

DEMOMODE

OF LITERATURE

30+

fall & winter

BOOKS TO READ

Nick Sider

The success story of Internationally known artist, Nick Sider, a self-taught acrylic painter, based out of New York City.





Eugène Delacroix

Liberty Leading the People, oil on canvas by
Eugène Delacroix, 1830; in the Louvre, Paris.
Josse Christophel/Alamy (Britannica.com)

Liberty Leading the People, an oil painting (1830) by French artist Eugène Delacroix commemorating the July Revolution in Paris that removed Charles X, the restored Bourbon king, from the throne. The heroic scene of rebellion was initially received with mixed reviews, but it became one of Delacroix's most popular paintings, an emblem of the July Revolution and of justified revolt. Delacroix finished the painting in three months, and it was shown with 23 other revolution-inspired works at the 1831 Salon, an annual exhibition of French art held at the Louvre. Yet Delacroix, by combining realism and idealism and by applying his characteristically expressive brushwork, created a more modern scene that contrasted with those of his competitors. Contemporary critics and viewers were nonetheless divided on whether the painting was heroic or distasteful.

CONTENTS



HEAVY IS THE HEAD BY KATRINA N. LEWIS

Katrina N. Lewis is an indie author who enjoys writing all things fiction - fantasy, romance, sci-fi, drama, you name it! 'Heavy is the Head' written by Author Katrina is a must-read for this winter.



A WICKED WIND BY NICHOLAS MCINTIRE

A Wicked Wind, written by Author Nicholas McIntire, is epic fantasy at its best. A worthy and almost impossible to put down the second book in the Archanium Codex saga series.

MYSTERIES + ROMANCE + THRILLERS + SCIENCE FICTION

04 EDITOR'S NOTE

DE MODE OF LITERATURE Editor in Chief Anushka Singh has something to share that made her release the 2nd Literature issue.

09 BOOKS TO READ THIS WINTER

Great writers do it with a purpose in order to do better and finish every single book. A simple question for all the writers, why do you write?

22 TOP 3 FANTASY NOVELS: OUR PICKS

Dirge of the Dead by Reed Logan Westgate on Pg. 22
Remnants of Blood by H.F. Cunningham on Pg. 43
Hale: The Rise of the Griffins by J.K. Noble on Pg. 65



08 EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS



LITERATURE JOURNEY OF BRILLIANT AUTHORS

29 ART BY AN EMERGING ARTISANS

Great writers do it with a purpose in order to do better and finish every single book. A simple question for all the writers, why do you write?

71 BEST NEW READS FOR YOUR CHILD

'El Lechon Concho' by Author Jennifer S. Segarra and 'Santa's New Team' by Author Trevor M.K. Airey. The beautiful illustrations and sweet stories will leave you and your children feeling full of the holiday spirit.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Anushka Singh
C.E.O & CO-CHIEF EDITOR Nikhil Chandra Rana

GRAPHIC DESIGNER Vihaan Malhotra (Kolkata, India) Nick (Bangkok, Thailand)

JOURNALIST John Stiles (Bangkok, Thailand)

JOURNALIST Jeremiah Boulware (Bangkok, Thailand)

JOURNALIST Azusa Uchida (Japan)

JOURNALIST Michael Foust (Paris, France)

JOURNALIST Christina Henningstad (Paris, France)

MAGAZINE DISTRIBUTION MODEL OF DE MODE

DE MODE magazine can be distributed through the mail or free distribution on authorized websites. The subscription business model of DE MODE for distribution fall into two main categories.

Non-paid publication means, there is no selling price and issues are given away for free, for example in street dispensers, airline in-flight magazines, or included with other products or publications.

Non-paid downloads, means, there is no download price and issues can be downloaded from the official website of DE MODE NEWS BUREAU or from website of authorized organizations.

All rights reserved throughout the world. Reproduction in any manner is prohibited.

Published by: Kings Federation International Group
Website:
www.kingsfederationinternational.com
Registered Head Office: M-15, Saltee Plaza, Jessore Road, South Dum Dum, Kolkata India 700080
Email: news@demodemagazine.com

Website:
www.demodemagazine.com
Ph: +91-33-46037667 (IND), +66-983-512-911 (THAILAND)
Satellite Offices: Thailand, France & United States

To subscribe,
Log on to
www.demodemagazine.com and fill the subscription form.
Email:
news@demodemagazine.com

●● DE MODE OF LITERATURE

VOLUME IV. ISSUE XXIV

A KFI GROUP PUBLICATION

FROM THE EDITOR

Anushka Singh
Chief Editor, DE MODE OF LITERATURE

OCT-NOV-DEC 2021 GLOBAL ISSUE



Dear Readers,

From disruptive culture to out-of-this-world literature, this issue celebrates the contribution of brilliant writers and their relentless need to question the way things work. The idea to come up with a separate literature issue in between fashion publications that we were already putting out on the stands since 2018 was very quick and unpredicted by the publishing company. It took one complete week to decide over separating the fashion issue and the literature issue, and finally, after long rounds of tea & coffee and unwanted arguments, the team was very confident about the

literature issue. So, hereby we proudly present you the second literature issue of DE MODE for the months Oct-Nov-Dec 2021.

An internationally known artist, Nick Sider, is a self-taught acrylic painter, based out of New York City. Since the age of 5, Sider knew he wanted to be a painter. He grew up with a love and passion for art but decided to pursue other interests after leaving high school. At the age of 25, Sider decided to quit his job, teaching himself to paint, and begin to pursue his childhood dream of becoming an artist. Read his interview with DE MODE on Page 5.

From gripping thrillers to literary gems, here are 25+ reads for winter by brilliant authors Gosia Nealon, Marie Jones, Cher Bonfis, Dominic Denvers, KT Luca, Tobi Rubinstein, Mitch Grey, Loni Hoots, Jeff Polak, Reed Logan Westgate, JoDee Neathery, Lainey Cameron, Sydnie Beaupre, Nadine Thompson, Mihret Adal Gidi, Shami Stovall, HF Cunningham, Michael Okeefe, Katrina Lewis, Len Handeland and others.

Enjoy reading DE MODE OF LITERATURE VOL IV. ISSUE XXIV and pick your top choices from the list of books inside.

DE MODE
OF LITERATURE - WORLD'S NO.1 LITERATURE MAGAZINE

NICK SIDER

Internationally known artist, Nick Sider, is a self-taught acrylic painter based out of New York City. He paints in a hyperrealistic style, attempting to create subjects that appear as though they are alive on the canvases.

SIDER has gained interest from collectors all over the world, particularly for his large Lion and Tiger Paintings. While he only began painting at the age of 25, Nick Sider had a dream of becoming a professional artist ever since he was a child growing up in Ontario, Canada.

Sider grew up with a love and passion for art, obsessively drawing a multitude of subjects from animals to comic books to cartoon illustrations. He had big respect for wildlife artists and was always collecting books and images of lions and tigers to use as inspiration. Sider was also very impacted by Disney animation, particularly *The Lion King*. He won an award in Kindergarten for drawing a lion and quickly decided he wanted to be an artist when he grew up.

His family moved from Canada to the United States in 1996 and Sider continued to develop a love for drawing. He was quickly recognized in school for his artistic ability and began competing in school art competitions. As the school continued, Sider gained other interests and, after several unfortunate art class experiences, decided not to study art after high school. He graduated college with a theology degree and worked with charities and churches for nearly 3 years. Eventually, Sider knew that something was missing in his life and needed to make a change.

At the age of 25, Sider decided to quit his job and

begin to pursue his childhood dream of becoming an artist. He was incredibly fortunate to have parents that both supported and encouraged this decision. His mother, who was a talented painter, gave him the set of her old set of paints and paintbrushes for him to use. While he had a great deal of experience with graphite and drawing, Sider had done very little painting. So he spent the next year teaching himself to paint while working two part-time jobs. Channeling his inner child, Sider naturally began painting wildlife, specifically lions and tigers. After selling his first few paintings, he decided to relocate to New York City in 2014 with the dream of showing in a prominent art gallery in Manhattan. Through several years of working temp jobs, doing caricatures as a side hustle, and getting the occasional commissioned painting, Sider was finding little success going the art gallery route. So he decided to make a shift and focus on building a social media presence, a decision that eventually launched his career.

In 2016, Sider began creating a 5ft hyperrealistic self-portrait and posted updates of the painting on Facebook and Instagram. Soon a video of Sider's self-portrait and other artwork went viral online and received over 10 million views. Thanks to several more viral videos on social media, Sider began to gain international recognition for his hyperrealistic paintings. This was followed by his very first solo show in NYC in the summer of 2016. He moved to a new studio in Brooklyn, NYC, and was able to start painting full-time.



FOR PURCHASING HIS ARTWORK VISIT WWW.NICKSIDER.COM

While experimenting with a multitude of subject matter, Sider has always maintained a hyperrealistic style, attempting to create paintings that extend beyond what a photograph could ever capture. "My favorite moment while painting is when a subject on my canvas begins to come alive." His main goal for his paintings is to use detail and color to create the illusion of life spawning from the canvas. In 2017, Nick Sider began working on a series of large-scale Lion and Tiger Paintings as an ode to his childhood obsession with drawing big cats. He loved the idea of creating paintings that his kid self would love to see in a gallery.

In 2018, Sider threw his own Solo Show in Manhattan, NYC, and continued to gain recognition for his Lion and Tiger Series. Over the next few years, he developed a waitlist for these paintings as they gained global popularity. In 2021, Sider finally achieved the goal he set for himself when he first moved to New York 7 years prior. He was approached by Galerie Bartoux, an internationally acclaimed gallery based out of Paris, France. With locations all over the world, Sider began showing in their Manhattan location on Central Park.

2022 looks to be a big year for Nick Sider as he will have his very first Museum Show at the Zilman Art Museum in Maine. He also hopes to expand his global appeal with plans to show his work publicly around the world through Galerie Bartoux. Sider currently works in his studio in Manhattan.



Was there a pivotal moment when you decided to follow your path as an artist?

- I wanted to be an artist ever since I can remember. However, when I turned 25 I decided to pursue art as a career. I had gone on a vacation to Jamaica and remember I didn't like telling people what I did for a living. I told myself I wanted a job that I was proud to tell other people about and that felt like me. I came back home, quit my job, and started to pursue a career as an artist.

Can you tell us the process of making your work?

- My paintings often start with a grid system so that I can have the correct proportions. When I look at someone's artwork, the proportions are always the first thing I notice. If they are just a little off, you can tell immediately. I almost always start painting the eyes of a subject. I often say if the eyes are correct, the rest of the painting will work out. I then continue the painting using a style I created that focuses on the building of thin layers rather than blending the paint together. This creates a great deal of depth and color variation within the painting.

What is your definition of art career success?

- My definition of art career success is loving your art and the process of creating it, while being able to make a living at it. I know of artists who have achieved great financial success with their artwork, but do not enjoy creating the art. To me, the true success lies in doing what you love and, hopefully, getting paid to do it.

Who are your biggest influences?

- As a kid, I was highly influenced by wildlife artists like Robert Bateman and Alan Hunt. Also, have great respect for Dali and Picasso as they both had amazing technical skill and yet were able to develop incredibly unique artistic styles.

How do you navigate the art world?

- I like to be informed about it, but not take it too seriously. The art market is very controlled by trends and money. While I like to know about the current art market, and am inevitably a part of it, I never want it to dictate my artwork decisions or practice.

What brushes do you use?

- All different kinds... some of my favorite brushes are old ones where the ends are worn down. This allows for a dry brush technique I often use in my paintings. I load the paintbrush, brush off most of the paint, and then lightly brush the paint onto the canvas to create a subtle soft layer.

Which current art world trends are you following?

- I don't know of any current trends I am following. I do see Hyperrealism becoming more and more popular, but I was not aware of this when I began painting in this style.

If you mentored younger artists who are beginning their art careers, what single most important piece of advice would you offer?

- I would tell them to find a style of art they love creating. To be successful, you have to work long hours and produce a great deal of art. So make sure you love making it.

What invaluable art business lesson did you learn in the past year that took your career to the next level?

- I learned the value of investing in myself and my practice. If you trust yourself, work hard, and believe in what you're doing...invest in yourself. Bet on yourself.

Do you have an essential philosophy that guides you in your creative expression?

- I always strive to challenge myself with each new painting. The moment when it gets too easy, I get bored and I need to move on.

What personality trait do you have that has been most helpful in your art career?

- I have trouble focusing on many things at once, but have always been good at being laser focused on one thing at a time. Lucky for me, that works for puzzles and painting.

What art marketing activity do you put into practice regularly that works most successfully for you?

- I always think about my social media following and what would be interesting for them to see. I often try to come up with fun, different ways to share my painting process through photos and video.

What famous artist from history would you like to spend a day with and what would you do together?

- I would spend a day with Picasso and we'd paint portraits of each other.

Do you have a favorite photograph or painting, which inspires you?

- Probably Guernica by Picasso.

How do you feel to be on DE MODE?

- I am both honored and excited!



10 NEW BOOKS TO READ THIS FALL

- Those We Trust by Marie Jones
- The Last Sketch by Gosia Nealon
- Who Was Killed by Cher Bonfis
- The Outcast by K.T. Luca
- The House of Faith & Fashion by Tobi Rubinstein
- How to Hire And Keep Great People by Mitch Gray
- If You're Gonna Be There by Loni Hoots
- Dirge Of The Dead by Reed Logan Westgate
- First Second Coming by Jeff Pollak
- The Society Of Eight by Dominic Danvers

Those We Trust

BY AUTHOR MARIE JONES

Broken and humiliated by her husband of ten years leaving her unexpectedly, Sophia Meadows muddles through her daily routine—writing computer programs and rarely leaving the house. That is until an old friend from the university shows up on her door with an offer she can't refuse: a chance to get away and heal in the Scottish Highlands of Inverness by flat-sitting. Yet once she arrives, she soon discovers the offer is not what she bargained for: A police surveillance team is watching her every move and a mysterious man is after the contents of a safe hidden in a wall. After a break-in at the apartment, her path collides with DI Marcus Armstrong, the man in charge of the apartment surveillance. Sophia is swept into an investigation of fraud involving her university friend and into a sudden attraction with the handsome DI who finds himself drawn to her even though she's a suspect in his case. With evidence piling up against her and her friend and the attraction between her and Marcus growing stronger, Sophia is forced to confront her broken heart and find a way to clear her name. In a tangled web of secrets and clues, can she and the DI work through their attraction and learn to trust each other in time to stop a criminal and possibly save a life?

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR MARIE JONES



Marie is a British writer, based in the southeast of England. Her book, *Those We Trust*, was released with GenZ Publishing in May 2021 and has recently been awarded the top 5-star award from Readers Favorite and numerous 5-star reviews. Her previously published book also was awarded a 5-star award.

She has loved writing with a passion from a very young age and loved nothing more than writing stories in her notebook. Since then, she has achieved a diploma in creative writing. In between having the fun and joy of writing stories, Marie is one of those crazy fitness girls and has raised money for charities through runs and climbing mountains. She is also mum to two loud but lovely children.



WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEWS:

- Amazing
Just finished this book and I would highly recommend it if you like well-written and easy-to-read books. It's a lovely mix of romance, mystery, and suspense. Great characters and the storyline keeps you guessing. I read at least 30 books every year and this has been one of the best so far.
- Pam Parker (Reviewed in Australia)
- Mystery & romance in beautiful Scotland
I really enjoyed this book. Had to force me to put it down from time to time as I didn't want to finish it too quickly. As it's an easy read it's easily done otherwise. If you are looking for some romance mixed up with suspense and mystery then this is the book! Can't wait for book number two.
- Hedvig (Reviewed in Sweden)
- An engaging page-turner
This twisty plot kept me turning the pages but what always engages me in a book is believable, interesting characters which this book really nailed. I also loved the evocative descriptions of the Scottish landscape.
- Kate Brushwood (Reviewed in UK)
- Well written and easy to follow but still mysterious
This was a great read. I like detective type stories anyway and so it's a genre that I would buy. I'm a Scot so relate to the places. Definitely worth getting. I hope there will be follow up books so the story can continue. Definitely 10/10 for this book
- Kim Fitzwater (Reviewed in UK)

Connect with Author Marie Jones socially on

 56970347-those-we-trust  www.mariejonesbritishwriter.com

The Last Sketch

BY AUTHOR GOSIA NEALON

Poland, 1944. Wanda Odwaga will never stop resisting. As the Nazis occupy her beloved homeland, the twenty-three-year-old artist vows to do whatever it takes to help the underground movement mobilize against Hitler's forces. But she's devastated when the Gestapo storms her house in search of rebel leaders, killing her heroic father and leaving the face of his murderer forever etched in her mind.

New York. Finn Keller longs to balance the scales. Having escaped Germany with his mother as a teen, he's disgusted his estranged twin brother has become a ruthless Nazi henchman with a vicious reputation. So when a covert government agency approaches him with a dangerous undercover mission, Finn willingly risks his life to play his part in turning the tide of war.

Still grieving her unforgivable loss, Wanda's thirst for revenge takes an unexpected leap forward when she once again encounters her father's killer. And as Finn dives deeply into the role of impersonating his cold-hearted sibling, he's captivated by the beautiful Polish woman frozen in front of him... her eyes blazing with the promise of murder.

Can these two players in a deadly game survive the ravages of a sadistic conflict?

The Last Sketch is a breathtaking World War II historical fiction novel. If you like engaging characters, exhilarating espionage, and a dash of enemy-to-lovers romance, then you'll enjoy Gosia Nealon's powerful drama.

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR GOSIA NEALON

While Gosia Nealon is a proud New Yorker, she was born and raised in Poland. Her journey to the Big Apple revealed a wealth of cultural differences, but also the values that connect us all. Like the fierce desire to protect family, find love, and ultimately, discover who we are and why we're here.

Gosia's award-winning short stories have always delved into life's biggest questions, but it was the drama, sacrifice, and tragedy of WWII that led her to pen her debut novel, *The Last Sketch*.

Growing up in Poland, Gosia heard many firsthand accounts of the war, told from a perspective rarely captured in mainstream literature. She was compelled to breathe life into Wanda and Finn, two young people falling in love amid a terrifying conflict that would change the world forever.

When Gosia isn't tapping away at her laptop she's often



walking the streets of New York. With her husband and two young sons in tow, they search for the most succulent pierogi, transporting them back to the cobble streets of Gosia's childhood.

WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEW:

- Gosia Nealon writes from the heart in *The Last Sketch*, an incredibly moving piece of historical fiction picking up near the end of World War II. The *Last Sketch* is an action-packed story that dots all the i's and crosses all the t's."—*Indies Today*

- The *Last Sketch* is a spectacular debut novel, full of brilliant details, profound characters, and a unique plot infused with intrigue. The heartfelt depiction of life during trying times of love, loss, and war brought me to the edge of my seat. I highly recommend this captivating novel to all fans of Historical Fiction. —*Shari J. Ryan, USA Today Bestselling Author of Last Words*



- "The *Last Sketch* is a powerful yet beautifully written novel recounting one of the worst periods in human history. —*Steven Moore, Amazon Bestselling Author*

- The author did a wonderful job of vividly painting Poland in 1944. She also breathed life into her characters. Their fears and struggles turned into mine.

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR GOSIA NEALON

Is writing your passion or emotion?

When I was in high school, my articles were regularly published in a national ecological magazine, and writing has been my passion since then. I took a break during my college years, but I knew that I would be back to it one day.

What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I turned 39, and I told myself that it was time to do it. I had so many doubts, but I kept moving forward and writing from my heart, and the fact that I won Fourth Place in the Genre Short Story category in the 89th Annual Writer's Digest Writing Competition helped me believe in myself.

How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing inspires me to learn from history and to express my feelings.

Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in awards and rewards because winning can motivate and help you believe more in yourself. But I try to keep in mind that all competitions are subjective.

What is your favorite Quote?

"The future starts today, not tomorrow."
— Pope John Paul II

How can you bring change to the literature world?

I believe that the best I can do is to write from the heart.

How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing is an excellent way to express my love for history uniquely.

For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

For me, writing means fulfilling my dreams.

How do you feel about being an author?

I love every second of it. It's like having your dream job.

Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I write from the heart and what I believe historical fiction fans would be able to enjoy it.

Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Yes, of course, there are many different genres of writing in which you do not need to feel emotions strongly.

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I read many books, do internet research and talk to people who have extensive knowledge.

I spent a long time researching and then thinking about it before beginning a book.

Do you have any upcoming books?

Yes, I'm currently working on my second novel set during Warsaw's Uprising in 1944.

Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Rewards. Writing is a gift and the best reward for a writer is knowing their book has been read and enjoyed. The only I would like is for one person to read and enjoy my story. If that does happen then I will be quite happy knowing for one brief moment I did something that was worthwhile.

How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm thrilled to have this fantastic opportunity!

GET YOUR COPY OF THE LAST SKETCH
BY AUTHOR GOSIA NEALON



Amazon.com: The Last Sketch: A World War II Novel Set in Warsaw and Montauk eBook : Nealon, Gosia: Kindle Store

The Last Sketch | Universal Book Links Help You Find Books at Your Favorite Store! (books2read.com)

www.gosianealon.com  [gosian18](https://www.instagram.com/gosian18)

Who Was Killed?

BY AUTHOR CHER BONFIS

'Who Was Killed?' is a murder mystery that requires the reader to put their powers of deduction to good use. The author also ensures its modernity by introducing feminist themes and highlighting potential dangers and desires, which, even in liberated western societies, can still shackle women to outdated cultural norms.

The book begins with a murder. The reader does not know if the murderer is male or female, nor do they know who has been murdered. Throughout the book, several characters could be candidates for the murderer and the murdered. The reader will not know the answer until the end of the book. Ultimately there are several deaths, and although one character remains physically alive at the end of the story, the life, they had lived is no longer available to them, in effect that life is dead. So, who really killed who?

The book describes the new freedoms that women have acquired over the last half-century, from being the possession of their father's or husband. and how some, in the modern era, have taken the 'Me Too' movement and turned it into a weapon to harm innocent men. Currently, the mere idea that a person has been involved, in any way, with some sexual impropriety, is enough to wreck their life. The story explores the evolution of humankind and the evolution of relationships. It speaks to the confusion of many men, who have yet to come to terms with the speed of change.

A corrupt policeman and a disloyal, adulterous, spouse conspire to ruin the life of a loyal and loving man. This is a recipe for a roller coaster ride through the lives of these people. The timeline of the story begins in 1973 and continues until around 2016. Forty-three years. The story takes the reader on a journey from Cheltenham, to London, to Yorkshire, to The West Country in England, Then into Wales and Snowdonia. Across Europe and around the Mediterranean. Then as far as Hong Kong, and to

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR CHER BONFIS

Born into a rich elegant world where copious amounts of money cushioned every breath...No, sorry, that was a lie. Let us begin again... Born into absolute poverty in a cheap, ugly, bed and breakfast, which was on the backside of Blackpool, during the off-season, to a single-parent mother, who was on benefits... Sorry that was another lie... Is it worth beginning again? Probably not, for the words written here, or in some newspaper, would not allow you to access the mind of this author. If you want to know about this person best you read the things this person writes. Trivia over details of this life are irrelevant. What you should know is that there is much gratitude for your interest and there is hope that you have found something rewarding. If you believe in love and kindness. If you believe everyone deserves a chance to live a happy life then you and Cher Bonfis have a lot in common. Word by word we will strive to make things better. So thank you for stopping by, and may all good things be yours.

I have written, and I have published for others, for many years.



Louisiana in The United States of America. The main protagonists are Arwyn, a school teacher, and Douglas a successful Jazz musician. They fall in love at college, they conduct, what is a secret affair, unknown to their college friends. Later they go their separate ways. They live their lives and product families. Thirty and more years pass and, by chance, they come back together, as adults, who have been disappointed by the lives they have led.

Arwyn is still searching for what she wants, she does not find it in Douglas. She thinks she finds it a policeman, Raymond. His involvement plunges the whole story into the darkest, and most evil of depths, and everything falls into a disaster of catastrophic proportions.

One reviewer said: I always love books that can tug me in and hold me there. Read this please and then tell me when you do, because I'm dying to talk to someone about this! For those looking for something more from a murder mystery reading choice, 'Who Was Killed?' is guaranteed to hit the mark.

Now I am so much older I have decided to write like me, for the first time. Experiences I have seen as an outsider, and experiences where I have been the insider, of an enormous number of events, I now find give me reams of tales to tell. I have been putting off this part of my life, I have been waiting until I had some experience of life. Then the pandemic was upon us, and my world stopped, and for the first time, I paused, and looked over my shoulder, and realized I have done many things, and have many stories which may entertain, and possibly inform others. In that eighteen months of lockdown, I became a pensioner. I went to a funeral of my neighbor and looking around the cemetery I realized that there were many folks there who were much younger than me when they died, so I thought 'I better get my skates on, and get these on paper before it is too late'.

