Metro Faculty Writes First Installment of Sci-Fi Adventure Series

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In October, I had the pleasure of conversing with A. P. Malloy, a faculty member at Metropolitan State University. Despite a busy schedule, Malloy has pursued a passion for writing and plans to publish “Beauty and the Bandit” the first book of a Sci-Fi series this December.

**Masrud: Can you describe what your novel is about?**

Malloy: “Beauty and the Bandit” is the first installment in the Moonstorm series, which is a six volume project intended for anyone who likes a bit of adventure and mystery. The series is about humanity’s first interstellar colony, and *Beauty and the Bandit* introduces the two main characters of the series: a young alien on the colonized planet, and the mysterious orphan she rescues.

**Masrud: What inspired you to write this book?**

Malloy: All the generous storytellers I was exposed to as a kid—writers who put imagination into words so readers like me could escape, learn or be inspired. Also, the teachers and librarians and larger state and national culture that said reading was valued and writing was to be emulated. Of course, I only knew that because of my parents. My mom is a voracious reader with years of book industry experience, and my dad is a great storyteller. I guess it was bound to happen.

**Masrud: Tell me about your creative process. What were your high and low points?**

Malloy: Audio-visual production taught me to divide big projects into thirds.

I organize first, planning out the big picture, including deadlines.

I write second. I remind myself to smile when I’m typing, offer thanks for guidance and apologies for failings, and I write four to six days a week (two to three hours a day). Music is a constant, as is connection to the internet for research.

I revise, design and publish third. I allow time for significant and numerous revisions based on outside readers, as well as time for cover and interior design. I also dedicate funds for copyright, ISBN and barcodes, review proofs, complementary copies, professional editor, etc.

During parts of the organization and revision process, I get to work with non-text elements (cover art, interior design, maps, timelines, character portraits) and that’s fun.

A novelist doesn’t always have to be staring at a computer screen.

I have had several nights where I’ve woken up certain that I’ve wasted my life, and that what I’m doing is a vanity and of no use. Those times are bad. But more often I’ve had blissful moments of conviction, when I know that a larger good is at work. My job is simply to tell the story to the best of my ability, and let everything else take care of itself.

**Masrud: How do you feel writing this book has impacted you?**

Malloy: It’s worsened my eyesight, but improved my attitude. When a person finally settles on that thing they were meant to do, the reward justifies the price.

**Masrud: What are your hopes for publication and beyond?**

Malloy: Today’s self-publishing market is pretty sophisticated. The opportunity to create a work, literally, from cover to cover, to consider distribution channels and formatting minutiae, has taught me more about the industry than I would have learned had I limited myself exclusively to the traditional avenue of query letters and rejections.

That said, who doesn’t want to hook an agent and an international publishing house? Who could say no to a big advance and a six-figure — or larger — return on years of effort?

So I’m starting small, with modest aspirations, but my eyes and ears are open for opportunities to take this story to the largest audience possible.

**Masrud: How did you juggle being a faculty member and a writer? What was that like?**

Malloy: The students are probably the ones who suffer the most. They’re almost always very kind to me, and I’m sure there are times when they notice that I’m tired or impatient. Working fifty hours a week but only getting paid for thirty-five can do that to a person. The myth of the starving artist, as it turns out, isn’t a myth at all.

Still, every dream job needs a day job, and I can’t think of a better balance to the isolation of writing than the collaboration and social learning that happens in a university classroom.

**Masrud: How do you feel your novel is applicable to Metro students and the community at large? What do you hope they take away from your novel?**

Malloy: When anyone in the Metro community gets a degree, raises a child, finds a new job or doesn’t quit when things get tough, that person inspires the rest of us.

I hope the entire Moonstorm project will be a way to show gratitude for that inspiration, and to possibly inspire others. Readers will have to decide on their own if and how the story applies to them individually. If they are glad they read it, that’s enough of a takeaway.

**Masrud: Do you have any encouragement for Metro students who are pursuing their own creative dreams?**

Malloy: Keep the faith. If it’s a dream that’s meant to be, the only thing that can get in the way is quitting.