, and humor categories, so your story may have a better chance at publication if it fits those genres.

Here are some genre-specific ideas to spark your imagination:

- *Mystery*: Take a famous mystery from history and give it a speculative twist. If it is unsolved, show us what *really* happened. If it was resolved, give us an alternate explanation that you find more satisfying. Find a lost traveler, or a traveler's lost valuables. Solve an archaeological mystery. Discover exactly which spices they use on that delicious roadside chicken sate or in that sublime chai tea.
- *Science Fiction*: Set a story in the theme location (the Americas, Asia, etc) but in the far future. Or use time travel to visit the distant past. Create a technological marvel that solves a current crisis or need. Fictionalize a modern news report about incidents surrounding early robot or AI implementation. What happens when we finally have hover cars or auto-driving vehicles?
- *Humor*: Traveling to different places provides endless potential for hilarious mistakes, faux pas, and translation errors. Moving to a new home can offer the same funny incidents, but with different stakes for offending the neighbors. Contrast is a great source of comedy, so try spotlighting the polar opposite reactions of two characters to the same situation.
- *Thriller*: Every continent has its dangers. Deadly storms, difficult geography, tribal unrest, crime, native predators, even poisonous vegetation. If you combine danger with a speculative twist, your story has a better chance of selection by more than one of our genre teams.
- *Fantasy*: Take any fantasy creature and imagine what would happen if it were hidden in a place and time of your choosing. It could be: the last tribe of centaurs living in a hidden canyon in America's pioneering west, sighting a unicorn in Central Park, capturing a dragon for the Emperor's zoo, dryads soothing the dying elephants and maintaining the graveyard of great bones.

TIP #1: Sometimes we get questions about our submission process. Here's a behind-the-scenes peek. Our submissions team routes your story to the genre team indicated on your submission form most of the time (Mystery Monday, Techno Tuesday, etc). If one genre team is low on submissions, stories that fit multiple genres may be shifted to fill that gap. Our teams coordinate together when needed to share stellar stories when one genre day is full and a story fits more than one genre. Bottom line: If your story can combine two genres, it may get an extra boost.

TIP #2: Sign up for our [author newsletter](#) to stay in the loop about opportunities for authors. We usually send a newsletter once a month, but there may be occasional announcements in addition to that schedule.

TIP #3: Follow [@havokauthornews](#) on Instagram for story prompts to spark ideas for our themes. We also post open and closed submission announcements and other author-centric news. On Facebook, follow the [Havok Publishing page](#) and join the [Flash Fiction Writers Guild](#) for the same info. Disclaimer: No guarantee of what info we'll post, or whether you'll see the posts when we do. Checking the Season Themes page on our website is the most reliable source for this info.

TIP #4: How to write a fantasy or science fiction story while targeting mystery, thriller, or humor: Take your fantasy (or futuristic) character and setting and center your story around a mystery, a question, an unknown. Or make the situation life-threatening and thrilling. Or give your characters a humorous personality or put them in a hilarious situation.

Using the season themes to inspire you, send us a story that fits any of the following daily flash genres:

MYSTERY MONDAY: From cozy to crime scene, start your week off with a bit of mystery. Creep through downtown foggy London Town, spy on secret agents at a midnight meeting, catch up with an old friend who may or may not be a cat burglar, or just figure out who stole your homework before the last bell rings. It doesn't have to be a classic mystery with detectives, clues, murder, or theft. If it's mysterious, uncertain, or unknown, take us on a journey through the dark and shine a bit of light on the hidden—and maybe even startling—truth.

Sub-genres: Amateur sleuth (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*), cozy/whodunit (Agatha Christie), crime (*The Departed*), legal/medical (*A Few Good Men*), noir (*Blade Runner*), police procedural (*Silence of the Lambs*), professional sleuth (Sherlock Holmes), supernatural (*The Woman in Black*), psychological horror (*Sphere*)

TECHNO TUESDAY: As your week hits its stride, don't be afraid to ask, "What if..." What if NASA really is covering for the aliens? What if your new cell phone comes with a free brain implant? What if a radioactive spider gives you superpowers? What if time travel vacations are a thing of the past? With Havok, even the mysteries of the universe aren't too great to explore over your morning cup of coffee.

Sub-genres: Hard sci-fi (*The Martian*), soft sci-fi (*Spider-Man*), military (*Starship Troopers*), space opera (*Star Wars*, *Dune*), steampunk (*The Time Machine*), cyber/bio/nanopunk (*The Matrix*), voyages extraordinaire (Jules Verne), gothic (*Frankenstein's Monster*), dystopian (*The Hunger Games*)

WACKY WEDNESDAY: Halfway done, and who couldn't use a little humor over their lunch break? Well, embrace the lighter side of Havok as you laugh your stress away, 1,000 words at a time. Whether you're running alongside a hilariously unfortunate private eye, hitching a ride across the galaxy, helping a kid defend his home from Christmas burglars, enjoying a "sick day" with a high school adventurer, or going on an epic quest to find a holy grail, you can rest assured that your adventure will be anything but serious.

Sub-genres: Forget 'em! What would Wacky Wednesday be with a bunch of rules? If it's funny, lighthearted, and downright entertaining, you're hitting the mark.

THRILLER THURSDAY: As your week races to a close, get caught up in some heart-pumping excitement. Run down a terrorist before time runs out. Infiltrate a secret society before they collect the last relic. Untangle a sociopath's plot before he pins the whole thing on you. Take down a crime boss before he takes you down. And do it all before your kids wake up from their afternoon nap.

Sub-genres: Action (*James Bond*), adventure (*Indiana Jones*), conspiracy (*The Da Vinci Code*), crime (*Die Hard*), medical (*Outbreak*), man vs. nature (*Jaws*, *Twister*)

FANTASY FRIDAY: TGI fantasy! Now, sit back and drift into another world filled with high elves, amateur wizards, magic wardrobes, suave vampires, and gun-slinging monster hunters. With Havok, there's no limit to how far the story will take you as you kick your feet up and usher in another fantastic weekend.

Sub-genres: Fairy tales (*Cinderella*), horror (*Dracula*), high fantasy (*The Lord of the Rings*), low fantasy (*Harry Potter*), magical realism (*Midnight in Paris*), medieval (*A Game of Thrones*), portal (*The Chronicles of Narnia*), urban/paranormal (*The Dresden Files*)