- CHER BONFIS

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR CHER BONFIS

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I have written a lot, this book is the first 'as me'. I have always thought after lived a bit, if I had some stories to tell I would. The pandemic stopped everything, I looked back over my life. So I have made a start. 'WHO WAS KILLED?' is published. I have another ready, I have the next.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

Well I have been in, think twenty five countries, if they were 'Pilgrimages' I don't know. Certainly the experiences filter into the stories.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

It actually lowers my blood pressure. When I read back what I have written that does both.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

For me, I am not interested in any celebrity. I want people to read my stories. Not me. As for other authors, they are what they are. Sure people can, with effort, modify their behavior, but people are what they are. People are best being what they are.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

What powers my writing? I have so many tales to tell. I have seen a lot of things, and I want to write them before I run out of time. I do not know if the stories will interest anyone, there are many books, many great writers, maybe some folk will find something they like in my meager offer.

Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

Always until now.

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

It is a mix. I know what I want to say, I realise that wrapping that in a container that readers like will help me to put across the story and hopefully give the stories an audience.

Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

It has to be said that AI computers have written books. Can a computer feel? Well computers write books using all the emotion that went into writing all the books that the algorithm ingests. Logic can write text books on engineering. Emotion writes great literature.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

Currently one of each.

What does literary success look like to you?

This morning I received this message from a woman I have never met 'I bought three books myself, gave one to my daughter, another to my son and the last, but not least, my wee sis, she doesn't read at all, but she read your book lol xx'

What's the best way to market your books?

Whatever you sell 80% is the marketing. Never rely on one angle, the publisher, the PR folk, roll up your sleeves and make a list of anyone who might be interested in what you offer. Then let them know about it.

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

The books are in my head. I research to make sure my memory, and the 'facts', line up. eg 'The long hot summer of 1976, in the south of England.' True/False? Or was it long and wet? That kind of thing.

WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEW:

- I have read a lot of books. Nothing I have ever read prepared me for the emotional storm of "WHO WAS KILLED?" by Cher Bonfis. On one page you see all from Arwyn's perspective, the next the whole view is from Douglas's eyes. Like the murder, (it is impossible to decide who was murdered, and who did the murder, until the end) it is not possible to side with either protagonist. Some readers may find it easier to take sides on the view of Raymond, as the 'baddy', however, that too could be negotiable with some, who may just find him pragmatic. I read it in one session, I really did not what to put the book down. Cleverly constructed, clearly written, and none of Cher's sentences begin with a conjunction, amazing in modern literature. I enjoyed this work immensely, it is certainly the best that I have read this year. Although a very different book, I found it as enthralling as Douglas Stuart's 'Shuggie Bain'. I am sure many will enjoy this excellent novel "Who Was Killed?"

GET YOUR COPY OF WHO WAS KILLED?
BY AUTHOR CHER BONFIS

www.amazon.com
www.amazon.co.uk
www.orellfuessli.ch
www.waterstones.com
www.dymocks.com.au
www.barnesandnoble.com

The Outcast

BY AUTHOR K. T. LUCA



It was said, in all the Fairy history books, that they had once lived alongside humans as elves until the first massacre for their wings. The stories told of a night when witches seeking higher magic had raided the elven homes and ripped their wings from their backs. They didn't know what the reason was for this sudden betrayal, but back then, the fairies hadn't evolved any offensive magic to help them under such an attack. Their only choice had been to run, as quickly as they could, and escape to the safety of the woods where they stayed protected for the centuries to come. Since then, they had dispersed further into smaller woodland settlements while the original tree city became the metropolis of their kingdom.

The magic surrounding the kingdom prevented those that lived inside from being detected by the outside world, the power only waning a little once every hundred years. This has allowed the war that the massacre created to cease in those periods of magical protection, only repeating once a century. This still costs both witches and fairies a great deal.

Lily Rosales, a fairy born without wings and outcast from her people because of it, is selected to expose herself to great danger and disguise herself as a witch to discover their plans for the next saga of the war which is due to

occur in five years. Sent into the settlement of witches closest to their woodland home, Lily is left to discover as much as she can without being detected.

The Outcast is a discovery of self while also addressing discrimination, the twists of history telling, and preconceptions between people. It follows Lily Rosales and her two cat companions through insecurity, self-discovery, and friendship while she fights to find the truth so she can finally be of some use and help her loved ones live through the upcoming war.

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR K. T. LUCA

K.T. Luca is an upcoming author with their new book, The Outcast, receiving 5-star reviews regularly since its publish date. While this isn't their first book, which was a 4-5 star book Silence of the Apocalypse: Journey Home, it is the one which they have put considerable imagination and world-building into. Having always been an avid reader of fantasy genres, K.T. Luca's imagination led them down the fantasy route with their writing. They have spent the last fifteen years honing their writing skills through online writing communities where they have increased their skills of creating characters, backstories, and plots.

Before publishing their first books, K.T. Luca obtained a graduate degree in Animal Management and Science, which they have incorporated into their designs of new and mystical creatures within the world of Ryvalia where The Outcast is set. Ryvalia is an ever-growing world alternative to our own; instead of our industrial revolutions, Ryvalia saw magical ones leading to the evolution of multiple magic races, some of which are featured in The Outcast, others planning to be featured in future books.

K.T. is a proud gender fluid person who goes by pronouns of they/them or she/her, though is still exploring their

relationship with gender. When they are not writing and losing themselves in Ryvalia, K.T. spends most of their time discovering new aspects of Japanese culture via their media, practicing Aikido and kickboxing with their partner, and creating yet more enrichment and entertainment for their cat, Pixie.



The Outcast is available through Amazon both in paperback and Kindle editions. It is also free to read for anyone with Kindle Unlimited.
www.amazon.co.uk

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

As a dyslexic, my writing skills as a child were lower than I wished. My first intention upon taking up writing was simply to increase my literacy skills. I had no idea it would lead to my greatest passion. I've since created characters that have carried me through emotional rollercoasters and met others who have motivated me to heighten my writing quality.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I have experienced so many as a reader, but I experience deeper ones as a writer. For example, one character I have written for years, Kai T. DeLuca-Nero, allowed me to explore my mental health, insecurities, joys, and more with a compassionate mind I didn't view myself with.

What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

I cannot say that I have witnessed anything unethical within the publishing industry. I did have trouble getting any attention from publishers as I could not afford a recognized or professional editor. However, there are methods of self-publishing facilitated in the modern online world so I went down this route.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

For me, writing is soothing, exciting, and as vital to me as breathing. I use my world building and writing to relax, escape from the stresses of reality, and to settle my mind. Writing only exhausts me when I am forcing myself to write something I cannot connect with.

What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The biggest trap I found was expecting the first draft to be perfect. It's easy to look at a first draft, think it's awful, and just scrap it. Never scraping anything would be my biggest advice. Even if you change it up and redo it one hundred times over, you will still have that original idea.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

Personally, I think some confidence helps. You at least need to be confident enough in yourself and your writing to just keep going no matter how many edits you need to make. You also need the confidence to put yourself out there when it comes to publishing as it does open you to the public domain which is unpredictable.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

My biggest Kryptonite would be my cat. She

likes to lie on my arms or the keyboard when I sit down to write. I am immediately drawn away from writing to give her fuss and tell her how beautiful she is.

Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

Reader's block isn't something I've really had too much trouble with. Writer's block, however, is something I bump into quite a lot. Sometimes it is as simple as being unable to come up with the best description, other times it's not knowing how the story is going to get to the next plot point without a time skip.

Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

K.T. Luca is a pseudonym. It's from the Kai who I mentioned in literary journeys. I took the base of this name K.T. Luca as it reminds me to always keep fighting and never give up.

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

Original. I have created the entire world of Ryvalia where this book is set and I have designed everything involved. As a reader, I want to know how characters develop and see what the author saw in their mind. I want to be surprised by twists and revelations, and that is what I hope to bring forward in my own writing.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

Honestly, it didn't. I still break the skeleton of the book down into bullet points as and when the scene is how I want it in my mind. I also never force myself to write, if I am not feeling it or have writer's block, I will take a break.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

Other than the two sequels to *The Outcast* which are in the works, I have five other stories in their skeleton phase. These delve into other aspects of Ryvalia and reveal more of the lore and delights of the magical land.

What does literary success look like to you?

If I could make enough to fund a life where I could write as a regular job that would be ideal, however, success would be my books in a bookshop and people finding the same kind of strength in my books as I find in the books I read.

How do you feel about being featured in DE MODE?

I would be ecstatic. This book is my proudest achievement so far and to have the honor of being featured in such a spotlight would be like a dream come true.

The House Of Faith & Fashion

BY AUTHOR TOBI RUBINSTEIN

Tobi Rubinstein's newest book explores two ordinarily unrelated paths, Faith and Fashion, merging them to create something uniquely her own within the collection of essays that will charm and intrigue the reader.

The cover was designed by acclaimed artist, Elizabeth Sutton, as an artistic visualization of the clothing candy store that awaits the reader inside. Through The House of Faith and Fashion, Tobi works to reveal G-d's presence in fashion, jewelry, art, beauty, and style through the unique lens of Jewish teachings.

Through her cancer diagnosis and the challenges of treatment, Tobi created an extraordinary chronicle of faith and fashion that elevates the creative process to divine proportions. Her collection of thoughtful, profound, and sometimes poignant essays illustrate to readers how the creation of fashion and art can become a channel through which to express one's faith and connection with their spirituality.

"Tobi Rubinstein is an extraordinary New York woman with a fabulous style. She connects to the spirit of the ensemble as well as how it will look on the body... That's a magic combination!" - Claude Sabbah, former head designer for TATI stores, Paris.

Tobi's work with top international designers, fashion editors, jewelers, artists, and influencers like Manolo Blahnik, Carolina Herrera, Iris Apfel, CFDA, David Datuna, Chanel, and Miss Universe. Tobi also weaves spiritual awareness into mega-events like The Met Ball and NYFW to create an opus that takes a fresh new look at style and spirituality.

"When I think of fashion there are dozens of people that cross my mind. But when I think of Faith & Fashion together there's only one name that stand-alone, Tobi Rubinstein! She is a true pioneer and one who's Manolo Blahnik's will be very hard to fill " - Nolé Marin - celebrity agent, a judge on America's Next Top Model and Miss USA

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR TOBI RUBINSTEIN

Tobi began her esteemed career in fashion by being recruited by an exclusive manufacturer for Victoria's Secret and JC Penney. She then moved on to partnering with Nicole Miller for Childrenswear and developing Crunch Gym's activewear line. In 2001 TR and her partners created "Chedda", an innovative men's urban hip hop brand specifically designed for mass-market giant K-Mart and the first women-owned urban brand of its kind. In 2009, The House of Faith and Fashion was her step into reality TV series for NBC and a successful lecture and radio series. Lifestyle, fashion, and faith commentator with multiple appearances on WABC,



WNBC, Lifetime, I24, Huffington Post, Page Six, and other national and international media outlets. The goal is consistently fusing spirituality with fashion and other creative outlets, interviewing industry personalities as Patricia Fields, Badgley Mishka, Jonathan Adler, and others about their faith within their craft. In 2014, The Tahor Group was founded upon the idea that fashion needs to step off the traditional runway onto the more creative ground. Closing Central Park South for a moving fashion show with horses and carriages during NYFW was the start of many "out of the box" collaborations. Stitched along this path, as an Orthodox Jewish woman, after becoming a Rebbitzin, she stepped out of the box and was ordained, finding deeper meaning by an in-depth study of Jewish thought and teaching. It led to the combination of both her loves into one solid purpose.



Becoming an author began as a weekly column for a local newspaper and flourished into a book that will become a series as her quest to elevate the creative process to divine heights continues to be explored.

Tobi is a lifelong leader in philanthropy and charities. She has done fundraising and board service for various organizations as Steven Spielberg's Children at Heart, United Nation's Montessori School, Tel Hashomer Hospital, Sharre Tzedek Hospital, and OR Movement. She is also director of the public relations team for Gedale Fenster, Breslov Miami.

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

My initial thought was that I was running out of time in my procrastination because my dr just informed me about my cancer diagnosis. My brain shifted to survival mode which translates to the urgency to start and complete this book.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

My lifelong pilgrimage is always in deep Judaic studies which take more than a lifetime to ever touch the surface of what there is to know.

What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

We are living in unethical times so it bleeds into everything.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

I'm energized when I witness extraordinary talent, It gives me a jolt of superpowers.

What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The most common trap is marketing your product. Who to trust and who to avoid, trail and error process that takes patience, tenacity and cautious spending.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

Enlarged and disproportionate egos have no place in faith nor fashion.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

My undoing would have been chemotherapy, but that didn't stop me either. The cover was shot while I lay in a hospital bed on my iPhone from NYC to Miami with Elizabeth Sutton.

Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

I worked my whole life to be Tobi Rubinstein, why would I use any other name!

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

Originality is more authentic

Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Anyone can be a writer if they have a message these days.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

Publishing my first book has given me the confidence to intimately make The House Of Faith and Fashion the series I've always

dreamed of.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

Starting to write my second book this year.

What does literary success look like to you?

The look of success is still unclear to me as my version is incomplete.

What's the best way to market your books?

Marketing is tremendously diversified and open to interpretation. the terminology can run the gamut from book signings and TV appearances to local pop-up stores and Instagram stories. All achieving the goal of getting your book out there for the universe to read and hopefully enjoy. I have yet to find the magic formula of a successful campaign.

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Research is a constant ability to keep your eyes and ears open.

How do you feel about being featured in DE MODE?

Being featured in a great magazine is on my bucket list. So now, I can cross that one off and work on my next one ... walking the runway during Paris Fashion Week!

GET YOUR COPY OF THE HOUSE OF FAITH & FASHION BY AUTHOR BY AUTHOR TOBI RUBINSTEIN



Google Play Books

https://www.amazon.com/House-Faith-Fashion-wardrobe-taught/dp/0578876299/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

<https://thehouseoffaithandfashion.com/>

How To Hire And Keep Great People

BY AUTHOR MITCH GRAY

People take a job for money. They stay because of purpose. The very people you need the most are often the ones walking out the door faster than you can hire. In 'How to Hire and Keep Great People', Mitch Gray teaches you how to lay the foundation of culture within your organization that will empower your team and ignites growth.

'How to Hire and Keep Great People' is your new guidebook for:

- Designing a great culture
- Finding great people
- Building an all-star team
- Understanding the real reason people work

Your #1 priority as a leader is to empower your people. When people feel empowered, they feel motivated. When they feel motivated, they become inspired. When they become inspired, they perform at incredibly high levels. 'We just can't find good people!' I've heard it a million times.

From business owners, managers, and leaders in companies of all sizes. I often ask them, "what is the greatest challenge you face?" Their response is almost always the same - We can't find good people. I remember what it was like to wake up each morning knowing I need- ed to make changes to my team. I remember the feeling of excitement when I knew I had hired someone who was going to succeed at the job. You could feel it. It's a palpable energy that exists when you know you have hired someone as perfect a match as possible. But finding these people is a learned skill. It doesn't just happen overnight. Recruiting, hiring, and developing are not talents we are born with. Learning where to find these "good people," crafting a conversation that makes them become intrigued with your organization, then having the courage to offer them a position takes practice, time, and focus. The great thing? You can learn how to find these great people. The even better thing? You are in control of who is part of your team. Even better than these two? You not only get to choose who is on your team, but you are also in absolute control of their development and success. Believing you can't find good people is like saying you can't grow your business - and no successful business leader would ever make that statement. If you've found yourself frustrated with hiring, firing, developing, and keeping people..., If you've found yourself complaining about anyone on your team..., If you've heard your leaders giving excuses as to why business isn't growing or employees aren't dependable or only a few are carrying the load... This book was written for you. Now it's time to learn how to hire and keep great people!

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR MITCH GRAY

Mitch Gray has combined over two decades of experience as a former pastor, life coach, entrepreneur, community developer, and creator to develop a brand of leadership that is at its deepest



level- human.

Mitch believes fully in the power of the human spirit and that each person should be taking part in work that brings them life and creates good in the world. Teaching leaders how to create alignment within their teams, design a positive, strengths-based culture, and develop systems that empower team members to thrive is Mitch's spiritual work. And he believes every single organization has the potential to create such a place of hope.

Over the years and through a variety of paths and experiences, Mitch took his love of spiritual growth and began to identify the connection of spirituality and the impact it has in the workplace. With a perspective of humanity that is larger than a simple day in and day out tasks and mundane jobs, Mitch began preaching a new message. A message that helps businesses grow by changing the way leaders recruit, hire, and develop their teams. A way that is hopeful and breathes life into everyday

work. Taking his heart for inspiring others and his passion for empowering leaders, Mitch creates the space needed to consider a new way of leading. When Mitch isn't creating or bringing his next idea to life- you might



find him fishing the streams and rivers of New Mexico or sipping a nice cup of coffee at a local shop or driving down the highway jamming to the latest Dave Matthews Band track. He is the creator and host of The Mitch Gray Show podcast, author of multiple inspirational books, and a highly regarded speaker.

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR MITCH GRAY

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I began writing poetry at the age of 13. It was very liberating and fulfilling to create thoughts with words on paper. To express my feelings differently. To share my perception of life and culture in a way that I could express easily.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

Literary pilgrimages? Wow. Great question. That is the power of books, right? They can take us to any place and time. I've traveled to various cultures, discovered various teachings, and felt the pain and agony of various historical happenings through the power of books

What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

Publishing in general is an interesting industry. I've experienced the struggle of publishing in both writing books and music. I would say the most unethical practice might also be the greatest blessing: technology. It allows us to present our projects to a wider audience but often at a much lesser valued rate that is forced upon us due to the demand for technology.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing is an energizer for me. It is one of those activities that give much more back to my soul than I give in taking part.

What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Talking themselves out of trying. Becoming overwhelmed with the grind and uphill battle of creating some sort of success. At any point in time there are over 15 million books available and more being published each year. To find any success is an incredible achievement.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

We all have egos. We also get to choose how we use ego to guide us. I believe the best artists and creators simply share their perceptions of the world in their voices. When you take this perspective, ego seems to simply become the source of courage needed to share your voice.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

Simply. Not writing. To become great at something you must practice that something over and over and over again.

Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

Gratefully, no. This applies to my career in writing books, speeches, and music. I seem to have far more ideas than time to bring them to life.

Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

I have! There are a few book ideas I have that I feel might be better suited for a pseudonym author. We will see if they come to life or not!

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I believe in authenticity. Originality is a bit more difficult to define. After all, nothing is original. Every thought, creation, and the word was inspired by something or someone else. Focus on authenticity. At the end of the day when you stay true to yourself, your audience will find you.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

I'm not sure my process has ever changed. Some books bring about more editing and adjustments. But my process stays the same. What influences my process more is the topic.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I've completed two manuscripts in the past and ripped them up. I probably have 5 more that are incubating or started.

What does literary success look like to you?

- Reaching and impacting as many people as I possibly can with my message,
- Building my consulting business on the message of my book,
- Finishing what I started and having the courage to continue offering those projects to the world.

What's the best way to market your books?

Wow. In a world filled with opportunity, this isn't an easy question to answer. My top 3 suggestions would be social media, reviews, and podcasts.

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I believe all of life is research. You just need to pay attention to the stories being told each day. With that said, I don't start specific research before writing. I am a topical writer so research comes within the development of the book in relation to points being made.

Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I believe this is guided by personality. Some are more emotional than others. Just be authentic to your voice and message. That is what will bring you fulfillment and success.

If You're Gonna Be There

BY AUTHOR LONI HOOTS

The world of love is hard to navigate; from toxic relationships to falling in love too quickly, to lose yourself in a whirlwind mess where one finds themselves questioning everything but not wanting to make an actual decision for themselves. This is where Mirella Drouet, the lead character of *If You're Gonna Be There* deals with as she navigates her own life, while constantly picking her battles over love interests, as she deals with her mental well-being. The novella starts with Mirella making the biggest decision that she has ever had to face, leaving the place she called home her entire life and packing up to move to a foreign country just to get away from the one person she hopes to never see again.

After landing in Canada, Mirella barely has the time to get settled into her new life, due to many circumstances that are thrown her way, which seem to be curveballs that wish to redirect her to a different path than what she wants. She establishes a relationship of sorts with a stranger that she met during an accident; she lives with intrusive thoughts that seem to isolate her from not only the outside world but also from herself, thus giving her very little time to face what is truly going on inside her mind and heart that seem to have a disconnect. The question that seems to face Mirella the most is, does she care for herself, the way she attempts to care for others, or is she numbing herself from the reality that is at hand? Many things in life are certain, there is a beginning and there is an end, that's it; everything else in life is uncertain. No one knows how a child is going to be as a grown-up, instead, they are going to assume the most mundane things about them, forgetting that other factors can steer the direction of one's path completely, one of those factors happens to be mental health. *If You're Gonna Be There* putting mental health on display right from the beginning, shows the reader that Mirella has always had the unfortunate reality of choosing unsavory characters based on her mental health and self-care.

The novella is fictional, the scenarios and characters are so real that it feels as though it could be nonfiction or even a memoir; indicating to the reader that the author has their agenda when it comes to this piece of work, luring you to read it more than once to find the author's message between the lines on the pages. *If You're Gonna Be There* crosses many lines of fiction and nonfiction, due to many instances where the author is adamant about letting the reader into the mind of the author themselves, showing that even the stranger that you have never met endures psychological issues daily, as they attempt to connect with the world outside.

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR LONI HOOTS

Loni Hoots is known as the author behind the two bestselling indie novellas, *Petals and Nails* and *If You're Gonna Be There*. She is an educator, artist, mental health writer, and poet. Her work across multiple disciplines broadly addresses narratives of mental



health and how it affects every aspect of one's life. As a writer, Loni has had her pieces shown in the likes of the *Odyssey*, *Pursuit of Mindfulness*, and *Four Steps*. As an educator, she has taught poetry courses for elementary school students in Albuquerque; and currently works as an educator specializing in special education in Kansas.

The women she writes are perfectly flawed, making them as realistic as those who read her books. Creating such characters has become one of the traits that Loni possesses because she is driven to write characters that she wished she had read growing up; also knowing that there are many readers out there that wish to have a character that they connect to on different levels.

The world of mental health and the possibility of alternate realities are brought together by Loni, attempting to make sense of everything that has plagued not only her mind but the mind of others. How mental health affects everyday life still has a stigma attached to it, this has driven her to become outspoken

about how it has affected her for most of her life, giving it a platform to let others know that they are not alone in their quest of figuring things out amid the chaos.

For most of her life, Loni has been driven to educate the future genera-

tions of students that walk into the classroom; while she can do so in a physical setting, she felt drawn to the possibility of teaching young children about imagination, manners, and morals through the medium she has known for much of her life: writing.



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR LONI HOOTS

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I was rather young when I started writing; however, I can remember that it was a great medium to release all my thoughts and imagination.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I haven't gone on any literary pilgrimages yet, however, I hope to go on my first one soon. It's either to honor L.M. Montgomery (Canada) or E.M. Forster (Italy).

What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

The biggest unethical practice in the publishing industry must be predatory journals and publishers; the reason behind my reason is that they are not wanting to produce quality research and would much rather go based on the rumor mill that only does more harm than good to everyone involved. Just like every industry has its bad side and toxic characters, these predatory journals and publishers are part of the bad part of being a writer or even a publisher.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing has always energized me, there is just something about writing that brings out this extroverted side of me, giving me the ability to breathe and finally socialize with others; whereas if I don't write every day, I then become rundown and listless. However, I will say this, I can feel exhausted after finishing writing a piece because it has taken away the issues that I have been dealing with and has been placed in a different part of my life, away from my mind and body; this, in turn, makes me tired and ready for a nap.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

In the end, having a big ego can ultimately hurt writers. Yes, it is great to be confident in what you are creating, however, do not think that just because you wrote a best-selling piece that you are constantly going to create the same level of work time and time again. It just doesn't work that way.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

Perfectionism. I feel a lot of authors can agree with this one, because we want our work to be the best thing that we have ever created. That is impossible; because all you can do is create something better than the last thing you created.

Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

There have been times where I have considered it, however, I think the only time I

would want to write under a pseudonym is if I wrote a raunchy novel.

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

A little bit of both; however, I mostly try to be more original when it comes to the subject that I write about, which is mental health. However, I try to deliver the readers a little more of a fantasy with magic realism.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

The way I wrote in my first ever book was in a mythological way; I focused on creating a utopian aesthetic that was mainly directed towards those who thrive in the fantasy world along with the Greek Gods and Goddesses, nymphs, satyrs, etc. Now I have taken pieces of that and thrown it into my work in a more polished manner, giving my style of writing a whimsical business feel to it.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I have too many to count because there are multiple books that I started then decided that they were not something I wanted to focus on, or knew that they were meant for another story, so I placed them in a pile where I could sort through them later.

What does literary success look like to you?

To continue to write work that I am proud of and has a loyal readership.

What's the best way to market your books?

Today, it is obvious the best way to market any book is through the internet, through ads, collaborations, book reviews, book clubs.

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

It really depends on the book, because sometimes I do not need to do much research. However, with both of my novellas, I had to do some research regarding location, dialects, genetics, etc. That alone took me several hours to make sure that I didn't misrepresent nations of amazing people.

How do you feel about being featured in DE MODE?

It truly is an honor to be featured; I have always wanted to be featured in a magazine that I read and now that time has come.

