

SMASHWORDS INTERVIEW

Interview with Willie Stewart, Sr



What is your writing process?

I only write when I am inspired. Then I am like a machine and don't stop until I am satisfied with the stage I find myself in. For instance, on taRNished, I decided to develop characters and character backgrounds first. I gave them each mental health diagnoses and flaws. I then kept a diary of dialogue between me and the character and asked them lots of questions. By the time I finished this, I had story arcs already developed. It lasted about three months. My coworkers found these diaries extremely interesting and I hadn't even written a piece of the story yet.

Do you remember the first story you ever read, and the impact it had on you?

I'm not a big reader. Does that surprise you? I'm a creator. I don't look outward for inspiration. I find it within, whether it's music, art, or writing.

How do you approach cover design?

I try to create something that can stand the test of time. I aim for iconic like the I dream of Jeanie or Bewitched themes. In tarnished I went for a blurred patient and licensed it. Everyone can relate to that hospital bed and them or a family member being in it. I also played on the profession of Nursing with the RN and the syringe. The original manuscript title was not tarnished. Inspiration hit me one day while watching an episode of Hawthorne. "Hey what word could I used that has RN in it." Well, speaking about Nursing's dark underbelly could definitely tarnish the profession.....and the rest is well.....we shall see.

What are your five favorite books, and why?

My favorite book is the one I happen to be reading. I rarely read for enjoyment. I read to learn and educate myself, even if it is to study and understand a specific style of writing.

What do you read for pleasure?

I have a short attention span. I read game informer articles and anything news related for pleasure.

What is your e-reading device of choice?

I have had them all and still have them. I am a pack rat so I find use in them all. I have stuff on an old Palm device. lol

What book marketing techniques have been most effective for you?

Just getting started but I find that a lot of people are like me with short attention spans and visually oriented. So, book trailers are my favorite. Time shall tell if they are effective.

Describe your desk

My office is a cross breed between a home studio and tv room. I call it the MANCAVE STUDIO. My desk is hard to describe. Wood and glass with a reverse U shaped top and a smaller U shaped top on top of that for monitors. I go for unique style but that is mainly because of my wife of 24 years. I'm influenced by her stylishness.

Where did you grow up, and how did this influence your writing?

I grew up in Gary, Indiana as a kid. I grew up in Alabama and other places as a man. I was middle class from about 7 years old on so I didn't grow up poor but gangs had a lot of influence so I had to be tough. I kept good grades and hung with every crowd. That introduced me to Dungeons and Dragons and I started writing because I had a very vivid imagination. I was always the DM for our groups.

When did you first start writing?

As a kid when I wanted to submit one of my dungeons for a contest at GenCon.

What's the story behind your latest book?

Dale, a young male Registered Nurse accidentally kills a patient in the Intensive Care Unit. When he suffers no consequence he soon finds that he is falling in love with killing patients. As his confidence develops he begins to develop a relationship with the new Respiratory Therapist on the unit. His mother, Isabel feels threatened with losing her boy and Dale finds he must now contend with the equally prolific killing abilities of his over protective mother who works right alongside him. taRNished is a medical thriller that takes you on a journey of innocence, murder, sex, and domination which invokes the question in the readers mind while being entertained, "how do I get out of the hospital alive?"

What motivated you to become an indie author?

I am a control freak. I want to do it my way and do it unconventional. Will it be a success.....maybe not. My goal is not necessarily success. I want exposure so my TV pilot gets picked up.....BAM!...DIDN'T SEE THAT ONE COMING DID YA?

How has Smashwords contributed to your success?

I don't have success yet. Have to get back to you on that one. Lots of great opportunity and education to be had here though. That, I love.

What is the greatest joy of writing for you?

I don't find joy in writing. I find joy in discovery. What I mean is I look inward to find the story and damn that is joyful because it's always been there, just like songwriting for me. Then I find joy in learning all these processes for trying to make it a success. Writing....hell, that's work and who wants to do that and not get paid. ha ha ha ha It is a labor of love because of the journey for me.

What do your fans mean to you?

I've been helping other develop fans for some time now in music as an indie record and management company so I understand the value of fans.....first thing I feel they are partners. Without them, you have no audience, no admirers of your accomplishments, nobody to empathize with your journey. They are the biggest component to success. Without them, you are just spinning your wheels in place.

What are you working on next?

Well, I have started development on the sequel to Tarnished but it may not be what's next. I have a TV written based on Tarnished, I have a comic book and movie script based on the comic, and still dabbling in music. I'm a leaf in the wind. I have a decent nursing career so I can afford to shift to projects that have legs that I am working on. If one starts to move I focus on that.

Who are your favorite authors?

Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins hands down. I don't know many author names (JK Rowling) and never felt the need to know until I got that series. I struggled with my Christianity and these books and then the movies came along and I was hooked. However, I think the movies led me to the books and not the other way around. Lol

What inspires you to get out of bed each day?

My wife of 24 years Shannon Eureka Stewart. NOTHING ELSE. PERIOD POINT BLANK.

When you're not writing, how do you spend your time?

Doing everything else.....that answer would be too long. Next question.

How do you discover the ebooks you read?

Usually I discover e-books as pop ups. Thank God for malware programs. lol

Published 2013-12-31.