Get your copies of *If You're Gonna Be There* by Author Loni Hoots on www.amazon.com

Dirge Of The Dead

BY AUTHOR REED LOGAN WESTGATE

Dirge of the Dead is an Urban Fantasy adventure set in modern-day Portland Maine. Follow the Baku warrior Xlina, whose magic is fueled by the nightmares she consumes. With the aid of the mysterious death eater, Oxivius and his dark necromantic magic Xlina will once again challenge the forces of the infernal planes. Dirge of the dead picks up immediately after the events of The Infernal Games and focuses on the aftermath of Xlina's epic battle in the Counsel of Magic chambers with the Arch Demon Ertigan.

As Xlina Dar'Karrow struggles to come to terms with killing her best friend Amber, the wily necromancer Oxivius hatches a plan to set things right. The magical duo will march straight through the gates of Hell and reclaim what the vile Arch Demon Ertigan has stolen from them. But stealing Amber's soul back from Hell is not without perils.

Xlina finds herself facing the judgment of the Counsel of Magic while the forces of both Heaven and Hell align to stop her from performing the resurrection. It will take all her nightmare-fueled magic to keep Amber's soul from being swept back into the fiery abyss of hell. With new allies and old friends alike vying to reclaim the stolen soul Xlina is thrust into a whirlwind of deceit and betrayal.

Is it all just another clever scheme by Oxivius to further his secret agenda? Whom are the mysterious druids sent to preserve the natural order? With the world at her back, Xlina must overcome her isolation and deepest fears if she has any hope of freeing Amber from an eternity of torment at the hands of Ertigan.

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR REED LOGAN WESTGATE

Reed Logan Westgate is a lifelong resident of the scenic state of Maine, nestled in the northeast corner of the USA. His longtime friend Bryan has been both supporters and advocate for his writing since they first met in second grade. Reed's support team also consists of his wife Amanda, who doubles as his trusted alpha reader and harshest critic. His two daughters, Emma and Lyriel, are his greatest achievement in life and provide him with all the joy and wonder a person could ask for. Reed spends his days working as a Financial Controller for a non-profit social service agency in Maine helping the people in the local communities he grew up in.

His journey as an author began early in school, where his love of reading transformed into a passion for storytelling. Reed's love of reading is the result of his grandmother's efforts early in his life. A Polish migrant to the United States, she lacked the privilege of good educational opportunities as a youth. Having that experience, she began emphasizing the importance of reading at a very early age. As an adult Reed attributes his love of reading to the efforts of his grandmother during his developmental years.



On graduating high school Reed moved on to College in Dover New Hampshire. While the desire to pursue his writing lingered, he instead chased financial stability for his family. He obtained his degree in accounting rather than focusing on his elusive dreams of being an author. In 2020, nearly twenty years later, he leaped faith and published The Infernal Games, the first book in the Baku series.

Reed spends his free time enjoying the world of tabletop games with friends and family. He attributes many of his characters' personality quirks to his years of guiding his local gaming group through dungeons and the host of reoccurring characters that have graced his adventures over the years.

WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEW:

A dazzling, solid tale... Genuine page-turner... Finely constructed and exceptionally well thought out, the taut plot is steeped in betrayal, lies, sinister conspiracies, and intrigue. There are healthy doses of action, dark magic, and emotional epiphany. Loyalties shift, with the deep, dark river of ambition and greed ruining lives. Tensions between the old allies and the new



enemies supply plenty of drama. The vivid narrative moves briskly and features a superb climax that resolves all the main issues while leaving enough to raise readers' fervor for the next installment. This mesmerizing tale makes for a winner.

-The Prairies Book Review

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR REED LOGAN WESTGATE

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

For a long time, I had convinced myself that if I never finished anything, then I would never “fail” to be an author. That the dream would always be out there. That fear held me back for far too long. I knew I had stories to tell and I regret letting that little voice inside hold me back for so long.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

No epic pilgrimages yet, but my daughter and I are planning on hitting some of the most haunted places in New England for inspiration for my next book.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing energizes me. It refills my spiritual cup if you will. When the daily grind has me feeling low I find taking a detour into my little world does wonders to lift my spirits. As a newer author having someone comment on my work is exhilarating and I often find myself having long discussions about my characters and world.

What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Fear and Doubt. It's the thing that prevents new authors from putting their stuff out there. I understand it all too well. After all, as a writer, we dump our heart and soul into our stories. Putting that finished product out there is making you vulnerable. It's exposing a part of you for the world to critique.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

I think it's a balancing act. The ego needs to be big enough to put your work out there and withstand the internet. I believe you need to have confidence in your work and at the same time accept that not everyone is going to like what you do.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

My daughter Lyriel. Honestly writing is a huge commitment time-wise, especially when just starting and carrying a full-time job in addition to focusing on deadlines and progress. I recognize the sacrifice my family makes to allow me to pursue this dream and so when my little girl wants to watch a show or play a game, I do it.

Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

Yes. I read quite a bit and can generally read a novel pretty quickly. I tend to binge-read my way through a series like my teenager binges through Netflix. After a series, I'll take a break, almost a cleansing of the palette if you will before diving into the next adventure.

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

When I started writing Urban Fantasy, I remember saying to my friend that I wanted to stay away from vampires and werewolves because they had been done so much that I didn't want to be boxed in by the expectation. Thus, my main character Xlina is based on the Baku from Japanese mythology.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

I changed my writing habits after the first book to be more disciplined. Once you publish there is a need or desire to continue to deliver promptly. People have short attention spans and if I make them wait too long for my next installment then they might forget and move on.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I have so many half-finished irons in the fire. These projects range in genre from Fantasy to Sci-Fi. In a way, I think there are some stories still forming. Like they are a great idea, but not quite yet a full story.

What does literary success look like to you?

I never set out to be a best seller. I just want people to enjoy my stories. For me success is having a steady fan following on the world and characters that existed in my head. I appreciate everyone who takes the time to share in my little world.

What's the best way to market books?

As a new and independent author, I think word of mouth is critical. You need that one person that reads your stuff and falls in love with it. That's the person that recommends you to all their friends. In that respect, you really need to put yourself out there which is hard for an introvert like myself.

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

For *Dirge of the Dead*, I spent a considerable amount of time looking into lore and legend. I knew I was about to jump into the deep end of the infernal planes. I had a running joke with my wife about clearing my browser history of all the demon content in the event of my untimely demise.

How do you feel about being featured in DE MODE?

I am completely overjoyed to be featured in DE MODE. Thank you for this opportunity.

First Second Coming

BY AUTHOR JEFF POLLAK

When Earth's variously named God retires in 2027 after 2,000+ years of service, he is replaced by a new Supreme Being – a planetary turnaround specialist who must decide whether to include mankind in his plan to restore the world's luster. This deity introduces himself to Earthlings through an unscheduled appearance on the Ram Forrester Hour talk show, which he beams worldwide.

Ram and co-host Brendali Santamaria, an atheist and devout Catholic respectively, are shocked. God informs them and their viewers that a 60-day conference will take place in Los Angeles to determine humanity's fate. Those attending must prove that homo-sapiens can help God implement his plan by eliminating religious violence forever before the conference ends. Failure will mean extinction.

Ram and Bren's romance ignites soon after God designates them as the conference's only authorized media reporters. The married couple must attend the conference by day, do their show at night, and outwit a fanatical group hell-bent on killing them for promoting a false god. Their love blooms as conflicts within the conference intensify, dimming the prospect of mankind's survival. Because only Ram and Bren can communicate with this God, the burden of saving humanity rests in their hands.

WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEWS:

Jeff Pollak does a fantastic job of creating characters that are both unique and relatable. This combination gives us a relationship that is engrossing and believable... It takes a talented writer to create characters you care about in a plot that makes sense while going at breakneck speed. *First Second Coming* is a captivating adventure novel that touches on some deep themes while never forgetting to entertain readers with a bit of romance and a touch of humor along the way. - *Literary Titan Magazine*

Religion turns into politics while the fate of mankind rests in the hands of a couple of journalists. Innovative, irreverent and ultimately thought-provoking, *First Second Coming* is a slightly futuristic romance/fantasy imbued with a sense of wit and wonder. - *IndiesToday.com*

First Second Coming captivates from the start, with a fascinating premise that never lets go. It packs a powerful punch for a debut novel and sets the stage for an exciting new series. - *InD'Tale Magazine*.

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR JEFF POLLAK

Award-winning novelist Jeff Pollak never pictured himself as a fiction writer because he was always too busy writing in his law practice to write at home. That changed in 2015 when Jeff's son graduated from college with a job waiting for him at a well-known tech company. Jeff began thinking that when he retires from his career as a trial attorney, he would need something to do. Being an avid reader, he resolved to write a novel and fill his retirement time creatively.

The choice seems to have worked. A mere three months after his



debut novel, *First Second Coming*, was published, the book received a Gold Award in writing excellence from *Literary Titan* magazine. In April, the book was nominated for the 2021 RONE Award in fantasy. And now the book is just beginning development in the entertainment world, most likely as a TV series akin to the *Good Omens* series from 2020.

Jeff's favorite authors range in genre and time period. James Clavell writes historical fiction; Frank Herbert, science fiction; Haruki Murakami, Magical Realism; David Mitchell and Iain Pears, various genres. Jeff himself writes novels that combine fantasy, romance, and suspense. The authors that have most influenced his writing style are Douglas Adams, Neil Gaiman, and Terry Pratchett.

A self-described music fiend, Jeff writes while listening to whatever music fits the chapter he's writing. He plays golf regularly, has a terrific spontaneous sense of humor (which is evident in his writing), loves to travel to new places, and a few he knows well and loves.



Jeff resides with his wife and 96-year-old mother-in-law in the suburbs of Los Angeles, but grew up in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, in New York City. He moved west to attend law school in L.A., where winter could be seen in the mountains but not felt at home, after graduating with a degree in Psychology from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Get your copy of *First Second Coming* by author Jeff Pollak:
www.jeffpollak.com & www.amazon.com

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR JEFF POLLAK

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I began to write fiction in 2015 to challenge myself to do something I've never tried. Also, I knew I'd need a hobby to occupy my time once I decided to retire from my law practice. (The retirement occurred in 2018.) When I sat down at my computer, hoping for some creative spark to strike, I recalled a thought I had while watching the World Trade Tower collapse on 9/11. This, more or less, was that thought: "we need to replace our present god with one who is a planetary turnaround specialist." I decided to try to write a story based on that thought. The result, years later, was my debut novel – *First Second Coming*.

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

As research for *First Second Coming*, I traveled to Toronto, Canada, in 2017 to attend a seven-day interfaith gathering put on by the Parliament of World Religions. I spoke to people of many different faiths from all over the world to get their feedback on how practitioners of their faith would react to a story that calls for religious tolerance, acceptance, and cooperation." Since these folks were active in the interfaith movement, they were all for a book like this. I didn't want to rely solely on the non-fiction books I'd read that offer one author's opinions. I wanted to imbue my story with insights from actual day-by-day believers. The trip worked well and enhanced the realism in my novel.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

Writing energizes me. It refills my spiritual cup if you will. When the daily grind has me feeling low I find taking a detour into my little world does wonders to lift my spirits. As a newer author having someone comment on my work is exhilarating and I often find myself having long discussions about my characters and world.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

I haven't yet experienced any exhaustion from exercising my creative side. I thoroughly enjoy writing, even when I find it difficult to write a chapter or a scene within one that meets my standards and fits the needs of the book. Spending my retirement doing this is way too much fun!

Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

I've never taken a break from reading. But there have been occasions where I didn't have a new book to read. I cure that problem by perusing Amazon, visiting my favorite bookstore, or re-reading a favorite: James Clavell's *Shogun* or *Tai-Pan*; David Mitchell's

The Bone Clocks; Haruki Murakami's *1Q84*; Frank Herbert's *Dune*; or Iain Pears' *An Instance of the Fingerpost*.

Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

Yes, a little, because my last name is often misspelled – there's no "c" in it. But I get never serious about it. The misspelling isn't reason enough for me to adopt a pseudonym.

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I write what I'm interested in writing, within the little niche I'm carving out for my work. I don't try to deliver what readers want because I don't know what that is, but I do know that not everyone will want to read my novels. Also, if I'm writing something for others, but I don't like what I'm writing, that becomes work. I've already retired from work.

What does literary success look like to you?

When I found out that *First Second Coming* had received a Gold Award for writing excellence just three months after publication, I was both dumbfounded and elated. Learning that the novel was nominated for the 2021 RONE Award in fantasy was also a shock. A well-known film studio has started to develop *First Second Coming* as a TV series for viewing on a streaming channel. Early 2023 is the target date for release to the public. That's beyond belief. I wrote this story just to see if I could write a novel – not to get all these accolades or make writing my second career. But all these other things happened. I'm amazed.

How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

There are two unpublished books I'm currently working on. One, the second book in the New God Series, is a sequel to *First Second Coming*. The book's working title is *Earth's Peril*. The other book I'm writing, called *The Recycling Center*, isn't part of that series but *Earth's* new god is a character in it.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

It hasn't, because I didn't have a process. While I wrote *First Second Coming*, I was working full time, or overtime, on behalf of my clients. I wrote fiction when I had enough spare time. Now I'm retired, with plenty of free time when I'm not on the golf course. So retirement, rather than publication, is what has allowed me to have a writing process.

The Society Of Eight

BY AUTHOR DOMINIC DANVERS

The first volume in a series about the supernatural adventures of a group of children and young adults who are thrown into their predestined roles as the new generation of Emissaries within the Order of the Society to do battle against the Wiccan and her armies of the Unremembered, the Wretched, the Infernal and the Cimmerian.

The Society of Eight: Volume 1 - The Compendium of Alchemists Abstruse Contrivances is the first novella in a series. It is a fantasy adventure for all ages.

The Wiccan has been plotting an attack against the Society for hundreds of years and has finally discovered the secret location of their home - the Sanctuary.

Tom, Zoe, Charlie, Stephen and Alexander are torn from their ordinary lives and thrown into their predestined roles as the new generation of Emissaries within the Order of the Society, guardians who protect the world from dark supernatural forces.

These young heroes rally to survive with the help of the old generation, their Custodians and the Great Cats to save humanity from the malevolence of the Wiccan.

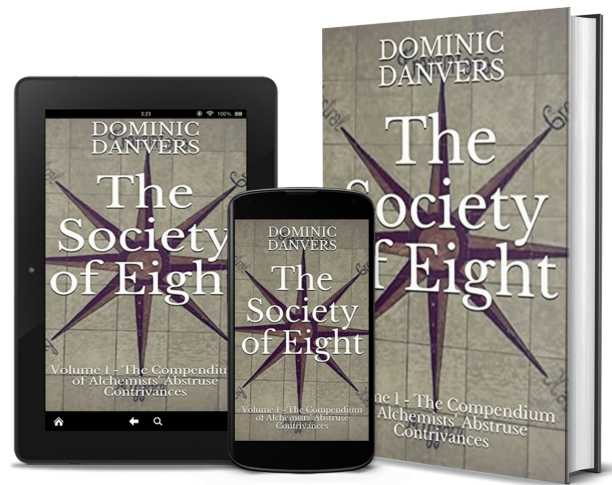
Crossing the globe in the present, past and future, they must find the last three to truly harness the power of the Society of Eight and do battle against the Wiccan and her armies of the Unremembered, the Wretched, the Infernal and the Cimmerian.

THE JOURNEY OF AUTHOR DOMINIC DANVERS

Dominic Danvers was born in London, UK but spent much of his childhood by the sea on the Dorset coast. This has influenced his storytelling and coastal locations and the sea often feature. He grew up reading Enid Blyton's adventures of The Famous Five and The Secret Seven but his favourite book remains Umberto Eco's Foucault's Pendulum. Dominic was a school governor and chair of its wellbeing committee for several years. He is a lawyer and francophone and lives with his wife, Anne-Sophie and daughter, Juliette.

WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEWS:

- This is an adventure story about a secret society that exists to protect humankind. My 10yo found it exciting with an interesting plot. 'A bit scary, but in a good way.'



She ended the book wanting more and is looking forward to the next installment.

- If you like fantastic literature, don't hesitate to read Dominic Danvers' book: The Society of Eight. Dominic, I can't wait for the release of Part 2!!! —Alexis (Reviewed in Spain)
- Couldn't put it down... —Belinda W (Reviewed in United Kingdom)

DIRECTLY FROM THE BOOK

It was dark, so very dark. The air was thick with moisture and Henry could hardly see the distant lights flickering around the London skyline as he ran. The gravel crunched beneath his heavy footsteps.

He kept close to the palace wall. Below were the sloping verges and thick trees of the park. It was safer to remain on high ground and hope they would not climb from the city below.

He felt the chill of frosty cold air at the nape of his neck.

It ran through his body down to his toes until he could not run any longer.

Henry found himself at the east coast entrance to the palace.

Get your copy of 'The Society of Eight' to read more. Audiobook is available on Amazon.com.



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR DOMINIC DANVERS

What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I started writing *The Society of Eight: Volume 1* on my commute back home from work on a cold and dark November evening in London five years ago. I had been toying with the notion for months and something triggered the process. I honestly do not know what!

What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I spend as much time as possible by the sea. Its sound, smell, and expanse give me the inspiration one needs to write.

What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

That's a rather controversial question which I will very politely sidestep! The industry is transforming rapidly with the ability to self-publish and promote on platforms such as Amazon and Instagram. Literary agents are no longer the only avenue for new authors and need to become more responsive to submissions from new authors if they want to keep up.

Does writing energize or exhaust you?

It most definitely energizes me. It takes me to another plane. For me, it's a form of escapism I suppose. It's so enjoyable to be part of the journey with the characters in my books and exciting to find out what will become of them. Even I don't know as my writing is generally spontaneous.

Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

Believing in your characters and story and having a total commitment to the book your writing is essential. But always remember to be humble. There are thousands of fabulous writers in the world.

What is your writing Kryptonite?

My family and the sea. Although, living in London also gives me so much material and inspiration. There are so many weird and wonderful places to explore and people to observe here.

Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

Yes, it exists! The important thing is to accept it's part of the process of writing. Do not be afraid of it or dwell on it. It comes and goes like everything else.

What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Do not force it. It's important to be disciplined in setting aside the time and giving yourself targets but writing is a natural process so if the words are not flowing onto the page do something else and come back to it when they

are. Forcing it will not produce your best work.

Do you try more to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I always try to be original and that is the greatest challenge when writing fantasy in the world of Netflix. But never be afraid to draw on things you've seen, read or heard and change them to make them your own. It's crucial you decide your writing and not be led by readers.

How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

For me, finishing and publishing my first book was like running a marathon. It is very difficult to switch off from my job on weekday evenings and it was a very slow process. But it made me realize that I could do it and now the process is speeding up and I'm finding it much easier to fit it into my daily routine.

Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

That's a very good question! Writing is an emotional process and as a writer, I do believe you need to be 'live' to your emotions. Your emotions fuel your imagination and you need the imagination to write. Particularly to write fiction. So, in my view, feeling emotion is essential to making a reader empathize and engage with your writing.

What does literary success look like to you?

Knowing that my books will be read and hopefully enjoyed. Someone I know who doesn't much care for fantasy stories told me they were totally hooked by my book and couldn't put it down. I think that's just the greatest of compliments which I regard as a literary success.

What's the best way to market your books?

Social media has opened up the literary landscape. Writers need to take advantage of all the platforms available and many of them are free! My daughter is my social media advisor!

What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I only planned ahead of my first book to work out the names of the main protagonists and the general storyline. Since most of my research is done online while I am writing a book. That's my way of writing but I'm sure every author has their own approach.

Get your copies on www.amazon.com



Tiffany Alfonseca

De Lo Mío, Jenkins Johnson Gallery
Brooklyn, New York, U.S.

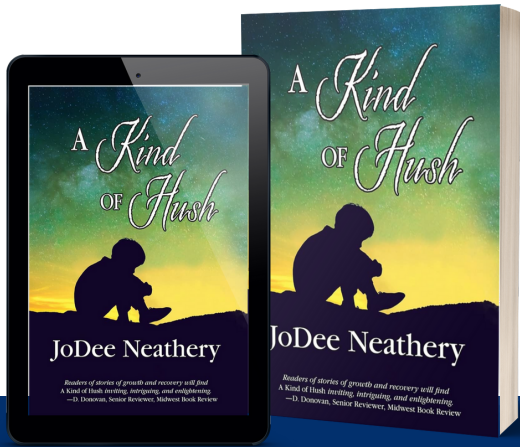
Tiffany Alfonseca’s vibrant portraits capture the multiplicity of experience within Black and Afro-Latinx communities. The Bronx-based artist draws on her own Dominican American heritage to inform her glitter- and charcoal-adorned paintings and drawings: All depict African diasporic subjects in moments of intimacy, quietude, and joy. Alfonseca graduated from the School of Visual Arts in 2020 and has exhibited in London, New York, and Los Angeles. Her work has also been included in a number of benefit auctions, including the Museum of the African Diaspora’s “Diaspora Unite!” and ARTNOIR’s “From: Friends To: Friends.” Alfonseca’s unguarded, multifaceted depictions of Black life contradict the flattening narratives prevalent in Western art history.



THE 10 MUST-READ BOOKS OF FALL 2021

Whatever genre you prefer, there's something for everyone on this list. Keep flipping for the top thrillers, fantasy, historical fiction and romance books to read this winter.

'A Kind of Hush' by Author JoDee Neathery, 'The Exit Strategy' by Author Lainey Cameron, 'Such Exquisite Calamity' by Author Sydnie Beaupré, 'Encounters' by Author Nadine Thompson, 'Hell Again' by Author Mihret Adal Gidi, 'Knightmare Arcanist' by Author Shami Stovall, 'Remnants of Blood' by Author H.F. Cunningham, 'Burnt to a Crisp' by Author Michael O'Keefe, 'Heavy is the Head' by Author Katrina N. Lewis, 'The Darkest Gift' by Author Len Handeland.



A Kind of Hush

A Novel by Author JoDee Neathery

ABOUT THE BOOK

A Kind of Hush, a work of literary crime fiction, examines how life is seldom a tidy affair exploring whether there is a grey area between right and wrong. The novel begins as the Mackie family struggles to put their lives back on track after suffering the unspeakable loss of their young son, Griff, nicknamed Boo, who accidentally died while in the care of Willa, their ten-year-old daughter – each person searching for a way to heal and move forward after the tragedy. Four-year-old Gabe, an old soul with wisdom beyond his years, retreated into his whisper room, “a windowless enclave with lavender walls brimming with daydreams, obscured from reality.” Summer Mackie yielded to her debilitating grief while her husband, Matt, relegated his own grief to the backburner focusing on the needs of his wife, preteen daughter, and young son. A family that once reverberated with laughter and closeness now wallows in silence, division, and heartbreak. After years of counselling and the compassion of friends and family, the Mackies resumed the habits and routines that dictated daily life until a road trip once more toppled their lives into disarray.

BOOK REVIEWS

“A Kind of Hush is about a moment in time that changes a family forever, surrounding it in tragedy, mystery, and unspoken challenges. Its special brand of intrigue and soul-searching engages readers from the beginning...JoDee Neathery's literary novel embraces psychological and spiritual elements...adding moral and ethical dilemmas leading readers to consider the foundations of what it takes to forgive and move on from tragedy.” - D. Donovan, Sr. Reviewer, Midwest Book Review

JoDee Neathery is a firm believer that dreams do come true with the release of her debut award winning novel, *Life in a Box*, in July 2017 asking the question, how much would you sacrifice to hide a secret? A few colorful characters were plucked off her family tree, encasing their world inside fictional events to create her literary novel.



The idea for her latest novel, **A Kind of Hush**, appeared in the middle of the night with the profile of the young boy and the first few sentences scratched out on the ever-present notepad on the nightstand beside her bed. “I didn’t know the whole story, but I knew that whatever I wrote next, this young lad had to play a major role in the narrative and Gabriel Edward Mackie doesn’t disappoint.”

JoDee was born in Southern California moving to Midland, Texas at the age of five – a wonderful place to grow up full of dreamers and doers and the friendliest people on the planet. After graduating high school, her eyes were on attending a small liberal arts college in Louisiana majoring in dance with aspirations of a Broadway career. Her beloved daddy filed that pipedream away suggesting that unless she was going to be a nurse or teacher, finding a job was a better option. She began her professional career in the banking industry prior to branching into public relations executive recruiting for Dallas and New York agencies.

Her dream “job” has been chairing and writing minutes and reviews for the community book club, Bookers, for 18 years and it was those members that championed her novel-writing journey. Relocating to East Texas offered more opportunities to write, handling public relations, writing freelance articles, trade publications and newsletters. JoDee and her husband live in close proximity to their only daughter, son-in-law, two teenage grandsons, a bird dog, four cats, a donkey and a few head of cattle.

Connect with Author JoDee Neathery socially on

JoDeeNeatheryAuthor
 www.jodeeathery.com
 authorihope

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR JODEE NEATHERY

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

My debut novel, *Life in a Box*, (2017) was the ultimate personal accomplishment for me as it was a cleansing of sorts – to prove I could tell a fictional story based on some members of my family in an entertaining way by unveiling my own ambitions and insecurities. Seeing it in print was a dream come true.

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Passion is defined as strong uncontrollable emotion so I don't think you can have one without the other. My goal when writing is for every word to match the "moment" that I'm trying to convey. So, my goal is to write with a fire that fuels reactions from my readers.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

I love the medium that allows a person to create life scenarios with a variety of characters playing a role in the process. I smile a lot when I'm writing.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Yes, I applaud anyone being recognized for their work – generally the rewards of that follow suit.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world." — Oscar Wilde.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

It inspires me because it challenges me to be better, smarter, more empathetic, and grateful for the talent I've been blessed with.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer? How do you feel about being an author?

I've been a writer for a long while, but it was not until my book was published that I considered myself in the lofty company of being an author. I have profound respect for those who have come before me and those who are trending toward prominence. It's a place of reverence for a shared passion.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Diving in headfirst without learning the craft. This doesn't take away your creativity but gives you a roadmap that will enhance your skills in the long run.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I strive to use my creative skills to develop a book that not only satisfies my standards but appeals to my audience because it is well written and not by following the latest "fad." It depends on what you are writing but if you are writing a novel – novels without emotion are not novels.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I'm a research fanatic! I do preliminary exploring after finalizing where the book will be set and continue with more throughout the entire writing process. I think it's important to be true to the setting whenever possible. I enjoy when people remark...I've been to that place, and it's described just as I remember it.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

A Kind of Hush was published July 2021 but I'm beginning to have novel titles swirling through my head and have a few characters that might be part of the book. All very preliminary at this point but am writing in the middle of the night...that's a good sign.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Excited...humbled...appreciative of the avenue to offer some insight into who I am and what drives my passionate emotion.

WORLDWIDE BOOK REVIEWS

'Couldn't put it down!'

This is the kind of book you don't want to put down. The childlike wisdom of Gabe adds humour to an engaging cast of characters as they deal with a death in the family and the inquiry into the cause. Was it an accident, or not??? Surprising twists to the story made me continue reading way past my bedtime.

- **See Are (Reviewed in the United States)**

'Another great book by JoDee Neathery'

A mystery yes but with a different twist. All the usual Neathery details to get you into each of the characters. Locations and details that are familiar but used by the author in different ways. With an ending that doesn't keep you hanging but may not be what you expected.

- **Bruce Walter (Reviewed in the United States)**

Another great read from JoDee Neathery. She has a gift for description that puts you right in the room with strong characters and a storyline that keeps you reading!

- **Julie Evans (Reviewed in the United States)**



The Exit Strategy

A Novel by Author Lainey Cameron

ABOUT THE BOOK

Silicon Valley investor Ryn Brennan is on the verge of achieving everything she dreamed of. She's succeeded in the male-dominated venture capital world, has a supportive husband, and is about to close the deal of her career. Everything is going exactly as planned, until she meets Carly, her husband's mistress, across the negotiating table. Carly clawed her way back from being a teenage runaway to become an accomplished scientist, caring single mom, and co-founder of her startup. Once she marries her loving fiancé, she'll secure the complete family she craves. But she's blindsided to discover her not so perfect fiancé is already married to Ryn, her company's biggest investor. In an industry full of not-so-subtle sexism, can the two women rise above, and work together to overcome heartbreak, and ensure their success?

BOOK REVIEWS

"SO MUCH FUN. Incredibly fast paced and satisfying, with two believable protagonists and one guy so bad you'll be dying to see if he gets what he deserves. Bonus for insider juice on Silicon Valley and going all in with the con artist plot. I read this in one sitting."

- K J Dell'Antonia, NY Times best-selling author

"Lainey Cameron's debut novel blasts out of the starting gate on the first page and never slows down. Well-crafted characters combined with some (admittedly) real-life scenarios and never knowing just how it's all going to turn out, had me wanting more."

- Patricia Sands, Award-Winning author

Lainey Cameron is an author of women's fiction and a recovering tech industry executive. Her award-winning novel, *The Exit Strategy*, was inspired by a decade of being the only woman in the corporate boardroom. Since release, it has become an Amazon #1 bestseller & won eleven book awards, including the 2021 American Fiction Excellence Awards, 2021 Independent Publisher Awards, and the 2021 National Indie and Book Excellence Awards.



The book has been called "fast-paced, satisfying", and a "provocative, edgy page-turner" with "characters who are ingeniously crafted" and a "rallying call for women to believe in themselves and join together". It tells the story of a Silicon Valley investor who first meets her husband's mistress across the negotiating table.

Lainey is a digital nomad, meaning she picks locations around the world to live (and write) for months at a time, and she loves to share her travels on Instagram.

She's the founder and host of [The Best of Women's Fiction](#) podcast, where she interviews authors she admires and highlights the latest great book releases.

She's also an active volunteer with the Women's Fiction Writers Association, believes community makes the author's life worthwhile and is on a mission to obliterate the term aspiring writer. Originally from Scotland, Lainey has a soft spot for kilts and good malt whisky.

Find her online at www.laineycameron.com or subscribe to *The Best of Women's Fiction* podcast at www.bestofwomensfiction.com

Connect with Author Lainey Cameron socially on

[lainey_cameron](#) [laineycameronauthor](#) [lainey_cameron](#)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR LAINEY CAMERON

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

Before my debut won 11 awards and received hundreds of great reviews, I didn't dream that it would capture the imagination and feminist vibe in the way it has. I feel so fortunate to have been able to write a page-turner that is uplifting others during this challenging time.

Q: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

As a digital nomad author, I'm lucky to have travelled to many places while writing. I've noticed in recent years I often find myself in the same bars as Hemmingway visited; in Key West, Pamplona, Madrid, Paris.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

Unfortunately, a lot of companies prey on writers. I'm particularly annoyed by those who charge authors for "exposure" on Twitter or Instagram. They promise to tweet a book hundreds or thousands of times or to thousands of followers, but if you look under the covers, the account has zero engagement.

The path to building a readership is slow and steady; write great books, make yourself accessible to readers, support other authors, and gradually you'll build a following.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

I'm an extrovert and while writing is peaceful (and sometimes frustrating), it's a solitary thing, talking to your own computer screen most of the day. The people-person in me balances this with my interviews for The Best of Women's Fiction podcast, where I enjoy chatting with other authors.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

As a new writer, a big challenge is to find confidence in your voice and your work's value. So, let's start with one of my pet peeves. I hate the term "aspiring writer".

Aspiring implies that you're not a "real" writer yet. You will always have room to learn, but the term aspiring writer saps confidence. I'd be happy to see it obliterated from our vocabulary. If you write, you are a writer.

Q: Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

It's a fine dance. On the one hand, you must believe in your unique story and stick with it, no matter who tells you it doesn't deserve to be told.

On the other hand, we can all hone our craft and keep learning. The challenge is balancing these two competing perspectives and also avoiding comparison with other writers.

Q: What is your writing Kryptonite?

Attempting to write in a style that is not my own. For example, my writing style is fast-paced and commercial. When I focus on how to keep the reader gripped and engaged, it flows. But if I compare my writing to lyrical literary style writing, then I stall out. I admire writers with that style, but it's just not my voice.

Q: Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

Reader's block happens when you no longer find joy and fulfilment in what you're reading. Many friends have shared their experience of this during this anxiety-inducing pandemic time.

One thing that can help is to free yourself from judgement. Forget what you "should" be reading and let yourself read for pure pleasure, go with whatever you feel like.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

For my second novel (revision in the process), I spent significant time on character development before I wrote the first draft. Digging deep into why my character has a secret past (her childhood wounding) and how that will affect her reactions to what is happening in the plot today. As a writer of contemporary fiction, I admire historical fiction novelists and all the research work they do before even starting!

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

After winning so many awards with my debut novel, I'm more patient with the process. I know this draft is not ready for readers' eyes and may require six more revisions before it is, and that's okay. One step at a time.

Q: What does literary success look like to you?

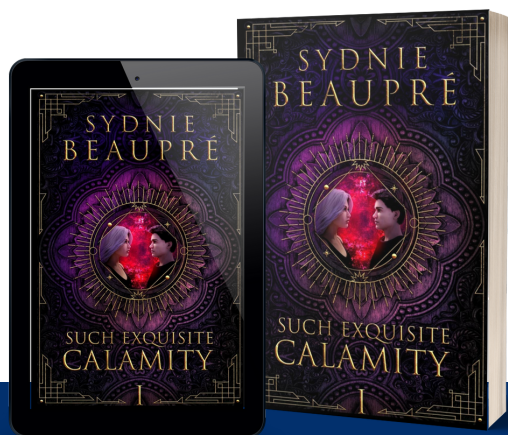
To me, the writer and reader community makes my author life worthwhile.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I am lucky to be one of those writers where the first novel I wrote got published. The one I am working on now — about a digital nomad adventure travel Instagrammer with a secret past — will be my second novel.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

This journey since my debut, *The Exit Strategy*, released has been wild and fulfilling. I'm thrilled with the chance to connect here with new readers and writers. Thank you DE MODE for this opportunity.



S

uch Exquisite Calamity

A Book by Author Sydnie Beaupré

ABOUT THE BOOK

Spencer and Cayden have always known that they were different from each of their parents, but when Spencer saves Cayden from a stab wound using only her tears and sheer willpower, they find out exactly what they are: the only two of their kind, born under a prophecy. Not Caster, not Familiar, but an impossible combination of both known as The Two, or The Lovers. Stumbling through the new world of Casters, Familiars and Demigods together proves dangerous for the pair, and unwanted enemies arise as emotions between them become more and more complicated. Will Cayden and Spencer be able to find themselves amidst the chaos? Or will they succumb to the power of those trying to stop them?

BOOK REVIEWS

“TWO OF A KIND!” I enjoyed this YA Fantasy Romance book. Story follows two young people, Cayden and Spencer, who know they are different having powers and abilities that humans don't. They are desperate to find out everything but no one is allowed, by law, to give them any information relating to their history or current status. They have an uphill battle as people fear difference but will they succeed against their enemies. A unique storyline, very different to what I've read before but would recommend to anyone who loves this genre. Keeps your interest from the start all the way through, hoping that The Two will find their way in more ways than one! Enjoyable read!

- Karen Inkle (Reviewed in United Kingdom)

Sydnie Beaupré is more than just a girl: they're an openly LGBTQ2IA author that lives in their own imagination: a post-apocalyptic, zombie-inhabited world, where magical creatures and supernatural occurrences are simply the mundane.



Outside of that, Sydnie can often be found in Montreal, Quebec where they were born and raised - and also where they chose to set their second novel, Such Exquisite Calamity. When they're not struggling to write at least one paragraph a day, you can find them reading the same six books they've been reading for the last two years out of obsession, playing their three-stringed violin, or singing very off-key despite being a great singer. And reliably, you can always find Sydnie spending time with their amazing friends and crazy family over a good cup of coffee or tea.

MORE BOOK REVIEWS

- Quality. Gripping. Realistic relatable characters. Diverse. Unique.

I was very impressed with the quality of the book. The matte finish, the smoothness of the pages and the density of it. The story was gripping and I found myself saying 'Okay one more chapter.'. Characters were relatable and had a realistic tone to them. I like the addition of real-life troubles, mental illness and trauma. As well as diversity. Very interesting unique concepts too!

- Adrian Doherty (Reviewed in Canada)

- This author is truly growing as a writer!! Not gonna lie...I loved this book. I even dreamt about the world and the characters in it. Can't wait for book 2! - Sher Monty (Reviewed in Canada)

- Two of a Kind! - - Reviewed in the United Kingdom I enjoyed this YA Fantasy Romance book.

Connect with Author Sydnie Beaupre socially on

 Sydnie_Beaupr_  SydnieBeaupreBooks  authorsydnieb

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR SYDNE BEAUPRÉ

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The provoking thought that made me write my first book was, "This is a story that needs to be told."

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion. It's something I eat, sleep, and breathe.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing brings out my sense of humour in a really positive way. I can make jokes through my writing that I wouldn't otherwise make.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I do, I think that if you work hard at something you should be able to reap the rewards.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I can bring change to the literature world by providing original storylines and characters.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

"Anyone can love a thing because. That's as easy as putting a penny in your pocket. But to love something despite. To know the flaws and love them too. That is rare and pure and perfect."

- Patrick Rothfuss, *The Wise Man's Fear*.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing inspires me to tell the best story possible.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

To be a writer is to weave tapestries with words.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

I feel, as an author, that I have a responsibility to my readers to make my books as readable as possible.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

A common trap is vanity publishers. They promise the sun, the stars, and the moon to authors and in reality, all they do is take your money.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I try to be original, always.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I think anyone can be a writer if they try, so if someone doesn't feel emotions strongly, they can still be a writer. They just have to do their research on human emotions if they're going to write about them.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

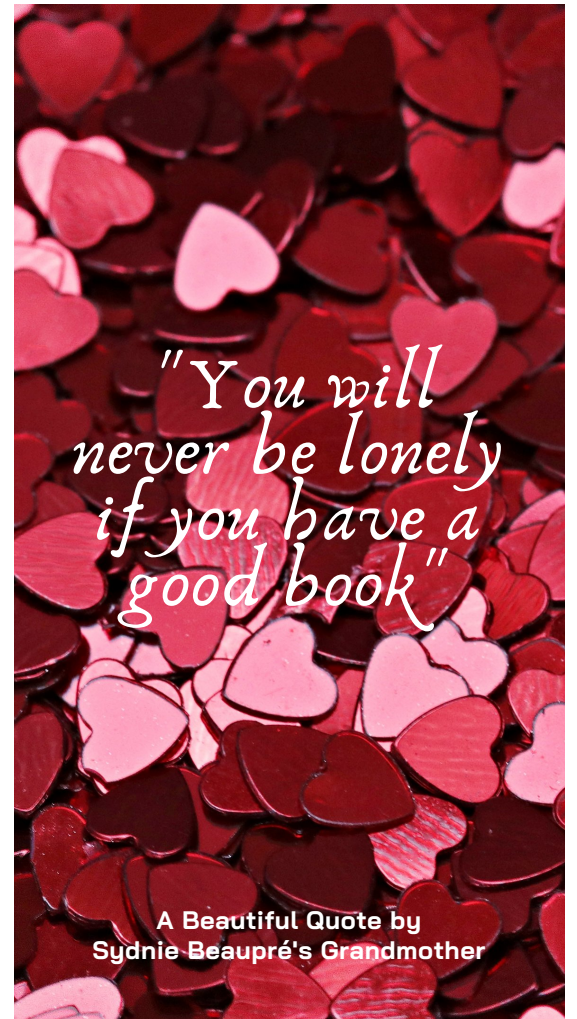
I do research on the setting for my books, and I often spend hours analysing Google Maps location.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

I have four works coming out soon. Two are charity anthologies, one is a children's book about an autistic little boy, and the other is a young adult paranormal romance.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am honoured to have my book featured in DE MODE, and humbled.





ABOUT THE BOOK

"Encounters" is a compilation of poems written over the course of five years. I got the idea to name the collection "Encounters" when I was living in Japan. At the end of the school year we would say goodbye to both Japanese and foreign staff members. It felt quite final as if we would never see each other again, especially because we were all from different countries. When the time came for me to leave Japan, I realized that encountering a place can have a lasting impact on our psyche channelling how we felt through various situations.

The **first section** of the book chronicles "Encounters with Places". The first poem, 'Japan for JETS' is a tribute to the Japan Exchange Teaching Programme. I was on the JET programme as an ALT- Assistant Language Teacher from 2006-2011. I lived on an island in the southern prefecture of Kagoshima called Amami Oshima which was a tropical island that reminded me so much of Jamaica. The first poem collectively looks at what Japan and the JET programme meant to those who were part of the programme. The **second set** of poems is about 'Encounters with a myriad of feelings'. The poems showcase a feeling of transience in love. The **third section** "Encounters with Spiritual/ Positive Light" has four poems that came about after a period of meditation. The **final section** of the book captures "Encounters with Love and Loss". The first poem "Lily Cups" speaks of a deep hurt.

The book has one long poem at the end called "I want your life". Two women, one married and the other unmarried compare their lives. We need to be grateful for the life we have instead of comparing ourselves to others. This section ends with a poem called "Peace".

E

ncounters

An anthology of poems by
Author Nadine Thompson

Author Nadine Karen Thompson was born in Jamaica to parents Videll and Sydney Thompson. She grew up with her three sisters Ann, Judy and Chrissie. As a child she loved reading books and also started writing poems at age nine. She loved reading the beautiful lines found in birthday and other greeting cards. At age 11 one of her teachers gave her a small book of poems which became her most prized possession. She told herself back then, that one day she will be a published writer with her own anthology of poems.



After graduating from high school she went on to pursue A' levels and continued to study English Literature. She has a 'Bachelor of Arts' Degree in 'Applied Linguistics' from the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.

She had English Literature as a minor at university. One of her favourite courses in literature was "Love, Death and Poetry".

She is an educator now. She taught Spanish and English Literature in high school in Jamaica. She worked in Japan as an ESL teacher and is presently working in China as an IB PYP teacher. She is also a member of the Hangzhou Writer's Association group of expats in China. She has attended two writers workshops since being in China, one of them was a silent writer's workshop. In the past, she also enrolled in an online poetry course which helped her to learn more about the form of poetry.

At university in the UK, she had the opportunity of listening to poetry performances in the form of slam poetry. She thinks of herself as a writer more than a performer. She enjoys reading poems for friends and family at weddings, graduations and eulogies at funerals. She strongly believes that words can heal and words can wound, but it is very important to use words to heal.

Connect with Author Nadine Thompson socially on

 EncountersByNadineKThompson  afrosensei10

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR NADINE K. THOMPSON

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

I would say both, writing is my passion because when I write I pour myself into it. It is my emotion because as a poet I started writing to express my deep emotions.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I wrote poems for my poetry collection as far back as five years ago, but during the initial outbreak of the COVID-19 in China and living under lockdown the thought came to me that "now was the time to step out in confidence and make my mark. It was time to take a major risk and trust myself.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing brings out the best in me, by helping me to deal with my emotions. It is like a friend to me, providing that outlet where I can share my thoughts freely.

Q: Do you believe in awards and rewards?

I believe that writers should be recognized for their work by receiving literary awards from different organizations and financial rewards through the sale of their books. It is important to get some sort of incentive, as writing can be a tedious process and requires writers to give so much of themselves.

Q: How can I bring change to the literature world?

Many people find it difficult to read poetry. Poetry is viewed as something that only poetry lovers or literature enthusiasts love. I would love to change that perception. I want poetry to be read by ordinary people everywhere.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

There are so many wonderful quotes that I have come to love but my favorite quote is from Maya Angelou. "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

I am most inspired by my writing to create a business based around a writing career.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

For me, being a writer means having a voice and a creative space to share my ideas.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

I feel it's a great honor to be an author. It's amazing when others read my book and tell me that they feel inspired.

Q: What are the common traps of aspiring writers?

I think one common trap is being exploited by publishers or publishing companies. Many writers don't think about the business side of becoming a writer until they want to get published. There are a lot of loopholes in becoming a published writer. Writers, therefore need to get prepared by researching the ins and outs of the publishing industry.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the reader what they want?

I always try to be original. I believe that is important to show originality as an artist/writer. All writers are influenced in one way or another by what they read or material they interact with, but despite this fact, I believe in being original.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I believe it would be hard to be a serious writer if you didn't feel emotions strongly. Strong emotions help us to reach deep and express hope and use the power of words to heal.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I do research about the form of poetry, selected vocabulary or how best to phrase a nuance in my poems. I also try to research the names of places, cities, towns and researching quotes to make sure of the integrity of my writing and to ensure as much accuracy as possible.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

I am working on a book of short inspirational quotes mixed with short stories about true experiences that I have had through traveling and living abroad.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I feel really honoured to be featured in your magazine. I see it as an ideal platform to showcase my book as well as tell my story in a bold way in order to inspire others to follow their dreams/passion.





Hell Again

A Novel by Author Mihret Adal Gidi

ABOUT THE BOOK

Hell Again is a romance and fantasy genre novel. It is a story about a young lady who meets a stranger on her bachelorette night, who soon will change her life path in an unexpected way. It is a 282 page novel with published by Austin Macauley publishers. It's intriguing and an engaging story to read.

Hell Again written by the author Mihret Adal Gidi is an intriguing story. Story features Adah Bamlakfekad Aschalew. Adah has come from Canada to her hometown Ethiopia. She is about to marry Teddy who is not her father's choice. But still, somehow, Adah's father agreed to their marriage. Adah went to a late-night party with her bridesmaids the day before the wedding. Her friends offered to drop her home but she insisted on taking a taxi.

Unfortunately, the taxi was having issues so Adah decided to walk. She met a stranger on the way and he is quite handsome. Adah found herself attracted to him. She was attracted to him to the level that she didn't mind spreading her legs for him. She lost her virginity to a stranger just before the day of her wedding. Next morning, Adah noticed that she was at a strange place that seemed magical and like a dream.

What is Adah gonna do? Will she still marry Teddy? The plot of the story is unique and interesting. The cover photo looks awesome and according to the story. We appreciate the author's choice of title for this book. The writing style is nice with a smooth narration and we enjoyed reading this novel. Worldbuilding is amazing. Go ahead with this book. We're sure you won't regret picking it.




Mihret Adal Gidi is a novelist who emerged from East Africa, Ethiopia. She has dreamed of being an author and has always been known for being a storyteller among her friends and family members. She finally made her dream come true, officially publishing her first novel on May 31st 2019, Bleeding Hearts of a Butterfly and on July 30, 2021, Hell Again. She is known for her never-dying, hard-working persistency that she aims to mature as an author.



BOOK REVIEWS

Mihret Adal Gidi's Hell Again is a story that captivates the readers from the first page. The story started with a couple that ran away from their home because their parents were not getting convinced about their marriage. Then, it moved to Adah. A bride-to-be who has landed in her hometown Ethiopia. She has a strict father. Her parents don't live together anymore but they are not divorced either. They still love each other and haven't yet moved on. Adah's father agreed to her marriage to a guy who isn't much aware of their culture. According to her father and her friend Meron, culture is important. On the last night before the wedding, when Adah was walking home, a stranger crossed her path. The next day, Adah was in the bedroom which was not hers. She felt she had seen a shadow-like figure standing behind her and that too with eyes like a red light. The dialogues are quite lively. Writing is so clear that even if you are a beginner you will be able to understand the story. Characters are unique and interesting. The book feels like I am watching some movie in the darkness of the night. The cover of this book is what caught my attention. A story worth reading.

Connect with Author Mihret Adal Gidi socially on

 Mihret_Adal_Gidi  Author-Mihret-Adal-Gidi  mercyadal

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR M I H R E T A D A L G I D I

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I would say I was quite a storyteller who could not recall when exactly she started developing her love for literature, in general. But it would be fair to put it like; I am born for it. After all, writing is what makes me feel alive. As it defines me.

Q: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I have travelled to Bahir Dar, Ethiopia to see the birthplace of Abe Gubegna; an Ethiopian author. He wrote evergreen stories that inspires many authors. One is 'Aleweledim' meaning I will not be born. It is a beautifully written story that illustrates an unborn baby mind in the belly, talking about the world and the corruptive minds that awaits it as it states the reasons why it does not want to join the world.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

Every Author desire to have honest publishers and I would say the most unethical practice in this industry is for a publishing company to have a lack of communication. Communication matters the most to make the Authors feel safe and transparency also matters, every rule they state they should follow; good communication level, acting according to the rules and lows they state to meet the author's expectations.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

I have mentioned that I feel alive when I write. This means nothing about writing exhausts me. I get to be everything when I write; each character, new behaviours and lives, new perspectives, thoughts and beliefs. It is beautiful to live a new life every time as also to be something new with each new writing.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The need to break some rules without considering common sense. Losing originality in the hope to get the majorities attention. Lack of research on a given topic. Losing connection to the story one writes.

Q: Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

Big ego might hinder self-growth, I think it is best to see other options and explore what exists outside of the box. In my opinion, I would say, art always revolves around the finding of new happenings; fictitious or non-fictitious and those new findings can help breathe life into the stories. Everything is good with limits, the ego might help some find positive results, but when it is too big, it would blind us from seeing other options. So Yes. BIG EGO hurt writers.

Q: What is your writing Kryptonite?

Editing; I find it hard to edit my own work. I would sit to edit on multiple occasions but it is hard to simply investigate the writing without considering to add on the story or to cut parts out. I find it hard to focus on other parts as my focus mostly gets corrupted by the story I would claim done. It feels like there is something I should add or omit to a given story. There will always be something new on the plate, it is never enough.

Q: Have you ever gotten a reader's block?

By far I have not faced reader's block yet. I read a lot as I also write, but I never run into a reader's block monster. Everything I have read I enjoyed all.

Q: Do you try to be original or to deliver to readers what they want?

I try to be original. I would like to escape the trap that might cause a writer's bloke and I would say one way to avoid that is by being original. Originality helps our mind to produce free thoughts and free thoughts can't easily get hindered.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I think strong emotions can make the writing more beautifully connectable, on that count I think to be a writer you don't have to feel emotions strongly. Anyone can write anything, but the question is, would the writer want his or her story to be more relatable and felt by the readers? Because, in that case, you need to feel emotions strongly.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

I used to write simply because I love it and simply because I feel like found but publishing it changed a lot for me. Sharing the stories with readers and getting good feedback helped me open my eyes to write, even more, share more stories with readers. It helps me to think about ways to mature in the field, run more research and read more.

Q: What does literary success look like to you?

For me, literary success is to be able to present a story that is evergreen; a story that generation after generation loves to read and discuss.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I have 14 books in general; 4 published, Seven unpublished and three unfinished books.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I feel honoured to be featured in DE MODE. It is a pleasure and thank you for having me.



Knightmare Arcanist

A Novel by Author Shami Stovall

ABOUT THE BOOK

Knightmare Arcanist is the winner of the B.R.A.G. Medallion for Fantasy, the New Apple Literary Award for Fantasy, and the Coffee Pot Book Club's Pick for 2020 Reading.

Critics love this fantasy adventure, first in the series!

Magic. Sailing. A murderer among heroes.

Gravedigger Volke Savan wants nothing more than to be like his hero, the legendary magical swashbuckler, Gregory Ruma. First, he needs to become an arcanist, someone capable of wielding magic, which requires bonding with a mythical creature. And he'll take anything—a pegasus, a griffin, a ravenous hydra—maybe even a leviathan, like Ruma.

So when Volke stumbles across a nightmare, a creature made of shadow and terror, he has no reservations. But the nightmare knows a terrible secret: Ruma is a murderer out to spread corrupted magic throughout their island nation. He's already killed a population of phoenixes and he intends to kill even more. In order to protect his home, his adopted sister, and the girl he admires from afar, Volke will need to confront his hero, the Master Arcanist Gregory Ruma.

A fast-paced fantasy with magical creatures for those who enjoy the Furies of Calderon (Codex Alera series) by Jim Butcher, Unsouled (Cradle Series) by Will Wight, and Percy Jackson and the Olympians by Rick Riordan.

BOOK REVIEWS

Knightmare Arcanist by Shami Stovall was rollicking good fun! Perfect for those who enjoy the Codex Alera series, the Homas Wildus series and the Harry Potter series. Stovall is quickly becoming a name I look for."

- [Seattle Book Review](#)

"Richly crafted and laced with wry humor and intriguing magic, Knightmare Arcanist is a page-turner." - [The Prairies Book Review](#)

My name is Shami (yup, just those 5 letters) was born in Utah, but grew up in California with my mother and little brother. After graduating high school, I went on to earn my BA in History from Stanislaus State, and then my Juris Doctorate from the Laurence Drivon School of Law.

My favorite novel as a child was *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell. It opened my imagination to possibilities I had never considered, and to this day I can still remember the impact it had on me.

As an adult (albeit still a kid at heart) my favorite novel is *Stranger in a Strange Land* by Robert A. Heinlein. His take on a perfect world again opened my mind to possibilities I had never considered, and Jubal Harshaw is the fictional character I most aspire to be.

I love telling stories, playing video games, reading, and writing about myself in the third person. As an author, nothing gives me more pleasure than hearing others enjoyed my work, so here's hoping you find something you enjoy!

MORE BOOK REVIEWS

"Volke carries readers into a darkly engrossing world with a passion that makes *Knightmare Arcanist* satisfyingly unique and hard to put down. Readers looking for a magic-based quest fantasy will find this story compelling and nicely written, with strong characters propelling action which is often unexpected and revealing." - [Midwest Book Review](#)

A spellbinding first instalment of what promises to be an addictive series, Shami Stovall has produced a mesmerizing story of magic, intrigue, and true adventure." - [ManyBooks](#)

Connect with Author Shami Stovall socially on

www.sastovallauthor.com [f](#) SASstovall [t](#) GameOverStation



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR SHAMI STOVALL

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is definitely my passion. I love story telling. I've been crafting narratives ever since I was a teenager. I played Dungeons & Dragons and made my own stories for the setting. I love interesting characters, powerful situations, and high stakes. Nothing compares to seeing a story come together.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I read the novel *Twilight* and thought to myself, "If this can be a published novel, anything I write can be a published novel." Thankfully, I was correct. Ever since that day, I've been heading toward my goal full tilt.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

It brings out my passion and happiness. I feel productive when I write. I feel like I'm improving the world by bringing entertainment. Those thoughts bring me happiness, and I'm just a joyful person after I've done tons of writing and editing. I wouldn't be the same person if I were putting words to paper.

Epic adventure and heroic protagonists help me escape into a world I can control. While things might look bleak (the pandemic, unstable economy, etc.) things in my stories can always be bright and virtuous. Writing really helps fight the darkness of reality.

Q: Do you believe in awards and rewards?

My novels have won several awards. My proudest award was the 2019 Cygnus Award for Space Opera. I won it for my sci-fi novel, *Star Marque Rising*. While it doesn't bring in the sales, it does help my self-esteem. I feel recognized for my hard work.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I can bring change to the literary world by adding my unique voice to it. I like a fun adventure. I don't want depressing or sad tales. I want heroes who win, bad guys who lose, and epic stakes that keep you on the edge of your seat. While some authors might want to push politics or slowly meander through a gentle tale, I want to grip the reader's imagination and never let go.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

My own favorite quote from my writing is:

"Mercy. Without it, we cannot help others find redemption. Justice. Without it, we cannot differentiate from revenge."

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing inspires me to be a better person. I want to be my protagonist. I want to be a hero—someone who succeeds no matter what.

That's how writing really inspires me!

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a writer means telling a story no matter what. I don't do it for the money or fame (although those are also nice!) I do it because I wouldn't be the same person if I weren't writing. It's crucial to my personhood.

Q: What are the common traps of aspiring writers?

The BIGGEST trap is not finishing their stories. So many new authors give up halfway because they doubt themselves, they get distracted, or they get caught up in other aspects of life. It's SO important to finish at least a rough draft! You can edit a poorly written sentence, but you can't edit a blank page.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the reader what they want?

I want to deliver a fun experience. Sometimes, that requires surprising the readers. Something, that requires giving them what they want. A true master of storytelling knows when to use which. I feel like I'm talented enough to know the difference.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Yes. You don't need to feel deep emotions to write novels. You need a determination to see your story through. You need humility and patience. You need story craft. The emotions can be built like a building, one day at a time, through the careful use of words.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

It depends on the type of novel. Science fiction stories require a lot more research. Fun fantasy adventures need a well thought out world. Both require time, but science fiction requires more research. Typically, I'll spend a couple of weeks reading in order to prep for my new sci-fi novel.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

My latest novel, *Warlord Arcanist*, is the 6th book in my Frith Chronicles series. It continues the story of Volke, the protagonist of *Knightmare Arcanist*. I don't want to give a ton of spoilers, but it's a fun fantasy adventure where people bond to mythical creatures and gain magical powers from that bond.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm truly humbled and honored to be part of this publication. Thank you so much for having me. It's been a pleasure.



R

emnants of Blood

A Novel by Author H.F. Cunningham

ABOUT THE BOOK

Remnants of Blood is the first book in a planned trilogy that takes place in the Scotland-inspired realm of the Five Kingdoms. With strong character dialect and references to Gaelic festivals and traditions, you'll be transported into a vibrant Celtic world with danger and magic around every corner. Remnants of Blood is a dark rich fantasy novel that is filled with wit, dry humour and characters that you can't help but root for. Ideal for fans of The Priory of the Orange Tree, Crier's War, Shadow and Bone or The Cruel Prince. Set in the city of Armodan, capital of the Brochlands, Remnants of Blood follows 17-year old Tannin – a bakery assistant whose sharp wit, sharper tongue and healthy disregard for authority gets her in enough trouble as it is - after her grandfather passes away leaving cryptic clues that lead her into a secret world of magic and monsters. What Tannin always thought were myths and legends about the Fair Folk and their descendants with magic in their veins turn out to not only be true but far closer to home than she could ever have imagined. Remnants, as they are called, are real and they're being hunted by a group that calls themselves the Triquetra. And she might just be on their hit list. A childhood illness left Tannin with little to no memory of her past and her grandfather's old paranoid journal entries are all she has to go on to try and piece together a life she doesn't remember but one that is catching up to her quick. But with secret societies out to get her, a crushing debt left behind by her grandfather to a formidable local Laird, not to mention her own strange and confusing powers, Tannin doesn't have much time to dwell on her conflicting feelings for Ava...much.

HF Cunningham is the author of Remnants of Blood – a Young Adult/Adult dark fantasy novel that debuted on 14th September 2021.

HF Cunningham was born, and grew up, in Scotland and it holds a special place in her heart and elements of Scottish mythology, geography and history as well as distinctive dialects can be found throughout her book. Now living in Germany with her partner and their spoiled fluffy cat, Cunningham speaks English and German although admits her German grammar is still atrocious.

Cunningham studied to become an Electrical and Mechanical Engineer at the University of Strathclyde and worked as an engineer in the automotive industry for several years. However, fantasy books and reading were always important to her and she had always had the idea of writing her own in the back of her mind.

She started writing seriously after losing her job in the Corona Pandemic which she now considers a blessing in disguise as she was able to develop her true passion for writing and storytelling. Now working part-time in order to dedicate more of her time to writing and publishing, Cunningham is actively working on the next book in the Remnants series.

Cunningham is a self-published author and worked with a number of freelance artists and editors to bring her book to life including a wonderful fantasy map that the characters will get to explore as the series progresses. The publishing part of being a self-published author was one of the more challenging aspects for Cunningham as it was brand new territory with a myriad of options and routes to follow. She credits a lot of her success with the final product to the freelancers she worked with but also to the self-published authors she came into contact with who provided advice and resources.

Connect with Author H.F. Cunningham socially on

www.hfcunningham.com [hfcunningham](https://twitter.com/hfcunningham) [hfcunningham.author](https://www.instagram.com/hfcunningham.author)



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR H.F. CUNNINGHAM

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

I'd say that it's just who I am. I've always made up stories in my head, I've always loved reading and getting lost in fantasy worlds. It's a passion that I have strong emotions about.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

"F*** it." Well, to put it more eloquently, it was more along the lines of "Why not? It's something you've always thought about so why not try it? What's the worst that could happen? - that I realise writing's not for me? I can live with that."

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing really helps my creative side. Before I was working in a very technical environment and I was missing that extra bit of self-fulfilling satisfaction of creating things. It makes me happy.

Q: Do you believe in awards and rewards?

Absolutely both. I reward myself with little treats when I reach my goals - whether it writing or just getting all the ironing done - however, I firmly believe that the end result of something be it a book, a film, a great grade or anything that you're proud of deserves some kind of award.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

Representation. I write books that I, as a queer lover of fantasy, would love to read. My books feature a number of queer and diverse characters in fantasy settings just living their lives and having the same struggles and adventures that straight characters have in the majority of fantasy fiction.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

From my book? "Well," Tannin said putting her hands on her hips, "f***." I like this quote because it sums up my main character so clearly and demonstrated the tone of my book - it doesn't take itself too seriously.

Favourite quote in general? "You can't edit a blank page." You can't improve anything that you never start.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

The whole writing journey has so many sources of inspiration. I've met some amazing authors and gotten great book recommendations but also seeing that writing is something that I can do and that I think I'm good at is a phenomenal boost to keep at it.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

It's all about creating. Creating worlds and characters and personalities and dialogue and

plots and subplots. It's taking a world that you see every day and making it into something new.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

Honestly, it still hasn't quite sunk in that I am an author. My debut novel has only been out a short while (and the response has been amazing) but it still hasn't hit me yet that I Did It.

Q: What are the common traps of aspiring writers?

The biggest one is judging your first try too harshly. That's why I love the quote about editing a blank page so much. Of course, the first try is going to suck a bit. So is the second. And the third. But it's going to get better each time. And you learn more with every little bit.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the reader what they want?

Both. I like to use Scottish Mythology and celtic influences for my monsters and magic which are something a little less explored in fantasy (with the exclusion of faeries of course) but tropes are tropes for a reason and I adore the classics like "enemies to lovers".

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Absolutely. There are thousands of different writing styles just as there are thousands of different readers. You don't have to delve deeply into emotion to be a good writer. That being said though - you do have to understand how your characters would feel and react in response to your plots. Understanding emotion is the ability to explain to others what a process is so that they could further tell someone else. Writing is about imagination. It isn't and cannot be about making yourself physically go through what your character is going through.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

This answer will definitely change for the sequels to Remnants of Blood because I have learned to do my pre-work, but for the first one my writing style was a bit chaotic and I researched as I went. So zero research before and then bits and pieces as I wrote and as more of the plot came together.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Very surprised. I'm a brand new author and to be contacted by a magazine like DE MODE so shortly after the release of my debut is extremely exciting but also unexpected. I'm very grateful that DE MODE decided to reach out to me.



Burnt to a Crisp

A Novel by Author Michael O'Keefe

ABOUT THE BOOK

Detective Paddy Durr is back in *Burnt to a Crisp*, Michael O'Keefe's third installment in the Durr series. This time out, life hasn't gotten any easier for Paddy and his heroic wife, Mairead. She is near death from 9/11 cancers, contracted from her time volunteering at Ground Zero after the attacks nineteen years earlier. Paddy is distraught, operating under the prospect of losing her.

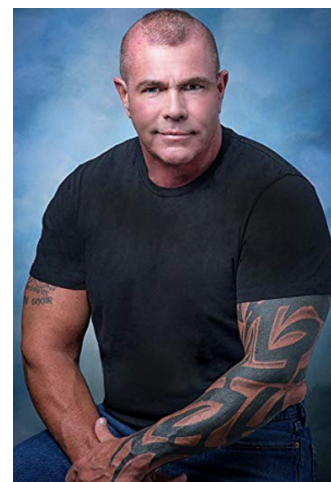
An enemy from within the NYPD has bared her fangs and is coming after his job. Dr. Deborah Levine is a department psychiatrist out to get Paddy's guns taken away, in retribution for scorning her sexual advances a year before. She tried then without success, but this time she has the power of the corrupt mayor and his insidious wife's backing.

Through all of this, Paddy has just caught an Arson/Triple Homicide that no one but him and his partner seem to want solved. A drug lord from the neighborhood has placed an embargo on the witnesses, refusing to let them tell Durr what he already knows. He has a suspect and a motive, but only reluctant witnesses. Forensic evidence is at a premium, but when fire is a killer's modus operandi, there is little left that didn't burn away in the flames.

With cancer destroying his personal life, and a vindictive doctor trying to end his career, the clock is ticking. Durr will need a miracle to save his wife and career, and some luck and old-school detective work to solve his case and give his innocent victims justice. But time isn't on Paddy's side, and he has learned not to expect a miracle from a God he is sure has forsaken him.

It's no wonder Durr is *Burnt to a Crisp*.

Michael O'Keefe is a retired 1st Grade Detective from the NYPD, and a novelist, poet, and playwright. Working in the toughest neighborhoods in New York, specializing in homicides and other violent crime, he was born and raised on the dangerous streets he likes to write about.



His debut novel, *Shot to Pieces*, the first installment of the Detective Paddy Durr series premiered in early July of 2016. For its realism and attention to detail, it has been included in the curriculum at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and St. John's University.

13 Stories-Fractured, Twisted & Put Away Wet is a collection of prize-winning short fiction released in March 2019.

A Reckoning in Brooklyn, a historical crime thriller released November 2019, is the prequel to *Shot to Pieces*. The book introduces Paddy Durr as a seventeen-year-old and reveals what prompted him to become a Detective.

Book III in the series, *Burnt to a Crisp*, debuted in late spring 2021 to critical acclaim. True crime impresario T.J. English, the author of the classics, *The Westies*, *Paddy Whacked*, and *Where the Bodies are Buried*, said about it, "Nobody writes New York cops—or police work—better than Michael O'Keefe. With *Burnt to a Crisp*, he reintroduces Paddy Durr, a stellar detective and a flawed human being, and sends him on a roller coaster ride of an investigation involving arson and murder. If you want to experience the granular detail of detective work through the experiences of fully realized characters who happen to be police officers and public servants, do yourself a favour.

Book III in the series, *Burnt to a Crisp*, debuted in late spring 2021 to critical acclaim. True crime impresario T.J. English, the author of the classics, *The Westies*, *Paddy Whacked*, and *Where the Bodies are Buried*, said about it, "Nobody writes New York cops—or police work—better than Michael O'Keefe. With *Burnt to a Crisp*, he reintroduces Paddy Durr, a stellar detective and a flawed human being, and sends him on a roller coaster ride of an investigation involving arson and murder. If you want to experience the granular detail of detective work through the experiences of fully realized characters who happen to be police officers and public servants, do yourself a favour.

Get this book...now!"

Connect with Author Michael O'Keefe socially on

www.michaelokeefeauthor.com

[58054835-burnt-to-a-crisp](https://www.instagram.com/58054835-burnt-to-a-crisp)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR MICHAEL O'KEEFE

Q: Is writing your passion or an emotion?

It is my emotional passion, and I'm passionately emotional about it.

Q: What was the final impetus that made you write a book?

I had been threatening to write a book since I retired from the NYPD. My wife, Janet, evidently got tired of hearing it. She bought me a laptop and said, "Get to it, Hemmingway." Shot to Pieces was born a year later.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

It focuses me and leaves little time for me to get myself into trouble.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I don't see why I have to choose. They are not mutually exclusive of each other.

Q: How can you bring change to the literary world?

I can add to it. I also offer professional expertise and experience to crime fiction never seen before.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

I have so many favourites. Right now, I'm editing a novel. So I am reminded of what Stephen King said about cutting words. "When it comes to cutting, one should cut to the bone. It's a bit like murdering your children, but it must be done."

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing is the thing I must do. Inspiration is external. It's what moves me to write. I find these days, not writing unbalances me. It makes me anxious if I haven't written anything in a few days. So, at this point, it's a full-blown compulsion bordering on an obsession.

Q: What does it mean to be a writer?

For me, it's a realization of a dream. I am expressing myself—hopefully with eloquence—and sharing it with the world. It's really no different from what Shakespeare did. I hope to one day have as many readers.

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

I was in 7th grade when I was first introduced to creative writing. I had a blinding crush on my teacher. So, when I was through obsessing over her beauty, I thought, Damn, I really like this writing thing.

Q: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I've had whiskeys at the White Horse Tavern, at the same table Dylan Thomas had his last. I've been to the Chelsea Hotel, the Gramercy Park Hotel for the Algonquin Round Table (Sadly, it

no longer meets.) I was born, raised, and still live in New York. So, the list is long and growing. In the future, I hope to visit Paris, where Hemmingway penned A Moveable Feast, and Stratford on Avon from where the Bard emerged. I'm presently hunting the true locations F. Scott Fitzgerald used for inspiration for East Egg and West Egg in The Great Gatsby. I'm using them for my next novel, a WWI historical saga entitled, Armistice Day for Johnny Kear.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

There are a lot, but the most unethical is traditional publishing's insistence on dealing only with agents. The agents have become a narrow funnel for written words, creating a logjam. Nothing emerges to the publishing houses until these self-styled tastemakers allow it. Then they charge the writer fifteen per cent for the privilege of letting their work see the light of day. That is why I am an independent author. I'm not consenting to the shakedown.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

I like to think I became a better writer. Like all new novelists, the tendency is to overwrite. As I am writing in a very technical field, there is an urge to over-explain the science of forensics. I don't do that anymore. I trust my reader. I also use dialogue more to tell the story. Good writing shows. It doesn't tell. Nothing is more effective for that than dialogue.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

I think of the finished ones as soon-to-be-published, and the half-finished ones as works in progress. I have two completed soon-to-be-published novels and one in progress. I also have another short story collection brewing as well as a book of poetry.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am excited about being revealed to your readership. It's an opportunity to broaden my appeal and expand my following. It also gives me an opportunity to highlight the incredible humanity of the Detectives in the NYPD, their personal stories and extraordinary and selfless devotion to their fellow citizens. I believe that this reality has been somewhat lost in the cacophony of media bias and the anti-police movement. These stories need to be told, for balance if nothing else. It's also an opportunity to share the gritty insider's viewpoint of iconic New York locations for readers who might otherwise not be exposed to them.



H

heavy is the Head

A Novel by Author Katrina N. Lewis

OPENING SCENE

It was a bright spring day when Calla Emery kneed the man her mother sent to woo her, deep in the crotch. Her knee went rather high and deep. Probably because his cock is little, she thought with a snicker. He doubled over, stumbling to the door and falling against it. The bell jingled harshly and while she hoped the scene wouldn't gather a crowd outside the shop, she was more concerned about this man being gone. He had tried to kiss her, without her permission, and wouldn't stop when she said so. "And don't come back!" Calla yelled at him. It was the third man she'd chased off this week—a rather slow pace for her mother.

BOOK BLURB

Paths Cross. Love Blooms. War Rages.

"By order of His Majesty the king..." These words changed Calla Emery's life forever. With her father missing and her mother falling ill, Calla is forced to enter the world of nobility to leave her family's commoner status behind to land a wealthy husband - despite her family's messy history with the royal family. Little does she know, beyond her wildest dreams, that there's magic that lies behind the castle walls, both good...and evil. And she's going to get more than she bargained for.

"The sun will never set on the kingdom of Dragoon." Prince Mekai Okoro would do anything for his father. He would fight in any war, at any cost - or so he thought. With a civil war looming in the realm, a fight for the royal crown brewing, and dragon magic coursing through his veins, Prince Mekai must decide if he will be his own man or will he be who his father wants him to be, a warmonger. And, what will Calla and Mekai do when they realize that love is their greatest adversary...and ally?

Katrina N. Lewis is an indie author who enjoys writing all things fiction - fantasy, romance, sci-fi, drama, you name it! She loves a good story. In fact, her favorite subject is history! Katrina is a Philly native and proud grad of Temple University. She's passionate about creating stories about extraordinary adventures with diverse characters and worlds.

With a love for worldbuilding and creating interesting characters, Katrina had a passion for writing since she could pick up a pen or use a keyboard. And with the help of the inspiring words of her father, has always wanted to chase her dreams to become the storyteller she's always wanted to be.

Katrina's most recent work includes A Crimson City, a fantasy, romantic, short story drama that takes place in the fictional kingdom of Dragoon, and its full-length sequel, Heavy is the Head: Love & War that can be purchased on Amazon in eBook and paperback format.

When she isn't writing, Katrina loves re-watching her favorite movies and TV shows like Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, Avatar the Last Airbender, and Game of Thrones. She also loves to dance, eat good food and spend time with her big family and wonderful fiancé.

BOOK REVIEWS

So good you won't want it to end. I received this book in exchange for a fair review. I bought the ebook because I loved it. It took me a while to read this book and I realized that it was because I didn't want to let it go. I think that's the greatest compliment I can give any book; I read slowly because I didn't want it to end. It is a fantasy romance with all the twists and turns of Game of Thrones, but with more heart. I loved it.
- Arietta (Reviewed in the United States)

Connect with Author Katrina Lewis socially on
Instagram [katrinawrites_](#) 58059519-heavy-is-the-head



THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR KATRINA N. LEWIS

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is certainly my passion! I've always had the passion to tell fantastical stories about characters going on fantastical adventures. When I decided to take my author journey seriously, is when I decided to finally accept my passion as part of who I am.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I was provoked by the lack of representation I noticed in the media in regard to diverse storytelling featuring Black characters and thought that if I could make a difference, I should.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing just makes me feel so good! I'm usually in the best mood after I've written a chapter or fixed a plot hole. Writing excites me because it's when I feel most expressive and inventive. It feels like I've just got done exercising!

Q: Do you believe in awards and rewards?

Sure, I do. Great work and reaching your goals, whatever they are, should be celebrated and rewarded. I often tell my friends to reward themselves with an extra slice of cake when they've accomplished something.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I can bring change simply by creating the stories I want to read. By doing so, I'm creating a space for other authors who look like me to do the same and be successful at it. With my platform, I can advocate on the behalf of other authors as well as showcase my own work to readers to show them that diverse storytelling matters. I can spend my money with other independent authors of color and encourage others to do the same. The possibilities of how I can change the literature world is endless, and I want others to know that they can be that change too.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

By far one of my favorite quotes is by Toni Morrison, "If there's a book that you want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it." I live by this!

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

I'm mostly inspired by music! Music gets me moving just as much as writing does. Sometimes, I have to cut the music off because I'll end up dancing

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a writer just means being able to create with words! If you can create with words, whether that's with poetry, a short story, the

description of an advertisement, you are a writer!

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

Oh, it feels incredible! I feel like I really made my younger self so proud!

Q: What are the common traps of aspiring writers?

Believing that someone is going to steal your idea! Granted, I COULD happen but not like how you think. Don't be afraid to share your work with social media or beta readers! You want others excited about what you're writing just as much as you are.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the reader what they want?

What a hard question! I try to stick to being original in the developmental stages of the story even if I'm inspired by other works. Though giving readers what they want is super tempting, everyone can't be and won't be pleased!

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Sure, why not! Who am I to judge! I love to write fantasy and have never once rode a dragon! Writers often try to become the characters they're writing, to move through them and see the world through their lens. Just because someone may not feel emotions strongly doesn't mean the character they're writing is the same way!

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I spend time researching tons. Everything from what certain names mean, languages, culture and so much more. I usually spend about a couple of weeks in the research process before starting a book, however, the research itself doesn't end until the book is finished. Something could always come up!

Q: Do you have any upcoming books?

Yes! I'm currently working on the sequel and finale to the Heavy is the Head duology. The second book is called, Heavy is the Head: Kingdom Come, and I can't wait to be able to share it with the world! Readers will get to see what happened to Calla and Mekai after the events in book one as the world ascends into magical chaos and war. I'm so excited.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

So honoured and touched. Many thanks to DE MODE for featuring me! This has truly been a pleasure. To be able to see me featured in a magazine as an author is so cool. Thank you for making one of my dreams come true.



ABOUT THE BOOK

Two worlds colliding, one man, the other a vampire—who form a strong bond and eventually, bound by a blood covenant known as the dark gift, are destined to create a world of their own until their love is violently ripped apart by jealousy and rage. Love eventually triumphs over despair and misery, only in a different place and time, but are they destined to be together?! Laurent Richelieu is a 250-year-old vampire who's lover and vampire maker Fabien Levesque—is destroyed in front of him in a jealous fit of rage by his vampire maker Stefan, exacting revenge for Fabien's rejecting him. Laurent narrowly escapes—leaving Paris to set forth to settle the New World and seek shelter and refuge in the newly established city of New Orleans anonymously with his trusted servant Barthelme sworn to Laurent's secret. Cloaked in darkness—Laurent struggles with modern times and, in deep despair, haunts the French Quarter's jazz bars—listening to beautiful music and seeking out dark tables in the back to hide his blood-soaked tears to mourn the loss of his long-lost love Fabien. Deep isolation and loneliness consume another: Jack Devereaux, a man's man, and a self-loathing gay man. Jack recently, having come out as gay from a ten-year failed marriage to a woman. Jack feels estranged from connecting with his gay community - his Catholic faith forbids it. He feels as if he's unable to exist as either straight or gay. His reluctance in accepting his true sexuality leads him from one disastrous sexual encounter to another. Swearing off his same-sex attraction leads Jack back into a straight jazz bar where, unknowingly—he meets a refined and elegant gentleman that entices, attracts, and, oddly, disturbs Jack. Are they destined to be together?—does Laurent honestly care for Jack? **Get your copy of 'The Darkest Gift' today.**

The Darkest Gift

A Novel by Author Len Handeland

Len Handeland has always enjoyed writing and drawn to being creative—as far back as he can remember. Back in middle school, when he and his classmates were assigned a book report, and the others groaned, Len cheered—not only being given an exciting novel to read but also to compose the essay assignment as well. Everything had to be perfect, the spelling, grammar, and accuracy



regarding the subject matter. Later on—in his late teens, Len attended FIT in Manhattan studying fashion illustration; years later, he decided to pursue a career in the hair industry using his artistic training and creativity to excel in hair. He decided to pursue writing after reading many of Anne Rice's work (having read all of her Vampire chronicle books) and after having attended many creative writing classes and attending the San Francisco International writers' conference—decided it was time for him to write a Vampire story of his own; in his words, given Len's affinity for vampires.

Handeland says, "I wrote "The Darkest Gift" as I felt no other author had written an enthralling vampire romance novel since Anne Rice, which was a breakthrough in featuring two vampires of the same gender as a couple. Being a life-long fan of vampires starting when I was a small child and into my adult years, I wanted to write a compelling and enthralling book where the characters are complicated (both my human and vampire characters) and that same-sex couples are far less ambiguous about their sexual orientation than in vampire books of the last century. Where the emphasis is on love, whether between a human and a vampire or two vampires (of the same gender), it was vital for me to avoid anything graphically sexual, but instead, the focus is on the sensual aspect of two men together.

In August of this year (2021), Author Len has started writing his 2nd novel entitled "Requiem for Miriam".

Connect with Author Len Handeland socially on

 www.lenhandelandauthor.com

 [21426110.Len_Handeland](https://www.instagram.com/21426110.Len_Handeland)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR LEN HANDELAND

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing is my passion infused with many emotions, such as happiness, sadness, love, hate, and self-discovery or self-actualization as it relates to each character in my books.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

Being a life-long fan of vampires starting when I was a small child and into my adult years, I wanted to write a compelling and enthralling book where the characters are complicated (both humans and vampires) and that the same-sex couples are far less ambiguous about their sexual orientation than in vampire books of the last century.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

I am an entertainer by nature, a storyteller. I do this by creating worlds and characters and situations that readers can get lost in to escape this complex and often troubled world we all live in. I believe that is one of my best attributes, entertaining others with my writing.

Q: Do you believe in awards and rewards?

I believe in rewards, and for me, that is the feeling I have when readers appreciate my work by reading the stories I have told in my books. For me, that is validation; awards are merely for a person's ego.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

In my books, I try to be inclusive of marginalized people. I like to dispel stereotypes so that the literary world becomes more inclusive so that it continues to become more diverse.

Q: What is your favorite quote?

"You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be defeated." - Maya Angelou

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

I can only speak for myself. As an author, there are voices inside of me that are dying to be told. By writing, I am inspired to share those voices with others that would read what's been inside needing to be said.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

As I mentioned earlier, I consider myself a storyteller and an entertainer; it's what I love the most, to entertain readers with my work and elicit reactions to the many emotions I put into my work. That's magical pure and straightforward.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

I adore being a writer; to bring joy to others through my books is humbling and extremely gratifying.

Q: What are the common traps of aspiring writers?

Again, I can only speak for myself. I tend to overanalyze my writing long before it's been sent to an editor. It's true; analysis paralysis is a real dilemma at times. That can be a real trap for writers.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the reader what they want?

For me, it's both. I like to deliver something to my readers that may be based on something, but in my own words, story, and style. That's what separates my work from other writers.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I believe it takes emotions and a passion to be able to write an extraordinary book. Look at the various genres, fiction, and nonfiction, biographical and historical; there has to be a passion for the research and creativity in writing; I don't believe in simply writing for the sake of writing. There should be a bond between both reader and writer.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

That all depends on what I'm writing. Suppose it's a specific period; I research that in-depth to reference some of those events in time in my book. Even though my books are mostly fiction, there needs to be a certain amount of truth and accuracy; they can't all be made up.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books?

Yes, I started writing my second novel entitled "Requiem for Miriam" It's a murder, crime, drama, with paranormal activity set in Manhattan, Westchester County, and Mexico in the 1980s. It should hopefully be launched just before the New Year (2022).

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm ecstatic! Thank you so much for writing about my book!

BOOK REVIEWS

"An engaging and vivid Vampire tale" - Len Handeland paints a vivid and engaging vampire story full of rich imagination and passionate emotions. It is as much a story of love and revenge as it is a vampire odyssey. An easy and fun read. - KenHendSF (Reviewed in the United States)

"Engaging and easy to read!!!!" - You will easily be engaged with the narrative of this novel that goes through hundreds of years and the universal themes of love, good and evil! - Howard (Reviewed in the US)



Jamini Roy

Aicon Gallery
Brooklyn, New York, U.S.

One of India's first modernists, Jamini Roy developed a unique aesthetic that balanced traditional Indian iconography and materials with Western sensibilities. Roy studied under the renowned artist Abanindranath Tagore at the Government College of Art and Craft in Kolkata and learned to paint in an academic style. As a young man, he became a successful portraitist, regularly receiving commissions for impressionist-style paintings. Inspired by the rise of Indian nationalism, Roy eventually abandoned Western artistic styles in favor of the flat compositions and naturally derived pigments of traditional Bengali folk art, calligraphy, and temple decoration. He combined these with modern, graphic lines in his paintings of figures, animals, and mythological scenes. Roy's works can be found in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London and the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi (India), among others.

11

BOOKS TO ADD TO YOUR READING LIST THIS WINTER



THE CRANES OF BLACKWELL
BY AUTHOR J.D. KELLNER

THE BINDING TEMPEST
BY AUTHOR STEVEN RUDY

A WICKED WIND: BOOK 2 OF THE ARCHANUM CODEX
BY AUTHOR NICHOLAS MCINTIRE

THE IMPOSTOR AND OTHER DARK TALES
BY AUTHOR MARLENA FRANK

THE DROWNING
BY AUTHOR JONAS SAUL

XONARYE
BY AUTHOR SCOTT SHEPHERD

HALE: THE RISE OF THE GRIFFINS
BY AUTHOR J.K. NOBLE

THE GIFT OF ABIRAMI
BY AUTHOR CLAUDIO ANUGRA

USER: BASED ON A TRUE STORY
BY AUTHOR FIVOS PANAYIOTOU

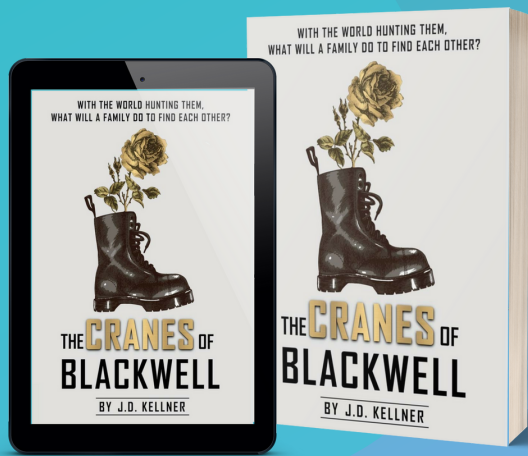
EL LECHON CHONCHO
BY AUTHOR JENNIFER S. SEGARRA

SANTA'S NEW TEAM
BY AUTHOR TREVOR M.K. AIREY

eleven

Get to know writers who will capture our

LITERARY HEARTS



THE CRANES OF BLACKWELL

BY AUTHOR J.D. KELLNER

J.D. Kellner is the author of *The Cranes of Blackwell*. His debut novel, *The Cranes of Blackwell* is the culmination of six years of long nights and loving support for his dream from his family.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Bergden and Alyssa Crane are dutiful citizens of the Regime living in the city of Blackwell. Under the ever-watching eye of the tyrannical Chancellor Kroft, the people of the city tirelessly just to make ends meet and avoid the ire of the Regime. Bergden, a Regime blackjack enforcer, and Alyssa, a faithful wife and teacher, do what they can to provide for their son, James, even when it means sacrificing their very freedom to the Regime.

Bergden is a man scarred by war, and his only relief from his memories lay in the love of Alyssa. Each day he strays further from the Regime's oppression from being a cog in the machine to openly sympathizing with those he was meant to oppress. The life of blackjack is not for the faint of heart.

After kissing his wife goodbye as he did every day, Bergden's workday started like any other, but when Bergden is accused of treason, the Regime sets its sights on the Crane family. The Cranes must flee for their lives to escape the terrible reach of the Regime's blackjacks. Bergden is absconded by his blackjack partner and friend, but Alyssa is not so lucky as she is arrested and faces a merciless interrogation by the Regime. With their lives turned upside down, Bergden and Alyssa become separated, leaving their life and their young son James behind to an unknown fate.

The Crane family, living in the iron grip of the brutal, unforgiving Regime, is torn asunder. The Cranes must overcome the impossible odds stacked against them and conquer their demons to be reunited as a family once more.

Get your copy of *The Cranes of Blackwell* today.



THE AUTHOR


Born in the small rural town of Kittanning (Pennsylvania, USA), J.D. found an affinity for science fiction and fantasy through the works of Neil Gaiman, Stephen King, and J.R.R. Tolkien. Inspired by their words, J.D. started writing short stories about through the wilds of his imagination. Through

these stories, J.D. began to build confidence in his writing.

Writing for pleasure took a backseat to the rigours of academia. As a history and classical studies major, J.D. wrote works rife with analysis and critical viewpoints of major historical events. Interpreting the words of others carried on through his graduate work in intelligence analysis culminating in 2010. Within a few years, the passion for fantasy and science fiction, J.D. reemerged, and his journey to becoming a published author began. J.D. Kellner's affinity for science fiction and fantasy attracted him to the writing world.

In 2016, with the support of his family, J.D. was encouraged to explore through writing. Through every stumble and setback, the strength J.D. pulled from the love and passion around him gave him the chance to put pen to paper with unbound confidence. The first draft of *The Cranes of Blackwell* was completed eventually finding a home with Dark Brew Press.

Read musings and short stories by J.D. Kellner and connect with him socially on

 www.jdkellner.com

 [authorjdkellner](https://www.facebook.com/authorjdkellner)

 [AuthorJDKellner](https://twitter.com/AuthorJDKellner)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR J. D. KELLNER

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The Cranes of Blackwell was birthed from the inspiration of numerous dystopian works. I did not set out to create a message about the state of the world but rather to catalog the journey of a strong husband and wife separated by the unforeseen but sworn to overcome the ills of their world to unite once more.

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

For me, writing is an escape from the rigors of reality and the hazards of a world gone crazy. Writing is also a legacy for me to pass down to my children and grandchildren. I want them to read my words and take the same journeys I did when I first put pen to paper.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

Authors are always on the fence about awards. I think awards are a great way to be acknowledged by peers for a job well done. However, we should not judge the standard of the written word solely by the awards on a shelf but by the author's passion for bringing their pages to life.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

Change for the literary world means getting as many stories in front of as many readers as possible. All authors have a voice that yearns to be heard. With today's technology, the time is now to give all writers a chance to be heard.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined." –Henry David Thoreau. We only have this life to live and placing our dreams to the side is not an option.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

Writing inspires me to pull forth my imagination and allow my inner child to flourish. Even at the age of 35, I love to build worlds full of fantasy and wonder. I hope to pass this love of creation to my children, and that is a major source of inspiration for me.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

Being a writer does not necessarily mean someone who is published. Writing takes on many forms, and all are valuable to the writer themselves. Whether it is a book, journal, or poem, writing means engaging in the process to create something new.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

I love being an author. I know I still have a long

way to go as I practice my craft, but as an author, I have seen my world, my characters come to life before my very eyes. Readers share in that same joy as they experience my world.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

The trap I fell into when I first started writing was trying to be a perfectionist. There will be a time and a place to edit, and the first draft is not it. Get your story to paper and to an ending, then go back and edit. There will be errors, there will be holes, but you are not alone. That's why seek out editors.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

Writing isn't a business for me. I write what I want to write about and what I am passionate about. Otherwise, my words will be disingenuous and lack passion behind them. I wrote for an audience for many years while in school. Now, I write what I choose to, and if readers came along on that journey, all the better.

Q: Can someone be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I think anyone can be a writer, but it depends on what you want to write. Emotions play an important role in character development. The ebbs and flows of the story are driven by character emotion, and if you can't empathize with the characters, it's tough to get lost in the plot.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Research for science fiction is a requirement for me. The physics of space and terminology are beyond my scope and require heavy research. There are times I research common tropes to see how they might apply to a story. Research may include watching movies or reading from similar genres to see how certain plot points may or may not work.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

My short story, Megan, is coming out as part of a science fiction/horror anthology called Remnants from Fedowar Press.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm excited to have The Cranes of Blackwell featured in DE MODE. DE MODE is a leading global magazine of the arts, and I consider it a great honor to be featured.



THE BINDING TEMPEST

BY AUTHOR STEVEN RUDY

Steven Rudy is the author of The Binding Tempest (Book One of the Luminance Saga) published by MysticHawk Press LLC. Available from most online booksellers and Amazon.

ABOUT THE BOOK

They thought the war was over. That their days of fighting were behind them. That they had given enough, but when an oppressive empire falls, what comes from the ashes, is turmoil and treachery.

Ellaria Moonstone, an alchemist, and a hero of the Great War has spent the last forty years trying to rebuild. An emissary for the Scholar's Guild, her life's work has been in establishing universities throughout the world. But as a former general that led the resistance in overthrowing the Sagean Empire, she has watched as all she fought for has slowly eroded away and with it, her faith in the republic. Now in her mid-fifties, her singular focus has been to protect all knowledge for future generations.

When Ellaria is suspiciously requested to attend a meeting in the capital city of Adalon, she quickly realizes something is amiss and the main governing body the Coalition of Nations may be compromised. When the Peace King of the Free Cities goes missing the plot to overthrow the tenuous republic takes shape, and Ellaria becomes convinced that the entity manipulating the fragile government is in servitude to a new Sagean Emperor. A Luminary with the powers to control energy.

The Binding Tempest is the beginning of an immerse saga, of magic, alchemy, airships, and ancient mysteries. A new epic Sci-Fi and Fantasy series that is a classic High Fantasy Adventure injected with Steampunk science. For fans of The Wheel of Time series, Shadow and Bone and the Stormlight Archives.

Get your copy of The Binding Tempest today.



THE AUTHOR


Steven Rudy has wandered around decrepit & dying buildings, investigated old churches, and abandoned gold mills, all while working on historical projects throughout Colorado. After almost two decades in the field of architecture, where he also designed award winning custom homes and commercial buildings,


Steven chose to finally pen his debut novel.

When quarantine hit the United States in 2020, and most of his architectural projects were put on hold, Steven decided to channel his creative energy into writing a book. For roughly a decade prior a fantasy novel had slowly taken shape in his mind and the time had come to see it realized. Inspired by the ideas of energy and unknown forces that connect people, The Binding Tempest is a delve into adult fantasy and science fiction that's equally influenced by classic fantasy like The Wheel of Time and adventure films like Indiana Jones.

Steven lives in Colorado with his wife and three kids. He is an avid fan of film and literature. His favourite novels are East of Eden, The Sun Also Rises, and The Curious Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. He goes to every Bob Dylan concert within five hundred miles, and he doesn't function until after his morning coffee. Now that he has written his first novel he can't wait to work on more.

Connect with Author Steven Rudy socially on

 [58083292-the-binding-tempest](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/58083292-the-binding-tempest)

 www.stevenrudybooks.com

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR STEVEN RUDY

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I came across a television show, with Neil DeGrasse Tyson about the nature of light and simultaneously I was reading about Nikola Tesla and his philosophies. Each were describing the universe as energy-filled and mysterious. It struck me that it was fantastical and mystical. Tesla said, "Everything is light. Matter is an expression of infinite forms of light; because energy is older than it."

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Passion and emotion are closely entwined, but for me, writing is a refuge for my restless creativity, more than an outlet for strong emotion. Acts of expression can be restorative, so inevitably there is an emotional component, but I find my reason for writing is out of a passion to express ideas more than a need for emotional catharsis.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

I believe writing makes me a more empathetic person. The outlet of creativity also provides a charge of excitement and wonder that I'm able to carry into my life and my interactions with my children.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I'm not sure those are things to believe in. Rewards can be a valuable tool for motivation, but they can be poisonous too. Recognition and awards are fleeting and outside your control and I like to maintain my focus elsewhere.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

There is a capacity for change in everything and all institutes have the obligation to adapt. For the current literary climate that may be a change in perception. I would love it if the perception of an indie author could become tantamount to indie music and independent filmmaking. In my own work, I try to bring the sense of philosophy and heart found in literary fiction to fantasy fiction.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"Life is not about finding yourself or finding anything. Life is about creating yourself and creating things." – Bob Dylan

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

There are moments when I'm writing when I find the truth of something. Not necessarily a "real truth", but the truth for the story and the scene and the perfect words to punctuate it. In those moments, I surprise myself and that ability to surprise myself is inspiring.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

To be a writer is to be an archaeologist of your own mind and soul. Between the endless stream of decisions, the self-doubt, the highs, and the lows of creating something, I find the meaning of being a writer is, perseverance.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Failure to finish and failure to push past barriers. First and foremost, you must finish. The best piece of advice I found on writing; was to finish. I struggle with the second part. Inevitably there are moments where the story can go down multiple paths. Sometimes the right path is the hardest one. It's hard to commit to that challenge.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I try to write scenes and characters I would want to read. In that pursuit, I try to be original, and I try to be clever, but originality is often overrated. Sometimes originality is simply a well-disguised influence, reimagined. I also don't believe established tropes are something to run from.

Q: Can someone be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

Sure, there are all kinds of writers and all kinds of readers. I think the best kind of books provoke thought and emotion in the reader. But whether the author was emotionally connected is probably less important than if they were thoughtfully invested when crafting the story.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Research can be a dangerous rabbit hole that I can struggle to reemerge from. It's hard to quantify, but for every creative piece of science fiction in my book, I researched each for a few hours to properly form the idea with a foundation. Sometimes single words and terminology can be their own research project.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

My upcoming book is called, Shadow Bound Souls. It's book two in my series, The Luminance Saga. It is tentatively scheduled to be released at the end of Dec or early January 2022. It picks up right where the first book left off.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am very excited for my work to reach a wider audience. I'm also tremendously appreciative for the opportunity to provide a sense of perspective to the authorship of my book. Thank you for this opportunity.



A WICKED WIND

BOOK 2 OF THE ARCHANIUM CODEX

BY AUTHOR NICHOLAS MCINTIRE

A Wicked Wind, written by Author Nicholas McIntire, is epic fantasy at its best. A worthy and almost impossible to put down the second book in the Archanium Codex saga series.

ABOUT THE BOOK

As the aftershocks of Kalinor's fall radiate through the realm of Ilyar, Prince Jonas Belgi finds himself fighting a very different war. As he battles for his very soul, powerful forces are in motion to remove him from the world entirely, lest the contradictory magic burning within him engulf the entire world in a conflagration that no one, not even his beloved Hunter Aleksei Drago, could hope to survive.

Even as Jonas begins the impossible task of escaping his prison, the Lord Captain is caught up in a savage civil war. As the fractured remnants of the Legions attempt to regroup, seeking refuge from the hordes of rebel soldiers hot on their trail, Aleksei is confronted by a new nemesis, a creature at once invisible and indestructible.

Aleksei must be constantly vigilant for the howling wind that stalks him, waiting to catch him off-guard, thus forfeiting both his and Jonas's lives. Aleksei is torn between his need to find Jonas and commanding the last remnant of the Legion against the Zra-Uul's rebellion, with its overwhelming numbers and scores of powerful and destructive Magi under the Demon Bael's command.

Having to choose between his heart and his homeland, Aleksei attempts to accomplish the impossible, while always listening for wind. A Wicked Wind.

A WICKED WIND continues the complex characters, action and event-filled plot, and vivid worldbuilding begun in The Hunter's Gambit.

Get your copy of 'A Wicked Wind' today.



THE AUTHOR

Critically acclaimed author Nicholas McIntire has been writing fantasy since he was 8 years old. The bones of the Archanium Codex were first created when he was 16, and in the past 20 years, he has taken that initially simple idea and crafted it into a fully realized world, finished the sequel,

earned three degrees one in Eastern European Studies, two in Nursing), and lived life to the fullest.

Nicholas wrote his first 1,000-page fantasy novel when he was twelve. Driven to write each night, he would bolt to his room immediately after dinner, shut his door and then pound, yes, pound on his computer keyboard till midnight. It was like a fever that could only be cooled with the pouring out of words, characters and stories.

Many more 1,000-page books poured out of his need to tell the urgent stories of his characters. He learned his craft through practising it. He was capable enough at 16 to have a book published. He had a top New York literary agent at 22. He wasn't happy. So, he started over.

He started over because he had a new, beautifully complicated and truly epic story to tell. A huge story is driven by characters so real you just know you can reach out and touch them. And at its centre is the Archanium, a new and fascinating system of magic, that drives this classic fantasy epic adventure.

Connect with Author Nicholas McIntire socially on

 www.nickmcintire.com

 [NGMcIntire](https://www.facebook.com/NGMcIntire)

 [NickMcIntire](https://twitter.com/NickMcIntire)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR NICHOLAS MCINTIRE

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

In a way, I write to keep some shred of sanity. With all of these characters and worlds showing up in my head, there's a drive to put them on paper before they disappear. In channelling these various people, I also have to go on their emotional journeys as though I were experiencing the event myself, which is exhausting, but the only authentic way I know how to do it.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I was about 8 years old. My family went to the bookstore quite frequently, and I was always searching for a book that combined all of my favourite elements together, but it just didn't seem to exist. I remember hearing a voice in my head that said "If you're going to be this picky, write your own damn book!" So I did. And then I just never stopped.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing is how I make sense of the world, and myself. It's sort of like therapy, in that I get to vent any frustration, aggression, internal pain, whatever is occupying my mind bleeds into what I write, but once I put it on the page, I feel like I've dealt with the issue, and if I need to revisit it emotionally, I know exactly where to find it.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I'm going to say "rewards" because first of all, chasing awards is a losing game from the start. I'd much rather create something genuine and authentically me and be rewarded for doing my job well. Not that I'd turn down any award, lol.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

There are a number of ways I strive to be an agent of change in the literary world. Representation is extremely important to me, and I very much wanted to create a world where marginalized people could feel at home. My series starts with a pretty specific perspective, but as it moves forward, we sort of zoom out to the world as a whole, each book an opportunity to explore other peoples and cultures. None of them is meant to be allegories for the real world, and thus these characters don't have to deal with the same cultural baggage that many of us face in real life.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"To love one's self is to begin a lifelong romance." - Oscar Wilde

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

To me, being a writer means being a storyteller. It's in the specific words you select, the way you craft sentences to fit a certain situation, communicating through sight and sound and touch as much as through a line of words that describes a series of actions. All these tiny bits come together to create a cohesive whole, spinning them into something beautiful.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Failure to finish and failure to push past barriers. First and foremost, you must finish. The best piece of advice I found on writing was to finish. I struggle with the second part. Inevitably there are moments where the story can go down multiple paths. Sometimes the right path is the hardest one. It's hard to commit to that challenge.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

Both? It's very dependent on the genre you write in, as some have some hard and fast rules that you break at your own peril. Every single trope doesn't need to be subverted, because some readers seek out a certain kind of book specifically for those tropes. I prefer to create a world that is almost familiar in the beginning, but then the more you learn about it, the more it breaks away from the pack and becomes its own unique entity. That can work if it's strung out over time, but if you make everything entirely foreign to a reader from the start, you run the risk of turning them off to your style before you've had a chance to show off what you've created.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

It really depends on where I am in the writing process. If I'm designing an entire country, with religions and power structures and so forth, I'll choose a mix of cultures I want to pull from and read up on the elements I like, the history and mythology that goes into something. Other times, I need to acquire a basic bit of knowledge quickly.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

In addition to *A Wicked Wind*, I just released a prequel novella called *The Gilded Prince*. I'm also in the final phase of creating the audiobook for *The Hunter's Gambit*, my debut novel.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It's an absolute privilege and honor. I genuinely couldn't be happier!



THE IMPOSTOR AND OTHER DARK TALES

BY AUTHOR MARLENA FRANK

'The Impostor And Other Dark Tales' written by Author Marlena Frank is an amazing book where the beautiful and the bizarre exist side by side in a collection of fantastic and strange tales.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The beautiful and the bizarre

Something watches from the corner of the room, peeking through a crack, existing within an impossible space—what does it want?

The ghost of a lover returns at the end of a lifetime, carrying a dark secret—what will she say?

A woman struggling with identity finds herself in the arms of a dangerous woman with a mysterious curse—what will she find?

The beautiful and the bizarre exist side by side in this collection of fantastic and strange tales by prolific short story author, Marlena Frank. From dark fantasy stories of sharp-toothed mermaids and bewitched sorceresses to horror stories with ferocious bird beasts and golden-eyed monsters that live in the peripheral of human existence, these stories bring to life the creatures that haunt the nightmare world.

From heart-rending to heart-pounding, these tales will linger long after reading them.

Having written fantasy and horror short fiction professionally for over ten years, *The Impostor and Other Dark Tales* is the first time Marlena Frank has collected her favourite short fiction into a single collection, along with additional stories which contain some of her most surreal ideas yet. Divided into tales of dark fantasy and shifting to horror stories that give way to nightmares, the tales explore the darker side of love, the beauty in the unusual, and the power and pain of denial. Candace says, 'This was the perfect little collection that I needed. Wonderful writing, dark tales with creative twists.'

Get your copy of *The Impostor* today.



THE AUTHOR



Marlena Frank is the author of books and novellas that span genres from young adult fantasy to horror. She also sometimes dabbles in weird westerns and noir mysteries. Her work is known for being diverse, immersive, emotional, and character driven. Her debut novel, *Stolen Book*

1 of the *Stolen* series, has hit the Amazon bestseller charts multiple times. She is a hybrid author with one foot in the small press world and another foot in the indie publishing world, which she is slowly learning to navigate.

In addition to novels, Marlena has also written fantasy and horror short stories since 2010. Several have been included in notable anthologies such as *Heroic Fantasy Quarterly*, *Not Your Average Monster Volume 2*, and *The Sirens Call* issue #29. Many of these tales can be found collected in her latest release: *The Impostor and Other Dark Tales*, which is incidentally her first self-published full-length book.

Her upcoming series, the *Wolves of Kanta*, begins in March 2022. *The She-Wolf of Kanta* is a re-release of the acclaimed 2018 novella. It will be expanded into a five-book series following *Mercy Pinkerton*, the daughter of a werewolf hunter, and her journey to realizing her true strengths and path in life. Book one in the series, *The She-Wolf of Kanta*, is currently available to preorder.

Connect with Author Marlena Frank socially on

 www.marlenafrank.com  [MarlenaFrankAuthor](https://www.facebook.com/MarlenaFrankAuthor)  [MarlenaFrank](https://twitter.com/MarlenaFrank)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR MARLENA FRANK

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Writing has always been my passion. At times I worried that I spent too much time with my head in a book instead of focusing on more concrete parts of my life. Writing has always been an escape, a way to unwind and relax, and a way to express me in ways that day to day life simply doesn't allow.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

I was writing long fanfiction but was intimidated by writing a cohesive novel, let alone a series. One day after a book was released from a favorite author, I stayed up all night to read it. I had faith they couldn't let me down, but they did. I was so distraught over the ending that I threw the book aside. I thought I could write a better book. My tears pushed me past my fears for my own writing. It was a big turning point.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

As an introvert, I find it hard to find the words I want to say face to face. I often leave a conversation and wish I had said something different. Writing allows me to explore those words I've lost. I can consider the words for months before finalizing them. I can control if the story leaves a heartwarming impression or makes the reader question their own morals. In my books, I get to say what I want to say in the time I need.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I tend to lean more toward rewards rather than awards. Awards seem more like a social accolade rather than a reward that feels more for a specific action. I think rewards are a wonderful motivation. I use them all the time when I get a lot of writing in, when I get a book published, or when I knock out my to-do list. I think we need tiny rewards for difficult tasks, whether that's writing a book or making a phone call.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I like to write outside of my comfort zone. I aim for diversity and for inclusion in my works. I feature lesbian couples, gay couples, people of color, trans characters—all of these are important because I want my work to reflect the world we live in. While I know that my books have their gaps, I strive to write something that can show diversity but doesn't take away from the wonder or terror. Diversity is simply part of my stories; it's built into the books.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

"No, it's not a very good story – its author was too busy listening to other voices to listen as closely as he should have to the one coming

from inside." – Stephen King, *Different Seasons*

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

I've seen online editing groups where many people try to move forward and publish before they've really practised writing. Fanfiction writing was a great way for me to quickly see what people liked to read and what they didn't, and these days there are places like Wattpad which makes it even easier to get writing out there. There are wonderful, safe environments to practice and make safe mistakes.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I'm aware of the common tropes in the genres that I write in, and the expectations that go along with them. Sometimes I sprinkle known tropes in my books, but mostly I like to surprise my readers. I like to subvert expectations and keep them guessing what will happen next. When I'm writing, I often don't know the full details of how the story will reach the end, and I like to let the characters surprise me.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

It is always tempting to be pulled down into the research well as an author, especially when starting out a new book. I try my best to be minimalistic in my early research. I focus on the characters first. I want to understand what makes them tick, sort out their relationships, and sometimes this takes the bulk of my time. As a character-driven writer, I want to have a solid grasp of the characters first.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

This March, I'll be releasing book 1 in my *Wolves of Kanta* series: *The She-Wolf of Kanta*. The *Wolves of Kanta* series will follow Mercy inkerton, who wants to be a werewolf hunter like her father. She lives in the ravaged city of Kanta, which must hold out against vicious werewolves every night. Featuring a strange mad scientist and a pair of dangerous hunters, *The She-Wolf of Kanta* kicks off a series where Mercy must evolve if she wants to survive.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I'm honestly thrilled to have been given this opportunity to be part of this iconic magazine. I am blown away by the amount of talent and creativity regularly featured and am honored to be part of it. Thank you so much to DE MODE for this opportunity!



THE DROWNING

BY AUTHOR JONAS SAUL

'The Drowning' written by Author Jonas Saul captures you from the first page. This book has a very different storyline than the Sarah Roberts series but just as wonderful. Jonas Saul is the author of over forty novels. He's a speaker at conferences and engagements worldwide.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Darius Shaw is a security guard working the night shift in the small town of Shadow Bay, New York. When he finds two bodies in the pool of the local recreation center, he calls 911, but he's not the only one as the operator has received multiple calls for drowning victims in the last thirty minutes. Within hours, over a dozen bodies are found in pools, bathtubs, and the lake—all apparent victims of violence as the bodies have bite marks and bruising.

Then Darius comes across a journal that belonged to one of the victims, which includes startling information on a decades-old cold case. While he attempts to investigate on his own, people continue to die—some by just walking into the lake to drown.

The police chief calls in the FBI for assistance, and they immediately lock down the town, effectively trapping everyone inside, along with whatever is killing them. With the lockdown in full effect, people are still drowning, leaving the authorities to question who—or what—is killing the people of Shadow Bay. The Drowning is an insane glimpse at the town of Shadow Bay over twenty-four hours—when Hell came to visit.

Author Jonas Saul manages to hold your breath right until the penultimate chapter, mixing in multiple points of view from some seriously damaged yet very realistic people. This is an extremely well-crafted book with a host of mysterious characters, a WhoDunIt or WhatDunIt mystery with a quick pace, great conflict, very real dialogue, and characters you will love and hate.

Get your copy of The Drowning today.



THE AUTHOR

Jonas Saul is the bestselling author of the Sarah Roberts Series and has written and published over forty thrillers. After selling more than two million books, he signed with the Gandolfo Helin & Fountain Literary and Dramatic Rights Management.

Jonas has often outranked Stephen King and Dean Koontz on Amazon during the past decade. He's also a freelance editor who works for several publishers, and he's regularly gets invited to be a guest speaker, teacher, and workshop presenter at international writing conferences around the world. "Sarah Roberts is one in a million. If you're her friend, she'll crawl through Hell to protect you. If you're her enemy, she'll send you there." – Reviewer

BOOK REVIEWS

Love it as all is writing he uses fact and keep the readers wanting more. Can't wait for his new boom.


- Joyce Juzkiw (Reviewed in the United States)

A Well-crafted Mystery with a Killer Pace! Something is killing people in Shadow Bay. And in a gruesome way: death through drowning, preceded by a bizarre event for each victim. Jonas Saul manages to hold your breath right until the penultimate chapter.

- Richard M. Cook (Reviewed in the United States)

Connect with Author Jonas Saul socially on

 www.jonassaul.com

 [jonassaulofficial](https://www.facebook.com/jonassaulofficial)

 [jonassaul](https://twitter.com/jonassaul)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR JONAS SAUL

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Passion certainly encompasses a large part of what I do as I'm passionate about the written word, the process, and the final outcome. Yet, throughout the process, it's an emotional journey, too. I end up in places I wasn't aware I was going, which then takes the reader places they didn't expect. Tears in the writer, tears in the reader.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

Fear was pivotal for me—the fear of losing the stories in my head urged me to jot them down. I was a ten-year-old boy when I took pencil to paper and wrote my first story. I've always asked myself "What if?" and created tales from that standpoint.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

Writing is a healing process. Writing is meditation. Writing is a glorious way to spend one's day, tapping out an emotional yarn, laughing with the characters, crying with them, hugging oneself. In the end, reading establishes and generates empathy in the reader, where writing nurtures it, making the writer care more about the world in which they live—or create.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

We're introduced to this concept when we're young as good behaviour is awarded and bad behaviour is punished. As a full-time author who has written over forty novels, I love awards and rewards, but there's a difference. Awards are something we win or earn, where rewards are something we give ourselves after another novel is complete.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I like to write outside of my comfort zone. I aim for diversity and for inclusion in my works. I feature lesbian couples, gay couples, people of color, trans characters—all of these are important because I want my work to reflect the world we live in. While I know that my books have their gaps, I strive to write something that can show diversity but doesn't take away from the wonder or terror. Diversity is simply part of my stories; it's built into the books.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

What stymied me in the early days of my career where all the rules on how a novel was supposed to be written. When I read the following quote, I set aside all those "rules" and just wrote, which helped immensely. "There are three rules for writing a novel. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are." - W. Somerset Maugham

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

Originality, humour, and tension. Be original in my own writing, add humor to cause smiles in the reader in an attempt to ease the pain and suffering we all endure and create tension on the page as that's the source of reader interest. Finally, to give back, which is why I volunteer at writer's conferences around the world.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want? Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

My goal has always been originality. Often that coincides with what my readers want, so they go hand in hand without much effort. Anyone can become a writer, anyone can write a book (once they decide to), but emotion plays a huge role in what will be successful or not. A successful book has emotion on every page.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

Doubt. To sum it up, doubt is the root of every bestseller that wasn't written, every book-turned-into-a-movie that wasn't filmed. Some call it "fear," but it all comes down to doubt in my opinion. Kill doubt, bury it in the backyard, remove it completely from your frame of reference, and watch your dreams grow.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

This is someone who writes, someone who expresses themselves in the written format. This means the world to me.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Research is not only pivotal in the creation of a novel, it's vital. Every book I've written began in the research stage and developed through to the final product. I often research with a hands-on approach. For a security guard main character in *The Drowning*, I worked as a guard to know the job intimately.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about? How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I have several upcoming novels. My Sarah Roberts Series book #30, *Wrath* is due in December 2021. Book two to *The Immortal Gene* published by Vesuvian Media Group is due to summer of 2022. And finally, I have a novel called, *The Woman in the Woods* that'll release in 2023. It's been an honour to be featured in DE MODE. Thank you beyond words.



XONARYE

BY AUTHOR SCOTT SHEPHERD

'Xonarye' - Xonarye to Rise Again written by Author Scott Shepherd is an exciting adventure mystery novel that will keep you guessing whether it is fact or fiction. The book tells a story of a country called Xonarye that Leaf has never heard of.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The story starts in a place that not many of you have heard of, a small country town called Naracoorte. You are likely thinking, Where? How do I even pronounce the name? Well, in the south of Australia, in the epicentre of marsupial megafauna, we find Leaf, a young apprentice builder, who discovers an old book, hidden on the inside of a wall. Little does he know that this book will not only change the next couple of days, but it will also change the course of this life. The book has details on a country that Leaf has never heard of; Xonarye. This book leaves Leaf questioning if it is fact or fiction, unable to verify sources on this mysterious land, he recruits his two best mates, Summo and Spence. Summo, the smart-arse salesman, and Spence, the logical thinking farmer, team up with Leaf to follow the clues hidden in the mysterious book.

Unlike most adventures, quests, or journeys that started a long time ago—or the old catchphrase “Once upon a time”—this story starts now, in the modern world 2019. If you want to know something, you have technology at your fingertips, ready to spit out any information that you desire. However, what if something isn't available on a search engine? I am not talking about some small detail like what a random celebrity's pet's name was—something much larger, far more important, and unique. Your brain is churning over wondering what on earth this mysterious information might be. This secret has a lot to do with the earth. In fact, the earth is hiding it and not many people know of this existence. **You want to know more? Well, read on. Get your copy of The Drowning today.**



THE AUTHOR

S.H.S. is Author Scott pen name, his initials. He is what you would call your quintessential country 37-year-old aussie bloke. He grew up in the country town of Naracoorte, in the South of Australia, which might provoke small town mental influences. But his own unique experiences


have given him a different insight which he hopes influences his style of writing. He also has the honour of having two beautiful daughters aged 12 and 15, who have been a big inspiration in writing and publishing Xonarye. A driving force in writing this book has been to show his daughters, that there is a place where dreams come alive.


His book is a journey, to show courage in the truth, most importantly when the message resonates within oneself. This resembles his own journey, where he has strived in his personal and professional life to honour his family and be true to his mates. What he knows is that everyone has their own strengths, and it's only when we put our mind to something, and work together with our mates, can we come up with the goods.

He hasn't had the luxury to travel abroad (yet), so this is only the start of the adventure. He loves geography and worldwide sport, and he has been able to incorporate this into the story of Xonarye. Releasing this book after many years of manifesting the idea created the only country starting with the letter X. And he named it Xonarye.

Connect with Author Scott Shepherd socially on

 www.xonarye.com

 [scott.shepherd.7792](https://www.facebook.com/scott.shepherd.7792)

 [shs_xonarye](https://twitter.com/shs_xonarye)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR SCOTT SHEPHERD

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

In my experience, writing is a passion and emotion because writing can be very difficult to write for many reasons. If you don't have that passion to tell the story you are not going to succeed. I know that there is a lot of emotion in writing with many highs and lows whether you are in a groove of writing so it all flows is just amazing. With a low of it when you are struggling to put pen to paper the emotions it can really affect you. Also, writer's block is real and really frustrating.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

The best of you I don't think is the best way to describe it. It brings out different aspects/sides of you as a person. For example, writing this Fiction book Xonarye I was able to bring out a creative side of myself that no one knew that I had. That creativity I don't have in day-to-day life so, to bring that out and let it run wild is an amazing feeling.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

An award would be an amazing achievement, a reward for me is hands down the winner. The rewards so far from the experience of Xonarye have truly been tremendous. Once the book was finished and out in the open telling my children, family and friends was a really rewarding experience for me. These reactions and responses are things that will stick with me for the rest of my life. An award would come and go however the reward of these experiences will never pass.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

Favourite quote would have to be "Don't be lazy". I have that writing on a yellow sticky note on the inside of the front door of the house. It's a good reminder to me because I have the tendency to wander down that path and get into lazy habits.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

How do I feel, there would be a lot of feeling really? I feel really proud especially growing up with ADHD, being dyslexic and not being a big fan of school. Also, I have had to pinch myself sometimes because of the previous sentence it's been a very surreal feeling.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

From my experience, since I published my book a lot of people, I know have commented they would like to write or dream of writing a book. Then normally after that comes reasons of why they haven't which range from I don't know where to start and I don't have the time to

write. I can defiantly relate to both these reasons especially the time to write. I believe in this day and age myself include that we have become very time poor.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I believe that you have to be true to yourself and be original. When I first started this journey of writing this book and series you hope people are going to read or like your book. So, you are being original and authentic right from the start. I want to be true to my vision and hope the readers enjoy the series as it continues to develop.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I think it would be extremely difficult for someone to write who doesn't have strong emotions. A book could definitely suffer in important situations or with characters characteristics without the emotions coming off the pages.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I did do a lot of research with Xonarye as I wanted to use current information in the world and blend it with the fiction side of the book. Most of the research I did was in the background of certain countries. To me, this research was very important. The second part of the question with time I did some research at the start and continued in certain parts of the book as required.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books?

Yes, I do I am working on book two of the series Xonarye. I am very excited about how this book is going and I am sure everyone else that has read the first one will be chomping at the bit to read what happens in the next book.

Q: What is it about?

The next book is the second one in the Xonarye Series. Where you will follow Leaf and his friends on a new exciting adventure in a foreign country.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

Very excited that DE MODE reached out to me for starters. Even more excited to talk about Xonarye and let more readers from around the world understand the book.

BOOK REVIEWS

This adventure written for young adults begins in Australia with something strange found behind a bathroom tile wall.

- Katherine E. Soto (Reviewed in the US)



HALE THE RISE OF THE GRIFFINS

BY AUTHOR J.K. NOBLE

J.K. Noble introduces memorable characters and makes them unforgettable by writing traits that distinguish each character and their role in the story... Hale, Bayo, Felix, Greon, Ellionna, Robin, and Rioma will stay with readers after they turn over the last page of this engaging story.

ABOUT THE BOOK

After a desperate escape attempt from his kidnapper, sixteen-year-old Hale is thrust into the brutal world of magic that his sister had tried to protect him from. Here, in the violent Land of Griffins, Hale learns he is anything but normal. He is in fact a griffin who has pretty amazing talents. As Hale grows close to the Griffin Leader, Bayo, he can't deny their connection. However, Hale is unaware of the dark plans Bayo has in store for him....as well as who they truly are to one another.

In Hale: The Rise of the Griffins, readers discover a diverse fantasy world with four unique nations and cultures. The novel is broken into short stories that follow a different set in the cast bringing the reader into fun adventures in every chapter. This unique magic system is unlike anything in fantasy literature today. Hale: The Rise of the Griffins is an anti-chosen-one story that addresses loss, manipulation, good and bad family relationships, finding one's path, and dealing with one's mistakes.

Hale: The Rise of the Griffins by J.K. Noble is a magical tale that follows a sophisticated protagonist, a sixteen-year-old boy who unwittingly discovers that he is more than human, a reality his sister has fought to prevent him from discovering. Pulled into a world of mystery and magic, he undertakes an exciting journey into uncovering his real nature and mission.

This book follows a sophisticated protagonist, a sixteen-year-old boy who unwittingly discovers that he is more than human, a reality his sister has fought to prevent him from discovering. Pulled into a world of mystery and magic, he undertakes an exciting journey into uncovering his real nature and mission.



THE AUTHOR

J.K. Noble grew up and resides in the Big Apple, where fantastical inspiration lives among the bright lights and colorful people. She envisions unique mythological creatures majestically roaming bustling streets and skimming the skies

between skyscrapers. Absorbing fantasy stories in awe of the great magic each possesses, Noble soon learned that she too holds the same power as the mystic writers of old. Finally, Noble awakens in her debut novel, Hale: The Rise of the Griffins, but her imagination does not end there!

BOOK REVIEWS

"Twisty and filled with adventure... J.K. Noble introduces memorable characters and makes them unforgettable by writing traits that distinguish each character and their role in the story will stay with readers after they turn over the last page of this engaging story. The author uses magic and originality in world-building to create a wonderful reading experience. This is a fascinating story that will pull in any fan of unique and original writing in the urban fantasy genre. From the nuanced characters to the mesmerizing prose, from the unexpected plot twists to the robust conflict, J.K. Noble weaves a yarn that has solid grips on the reader."

- Matthew Novak, The Book Commentary

Connect with Author J.K. Noble socially on

www.jknoble.com/hale-series [f](#) jknobleauthor [t](#) jknobleauthor

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR J. K. NOBLE

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

As it is impossible to go on without inhaling, I find it impossible to exist without writing. I can write while happy or sad, with several ideas, or none at all. Even if what I write is word-vomit that I will never use— which most of the time it is— I feel an immense weight lifted from me. I would not consider the act of writing a form of passion or emotion, rather an act of self-healing.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The project I've given myself to begin working on my first book at the age of sixteen was purely an act of preoccupying my mind and entertaining myself. After finishing that same book at the age of seventeen, then shopping it around my freshman year in college without success, I constantly reinvented the book and its characters in my mind. Through the difficulties I experienced in life, I found that my characters could be covered in much more depth as well as the world I imagined they lived in.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

One might believe that the writer wields the pen. While a writer might have an initial plan for the direction of their story, a greater force seems to take over, bringing their vision to new heights. The pains that my characters go through, although so extreme compared to my own, somehow resonate with my experiences. The way that they deal with that pain serves as an inspiration for goodness, goodness that always existed within me. It serves as a constant reminder that there is always great potential for anyone, even if they are given a bad hand.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

It is extremely difficult to gain recognition as a new author. I was turned down for nearly eight years. Constant failure takes a big toll on productivity. As a result, I often forced myself to stop writing to focus on more practical routes. While awards and rewards serve the ego, they also can bring great works into the light that wouldn't have otherwise had the opportunity to shine. Awards validate one's work, and rewards allow one to reap the benefits from one's hard work. I believe both are important for any individual.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I do not expect to change the literary world, as it is extremely diverse with its infinite authors, genres, and subgenres. I do however strive to create stories that will be cherished in the hearts of my readers for years to come. The

type of stories that will entertain, heal, and reveal the light living within my readers. Stories you'll want to share with your children and grandchildren, something timeless that appeals to all people in any era.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

C. S. Lewis Quote: "The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended: this is the morning."

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

Countless stories stick to the same cookie-cutter moulds in fantasy— clichés themes such as "chosen one", "rags to riches", "good girl marries the prince". Such stories become quite successful even though they are different versions of the same story, and rightfully so, for there is something they all have in common. The minor tweaks in character, detail and world-building keep the same stories alive by relating to the audience. There is a reason that there are infinite Cinderella's per generation, and that is because there is an audience for that version of Cinderella.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

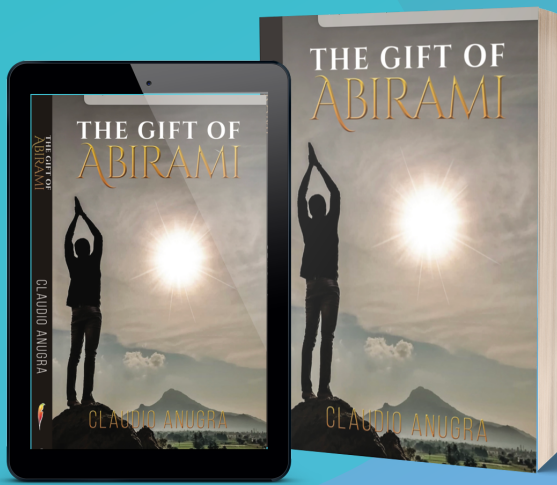
I research things that intrigue me, and later think up ways to use them in my writing. Topics such as bizarre things found in nature, animals, unique foods, traditions, cultures, fighting styles, various sorts of injuries, and symptoms to make the danger represented as realistic as possible. I love television channels like National Geographic, PBS, the Travel Channel, or any other form of educational media. Friends and family always tell me I know too much random information, but what I learn serves me very well. When lacking inspiration, or trying to put my thoughts into words, I look at the artwork, draw out scenes, or revert to music. Listening to music that fits perfectly with the tone I'm striving for helps me to better envision my scene, and I believe it also helps with pacing and rhythm.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books?

Hale: The Rise of Griffin's sequel is completed and ready for publishing! Readers who are excited to know what becomes of characters like Hale, Ellionna, and Marcus will be delighted by this upcoming novel.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It is an honor and dream come true to be featured in DE MODE, which inspires, motivates, and empowers so many people globally! What a positive platform! Thank you so much for this opportunity. Looking forward for more.



THE GIFT OF ABIRAMI

BY AUTHOR CLAUDIO ANUGRA

“The Gift of Abirami” penned by the author Claudio Anugra will inspire the readers to find their purpose in life. The story is set in India in the 80s. The main character, Leo, finds that because of money, status and career there is no time for self-discovery.

ABOUT THE BOOK

As he disembarks in Bombay, in the early eighties in search of some answers to his troubled life back home Leo gets caught by an unscrupulous mob who manages to take most of his savings while having him hooked on hard drugs.

When he realises how low he has fallen, he escapes to Goa where, having joined with a crowd of parties, drug and easy life, he finally discovers a place in the hills where he finds the strength to clean himself, leaving him with a dark hole in his heart.

He travels to Kerala where he meets Michelle, a beautiful young woman. After some passionate time, they decide to travel together. Soon Leo's aloofness becomes too heavy for Michelle's light nature. They are slowly drifting apart.

Once in Pondicherry, Michelle is drawn to Alan, a well-articulated and spiritual teacher. Their attraction doesn't escape Leo's and as he is slowly taken back by his inner demons, he receives a mysterious calling to go to a sacred mountain nearby.

Duelling between his relationship and the call, Leo finally reaches the mountain where a deep realisation occurs. He is no longer the same person that walked up the mountain and from the depth of his dark shadow emerges a profound gift he now can share.

This book isn't just a story, but an awakening call to realise that in the depths of despair and sense of inadequacy lies the potential to find our true gift and purpose. A journey of self-discovery, realization and coming out of complete darkness is what Claudio Anugra takes us on through his book The Gift of Abirami.



THE AUTHOR

Raised in Italy until the age of five, Claudio was taken to Belgium, where he ended up in various boarding schools for most of his childhood. The separation from his father turned him into a rebel against any form of institutions, including schools. As a young adult,

without any interest for a career, he travelled to India, where he got the chance to experience a world rich in mysticism and spirituality. His life turned on itself and later on, he settled in Australia eager to start a new life. Perhaps because of a lack of true deepening in his new-found purpose, his deep demons resurfaced and he ended up crushed and having to finally face the consequences of his troubles. Writing The Gift of Abirami and sharing it is a return to the source – a cleansing and a redemption. Claudio now spends time between Bali and his beloved India.

BOOK REVIEWS

A captivating page-turner! Claudio's first-hand experience with life in India shows through the accurate and very realistic characters and settings depicted throughout a story that never ceases to leave the reader wanting to know what comes next. This is a story that celebrates the resilience of the human spirit and gives hope to all who've searched and struggled to find meaning and purpose in their lives!

- Louis (Reviewed in Canada)

Connect with Author Claudio Anugra socially on

 56546422-the-gift-of-abirami  claudio.anugrah.5  claudioanugrah

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR CLAUDIO ANUGRA

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

Both. The passion is about transcending my own limitations, emotions are jewels that get polished to share and move the reader.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

I had two projects; one was about a journey in India, the other; about the divine gift, or life purpose. I couldn't start on any of them as I thought they were irrelevant or uninspiring, until one day as I was lying on my bed, sick and unable to move, I saw the two projects fusing into one then I realised the gift was the heart of the story, and the journey; the body of the Gift. They were made for each other.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

It gets me in touch with the highest most magical part of my world, where everything is so vast and comes together at the perfect moment of writing.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

If your writing inspires others, not only to read but also to want to broaden their horizon and share their own gifts to the world.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

By being unique, and at the same time that everyone can recognise themselves in my writing.

Q: What is your favorite Quote?

As a writer; Make the ordinary extraordinary... And the extraordinary ordinary.

Q: How does writing inspire you the most?

It gets me in touch with the unexpected, any time I am in an impasse or hit a block, something broader and transcending reveals itself.

Q: For you, what is the meaning of being a writer?

To inspire, transform and give me an opportunity to share with others.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

Definitely original, but also trying to deliver a message that is valuable and relevant for the present times and circumstances.

Q: Do you think someone could be a writer if they don't feel emotions strongly?

I believe emotions are the true guides of a story.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

I actually wrote my book out of memories, so I

had to focus on each moment and trust. Of course, when I am starting a new subject or chapter I would make sure I can bring the reader to be able to relate entirely to the facts and circumstances of the events.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

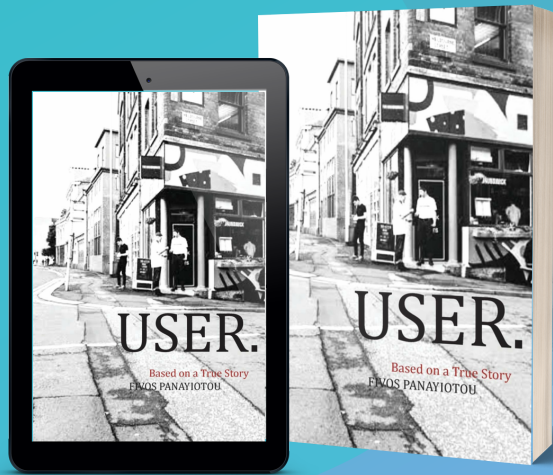
I am thinking about writing a more practical and hands-on book about the Gift that we all potentially have within ourselves. Also, my first book on a deeper level is about the search for the missing father within. I would like to have a similar insight about the missing mother, or the feminine aspect.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

It is all about spreading the message, I like the artistic background of the magazine, and the stories and pictures are quite captivating. Thank you DE MODE for the opportunity to help me reach my book to more readers worldwide.

DIRECTLY FROM THE BOOK

Dear reader, I am in Auroville, India, waiting for the release of my first book. It is quite strange being here in these challenging times, thirty years after my first visit and also where some of the events of the story happened. A lot has changed since then, Auroville was just a red desert of infertile soil. It was the beginning of a dream, to create a society where everyone from any background, religion and culture would be welcome to live in harmony with the earth and offer a life of service and dedication to the divine. What a challenge for the most spirited beings to leave thy comfortable but hollow life back in the west and throw themselves with open heart into following their calling. When I was here, in 1981, the place was seething with problems partially due to misunderstandings between its different communities, the locals and the governments. From the fifty thousand expected inhabitants, only a hand full made the numbers. As years went by, the ideology and efforts of the Aurovillians were often cynically labelled a sector even utopia. I came back a couple of years ago to write and discovered with awe, an oasis of peace, integration and creativity. These community ideals not only survived but also had started to appeal to younger generations, more interested to live a meaningful life rather than superficially based on image appearances and accumulation of wealth. Now I can foresee the original dream of fifty thousand awakened souls living in this land to materialise in some not-too-distant future.



USER BASED ON A TRUE STORY

BY AUTHOR FIVOS PANAYIOTOU

Fivos Panayiotou, Australian Author. Fivos works with the elderly, is a dedicated uncle, family man and man of God. He hopes that sharing his journey in his debut novel, USER, will help other victims of domestic abuse.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Brondo Violaris was just a good little Greek church boy who grew up on the outskirts of Melbourne in a traditional Greek family full of loving, but dominant women. On the morning of January 15, his thirtieth birthday, he had decided to kill himself because he suffered from depression and low self-esteem, thought he was just a loser with nothing left to live for. Everyone else had great careers, big houses, flash cars and marriages by the time they were thirty, while Brondo still lived at home with his grandmother Yaya and Uncle, barely able to hold down a job or get a date. That was until he met and fell for the beautiful, confident Sheena Baxter, who, like him, had come from a family of diabolical dysfunction. He thought he'd won the lottery; life was finally giving him a chance at love. There was just one problem. Sheena Baxter was married. To a gangsta.

This is Fivos Panayiotou's debut novel and work of truth, based on his shocking real life story.

BOOK REVIEWS

Congratulations on your fabulous novel. I loved the read, was fantastic and gripping at the same time. 10 out of 10 stars.

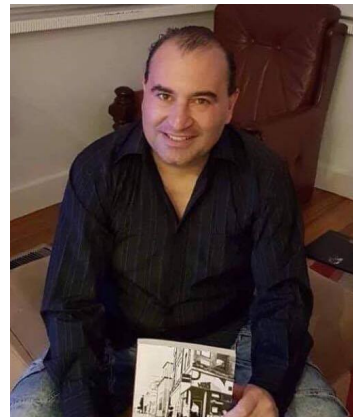
- Kazza Field (Reviewed in Melbourne, Australia)

A Brilliant read Highly recommended. Wonderful and well written, you will be surprised how good it is. So go out and read this book !!

- Anna Nouli (Reviewed in Melbourne, Australia)

'USER', What a captivating read. It had me intrigued and wanting to know more. I look forward to your next book and many more.

- Rosa Carrafa (Reviewed in Melbourne, Australia)



THE AUTHOR

Author Fivos Panayiotou grew up on the outskirts of Melbourne in the 80s in a traditional Greek family. As a first generation born of Australian Greek heritage hailing from Cyprus, he was raised in the multicultural area of Brunswick and ate meat pies and was a devout fan

of Carlton football club like any normal kid in Melbourne's eastern suburbs.

He has a particular interest in working with the elderly in aged care and is a dedicated uncle, family man and man of God. He is a survivor of domestic violence and a strong advocate against psychological abuse and wishes to speak out on this largely unrecognized aspect of men's mental health. Fivos is currently at work on his second novel, due for publication in 2021.

In his first book USER, we follow Brondo Violaris, leaving the safety of his traditional Greek family to find love and moving to regional Victoria to start a new life, in which we are led on a trail of toxic love and deception. This is a true account of the psychological and emotional abuse he endured for years at the hands of his partner and her family.

He is also the author of 'Beyond the Ruins'. In 1986, twelve years after Cyprus saw the invasion of the Turks in 1974, displacing hundreds of thousands of Cypriots as they commandeered the North.

Connect with Author Fivos Panayiotou socially on

 20853135.Fivos_Panayiotou

 fivosauthor

 fivosfiv79

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR FIVOS PANAYIOTOU

Q: Is writing your passion or emotion?

I feel as though the writing is a passion of mine, although the book written displays a series of emotions about the characters feelings and emotions based on his experiences, I maintained control of how I felt, despite being caught up in the moment and reliving the experiences as I wrote, I was thriving with passion and exploring my desires to put my passion to work. It was more about a thrill and passionate desire to commit to write this story.

Q: What was that final or provoking thought that made you write your first book?

The final thought that gave me the motivation to write the book would have to have been when I came home from work in June 2018, I had experienced all the emotions of isolation, humiliation, rejection abandonment and neglect throughout my life, but had never experienced true grief, not until I lost my grandfather who was a second father to my brother and me, and struggled with grief, I jumped on a plane to Cyprus and at the funeral, in 48-degree heat, I collapsed due to the intense heat and overwhelming grief, it was right there at that moment I realized that life was far too short, too precious and I had something to say, and I made the decision that when I returned to Australia, I would endeavour and focus all my energies into starting and finishing this book.

Q: How does writing bring out the best in you?

I would say that when I am writing, it is as though I am taken away deep in thought, my mind wanders and drifts into a world of imagination and wonder, there I can express myself in ways that I didn't think I ever could, at least not in this reality we are faced with. It gives me the chance to be free, to delve into freedom, and a world of fantasy, it gives me the chance to express myself in ways I wasn't aware that I could and to believe in myself, to explore a hidden talent.

Q: Do you believe in awards or rewards?

I believe in rewards more so how rewarding it is to put all ones works into practice and the hard work and effort paying off, I believe the rewards are the final touch and seeing the work come to fruition, I am one who believes it is a blessing and reward for giving, rather than receiving, I believe my rewards are that I achieve my goals and achieved the status of a first-time author.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I believe that I can bring change to the literature world by bringing forward a delicate topic that is rarely discussed amongst many men who are potentially going through similar

circumstances, suffering in domestic violent relationships, I would like to believe that I can impact and motivate other men going through similar scenarios to come forward and make a stand, to use the right emotions and the right narrative as well as enough entertainment brought forward to give the readers enjoyment and interest.

Q: How do you feel about being an author?

I feel that it's been a humbling but enjoyable experience, it's a great and fascinating journey, I feel that I have only scratched the surface about what it means to be an author.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

I try to be original and at the same time try to give the readers what they want, overall, I believe with being original, I give the readers what they want, I believe they want originality and they thrive on someone who has authenticity and dares to be different, rather than being predictable.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

The research I do is simple at this stage, I have involved myself in authors pages, had various discussions with my editor and publisher as well as other publishers and gained insight from them as to what they do and prepare for their next books, I also do lots of reading on novels on certain genres before I prepare, and gain key principles key points and aspects on what to use and what is catchy and appropriate, what is a key component. I believe it is more about describing to the reader, rather than telling them the story, involving them as part of the story themselves.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I have written a second book called beyond the ruins and it's just recently come out in August, I had my launch date and its about a storyline similar to my past and childhood, with many added enhancements and fictional storylines twisted, to bring in excitement and a warm fuzzy happy feeling, as compared to the first one which was all about harsh truth and brutal reality. I have another two I would like to continue working on, one of which is an erotic genre, more based on 50 shades of grey type story, I dare to go down that path, having been encouraged to do so, and the fourth one will be a back story to the first book user. I feel honoured and privileged to have the book featured in demode, I am very humbled to have that chance.



EL LECHON CHONCHO*

BY AUTHOR JENNIFER S. SEGARRA

Jennifer S. Segarra is a children's book author. Look for her upcoming book *El Lechón Choncho*, otherwise known as *Choncho the Pig* (2021) to be followed up with *El Lechón Choncho makes new friends* (2021).

*Recommended for Children

ABOUT THE BOOK

El Lechón Choncho is a giant pinkish-white pig with large ears that stand straight up. He is as big as a truck. But not only is he large, but he is also sweet, smart, brave, and practically the funniest pig you could ever meet! Set in the backdrop of the beautiful sights of Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. You find life on the farm with Hilda and her family along with some pretty interesting animals found there.

The story starts off with little Antonia and Anna not wanting to go to sleep. Their mother Hilda (adult version) promises to tell them the story of *El Lechón Choncho* if they plan to go to sleep right away. Once they are settled in their beds. You find yourself transporting back in time to when Hilda is a little girl on the farm and the everyday life with her charming pet pig.

Not only does he act like a dog to the delight of Hilda and her sisters, but every day becomes an adventure. He is the first one to greet them in the morning by sticking his head in the window to squeal "Good morning!" He also follows Hilda around in order to not miss out on any opportunity to be together. Given that everyone has specific chores on the farm, Hilda is tasked to take care of *Choncho the pig*. That is where their friendship began and stayed true to the end.

El Lechón Choncho is a wonderful story of a charming yet lovable pig that will bring a smile to your face and have a special place in your child's heart. Who would have thought a pig could be the best friend of a little girl?

Get your kid a copy of 'El Lechón Choncho' today!!



THE AUTHOR

Jennifer Segarra, the author to the newly published children's book, "*El Lechón Choncho*, otherwise known as *Choncho the Pig*," has loved reading and writing stories since she was a little girl. It all began in 4th grade, when she was given her first assignment

of writing an essay of a story in history in her own words. From that point on she was hooked. Nothing makes her happier, other than her husband and children, then sitting down and writing her thoughts, journaling or reading a book.

One of her favourite memories as a child was hearing her mother tell bedtime stories of when she lived on her family farm in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. Her favourite story was the one of *el lechón Choncho*, the lovable, kind and extraordinary pet pig and the relationship he had with her mother.

Apart from falling in love with stories of her family. She was a fan of books. A trip to the public library or school library always made her extremely happy. Judy Blume, Emily Bronte, Jane Austen was just of few of the many authors whose books she loved and cherished. To write a book in her mind was always an accomplishment she thought would never happen. Until it did.

Her dream finally came true and her book was published. She has made it a point to push for early reading.

Connect with Author Jennifer S. Segarra socially on

 www.authorjennifersegarra.com  [jennssegarra](https://www.facebook.com/jennssegarra)  [SegarraAuthor](https://twitter.com/SegarraAuthor)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR JENNIFER S. SEGARRA

Q: What do you love most about writing stories for children?

I love being able to write stories for children. The beauty of having a story that is meant for them is very special to me. I feel children are so in need of reading a book today now more than ever. With the technology growing daily, picking up a physical book to read or be read to, is something all children should have available or be doing.

Q: Have you always wanted to be a writer? What inspired you to become a children's author?

I didn't always want to be a writer or author due to my feelings my story wouldn't be interesting enough. But this story of my mother and her pet pig Choncho always kept me from giving up on the idea completely. This story was something I knew I needed to write for children.

Q: Do you like to create books for adults too?

I have not thought about that yet. I do have a book in the works regarding teenagers during Covid-19 and quarantine but it is not completed. I feel my genre is better suited for children and YA.

Q: What topics do your stories cover and why are these important to you?

My topics cover mostly family dynamics and the importance of keeping the family together. My family is everything to me whether it is my immediate family or my parents and siblings. My extended family also holds a very special place in my heart.

Q: How do you come up with the titles of your books?

I write down titles on a piece of paper and try to see how it looks in print. It helps me visualize the title and how I can make it better.

Q: How can you bring change to the literature world?

I guess by bringing more awareness to the Latin culture in books. I didn't see a lot of Spanish children books here growing up. So to be able to write a bilingual book for me was my way of contributing to the needed diversity in literature.

Q: Why do you think it is important for children to develop a love of reading?

It is so important that our children read as it is one of the fundamentals in education that will set them up for their careers. Also, especially now as we are still coming off the pandemic, what better way for a child to escape when they may be under quarantine or isolated due to high covid cases in the area. They can use their imagination and creativity to visual and escape

into the world of books.

Q: What is your favorite children's book?

Anything Judy Blume wrote in children's books was my favorite. Otherwise Known as Sheila the Great, Superfudge, Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing, etc.

Q: What was one of the most surprising things you learned in creating your books?

Besides how the process can be tedious and meticulous but I was struck but how much support and encouragement from writing the book.

Q: Do you have a favorite character that you have written? If so, who? And what makes them so special?

Obviously, Choncho the pig! He is special because he was real. He belonged to my family. He was my mother's best four-legged friend as a child.

Q: What were the key challenges you faced when writing this book?

Well, writing during the pandemic was easy. Finding the publisher and deciding whether to go with a publish with a known Publishing house or self-publish was the hard part. When you have something to say or a story to tell, it can be a lot harder to have that dream realized when you are told no because your story is not accepted. So I took the leap and used Tellwell Publishers to self-publish my book.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

Well, you could say this book took 30 years to write. And 1 month to publish.

Q: Do you have any upcoming books? What is it about?

I am currently finishing the sequel to El Lechon Choncho and also a teen book based on my daughter. No titles have been finalized.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I am honored, excited and so happy to be a part of this. Thank you to the entire team of DE MODE.



SANTA'S NEW TEAM*

BY AUTHOR TREVOR M.K. AIREY
ILLUSTRATION BY NATALIA STARIKOVA

Trevor M. K. Airey originally wrote Santa's New Team when his first son was just three months old. The story came to him in the middle of a sleepless night on Christmas Eve. Fast forward a few years and two more children later, Santa's New Team is now Airey's debut publication.

*Recommended for Children



ABOUT THE BOOK

You know Dasher and Dancer and Prancer and Vixen, Comet and Cupid and Donner and Blitzen, right? They're Santa's reindeer! And they've been pulling his sleigh for quite a long time...since 1823 to be exact. The time has come for Santa's team of reindeer to pass the torch of responsibility on to the next generation of reindeer, but who will they be?

Meet new members, Ruby, Pirin, Pacer and Golden, along with Titan, Jubilee and Digeridoo, too! Each member of Santa's new team brings something unique and special to the team. Together they have been chosen to take on the important task of guiding Santa's sleigh. There is just one problem: With so many talented reindeer, how will they decide who will lead the sleigh?

This story is a playful response to the world-renowned poem A Visit from St. Nicholas (more affectionately called 'Twas the Night Before Christmas) by Clement C. Moore. This story makes a number of references to the original classic, while also acknowledging topics that are part of our society today. Santa's New Team will inspire the next generation of readers by sharing with them a story of perseverance, comradery, inclusion, and diversity while demonstrating that we are stronger together when we share our talents with one another and work as a team.

OTHER BOOKS IN THE WORKS

Airey is currently in the process of planning out other books with similar modern takes on classic stories. He has aspirations to become one of the next great American Children's Book Authors!



THE AUTHOR

Trevor M. K. Airey is a graduate from the University of Washington and Gonzaga University in the United States. He originally wrote Santa's New Team back in 2015 when his first son was just three months old. He had just finished the capstone for his Master's Degree in

Leadership. The story came to him in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve. Over the subsequent years, he would edit the story, read it to friends, edit it some more. Until eventually he felt confident enough to pursue getting it published.

Team building and development is something Airey holds in high regard. This book highlights the evolution many teams go through and the value in their capabilities by coming together. Santa's New team is now Airey's debut publication. We hope you enjoy it! Airey lives in Washington with his wife, three children, and their Siberian husky.


BOOK REVIEW

A new holiday favourite! My daughter loves the rhyming and cadence of the story. The pictures are bright and have so much to catch your kiddo's eye. - Teetz (Reviewed in US)

Great book! This book has such a great story and beautiful, vibrant pictures!

- Tiffany Owens (Reviewed in the United States)

Connect with Author TREVOR M.K. AIREY socially on

 www.legendaireycreations.com



[Legendairey.creations](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

THE INTERVIEW

WITH AUTHOR TREVOR M. K. AIREY

Q: What was your first thought when you started writing and when?

So this might sound kind of weird, but the story came to me in the middle of the night on Christmas Eve. I literally woke up around 11:30 wide awake with the thought...“I NEED TO WRITE THIS DOWN!” I worked on it for about 3 hours straight into Christmas Morning. And By Christmas night I had the rough draft completed.

Q: What literary pilgrimages have you gone on?

I haven't really gone on any 'pilgrimages' per say. Over the years of editing, I've changed some of the names around. Many of the original character names meant quite a lot to me, but wouldn't to the readers of this story. So about 3 years ago, I scrapped about half of the Reindeer names and tried to make to book appeal to a broader, more global audience. For example, Pirin is named after a Bulgarian Mountain Range, Digeridoo is named after the famous wind instrument in Australia.

Q: What is the most unethical practice in the publishing industry?

To be honest, I'm not really sure, because I'm so new to the game. I think one of the main pieces of advice I would give any aspiring author is to really create something you are proud of that you are willing to stand behind. And do your research when determining which publisher to work with.

Q: Does writing energize or exhaust you?

It is quite energizing. My ideas come in waves though. I can't just sit in front of a computer and write on a scheduled basis. It's typically at odd hours when my creativity is flowing. Not sure why, it's just how my brain works.

Q: What are common traps for aspiring writers?

I'd say second-guessing oneself. Asking, would anyone even care to read this? It took me 5 years to build up the confidence to explore publishing, most of that delay was me 2nd guessing myself.

Q: Does a big ego help or hurt writers?

That's a tricky one. I think confidence can help. Remaining humble is also important. I have massive aspirations for this story, but I need to make sure the basics are covered and executed first. Think Big, but make sure you don't get too ahead of yourself.

Q: What is your writing Kryptonite?

Not having enough time to dedicate. I've got a lot of things in motion in my life, and right now it's just finding the time to put pen to paper. Right now the focus is promoting this book. My wife has been instrumental in helping drive a

lot of Marketing so far. Having a good partner or team can be huge!

Q: Did you ever consider writing under a pseudonym?

I thought about it. After all, it worked out pretty well for Dr Seuss. You'll see that a little bit on our website LegendAireyCreations.com. In all, I decided to use my full name.

Q: Do you try more to be original or deliver to the readers what they want?

Oh man, this is a bit of a loaded question. For me, the original story was used as a form of therapy. I'd lost some people in my life that were very near and dear to me. The original character names were tributes to them. But during my editing process, I came to terms with those losses and ultimately decided to swap their names out with other names that were more relevant to the story. I'm glad I did as some of those characters are actually some of the most popular ones.

Q: What kind of research do you do, and how long do you spend researching before beginning a book?

My 'research' comes mainly from life experiences. I did a little research in the public domain and trademarks to make sure I don't risk any litigious backlash, which I think I'm good at. My research was really on an as-needed basis. I had the original story from Clement C. Moore open next to me to ensure I maintained his structure. I researched mountain ranges, for inspiration of names, and pulled Bruce Tuckman's theories on Team Development. Then packaged it all together in my story.

Q: How did publishing your first book change your process of writing?

This was definitely a learning process for me. There were a couple of steps I had in the wrong order. Future books will have cleaner processes.

Q: How many unpublished and half-finished books do you have?

Right now just one. The plot is built, and the characters are established, I just need to finish writing it.

Q: How do you feel about your book being featured in DE MODE?

I couldn't be any more thrilled. The name of the game is awareness. Letting people know the story exists. DE MODE will help us reach a global audience which is a big deal! We've already had a couple of sales in Europe, so I know it's available over there. We purposefully chose a distributor with an international footprint, so this should be available in most countries, not just the United States!

DE MODE OF LITERATURE



THE LOUVRE

PARIS, FRANCE

DE MODE OF LITERATURE



Eugène Delacroix

Eugène Delacroix, in full Ferdinand-Eugène-Victor Delacroix, (born April 26, 1798, Charenton-Saint-Maurice, France—died August 13, 1863, Paris), the greatest French Romantic painter, whose use of colour was influential in the development of both Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting.