

Episode 99

Mon, 9/20 4:04PM 46:41

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

author, people, books, creative, indie author, publishing, readers, poetry, patron, indies, amazon, business, ally, writing, hear, website, absolutely, independent authors, orna, producing

SPEAKERS

Orna Ross, Carissa Andrews



Carissa Andrews 00:09

The indie author revolution has been around for more than a decade. But we indies continue to push the boundaries of what we're capable of. from getting over initial prejudices to staring down perfectionism and author imposter syndrome. We've become a force to reckon with indie authors now wear more hats than ever as we strive to create a career full of meaning prosperity, and potential. We've juggled the demands and continue to be rebels in the face of adversity. Now, after years of hearing the scheldt of hustling, grind, we Indies, are rebelling again, Gone are the days of publishing a book a month until we drop. In its place, sow the seeds of a better way to rapid release, a way that feels incredible as we build a sustainable, lifelong author career, that not only increases our visibility and royalties, but it's all done with intention and ease. If you're ready to buck the system and become the visionary entrepreneur, I know you're meant to be, you've come to the right place. I'm Carissa Andrews, international best selling indie author, and this is the author revolution podcast. Well, hey, they're revolutionary. I hope you had a tremendous weekend writing. Now this week's podcast is gonna be a fun one, I had the privilege of speaking with best selling and award winning indie author and poet Orna Ross. She is also you may have recognized her name, the co founder of the alliance of independent authors, also known as ally. Now, if you're not yet a part of ally, I encourage you to check them out. Author revolution is a partner member and as an author, I'm also a member, the organization is a treasure trove for indies like you and me. And it is truly a great place to hang out with more from your author, tribe. ordinate. I chat a lot about things from her origins as a writer, to how she and her husband started ally, and even how

to solve some of the world's bigger problems. Trust me, you'll have to listen to find out how. Now since the interview definitely speaks for itself. Let's just hop right to it. Well, or no, thank you so much for joining the author revolution podcast, I am so excited that you're here today. So I've given a little bit of a bio in the beginning part of the podcast episode, but why don't you tell my audience who you are and what you do and why they should be picking their ears up.



Orna Ross 02:41

tell you who I am. And whilst I do want to see what happens to the years. I'm on or off to an Irish indie author. I live in London, though London, England and St. Leonard's on sea. And I published novels and poetry. And I became a self publisher after a long number of years in journalism and media in various guises back in 2011, and I was immediately blown away by you know, some people think of self publishing as an alternative route to Market. But for me, it has always been much, much more than that. It is about the empowerment of the author. And that's what makes it so interesting. To me. It's a complete disrupter. You know, once digital self publishing came in the door, the whole publishing industry, or writing business, fact, we even think of writing now as a business, you know, for readers, for writers, for anyone interested in books, in culture, and in life, because, you know, books are so important to our society. And and, yeah, it's it's been, into my mind an overwhelmingly positive development. And I kind of wanted to be part of this. And I looked for as an indie author myself, I looked for an association to join and couldn't really find one. And then thought, you know, do you really want to do this and then start again and said, Yeah, I actually do for that reason, because I, you know, the biggest thing that's happened to our industry for four or 500 years, and wanted to be in there, beating the drum for authors, so started the alliance of independent authors in 2012. We're 10 years old next year, I cannot believe that



Carissa Andrews 04:35

That is amazing. Okay, so you've been writing for a long time and I know you do poetry and you do historical fiction. So you've got a new book that's coming out soon right? Dancing in the wind.



Orna Ross 04:46

Yes, dancing in the wind twitches, part of my swatches, turning into a series of books about the Irish poet wb Yeats and his muse Maude garden and her daughter who was Also abuse sorts of very interesting, unusual and creatively fascinating triangle, a love triangle.

But you know, enough in any conventional sense. So I, yeah, I've been writing about these guys for a very long time, they fascinate me and just keep finding more and more and just you have more books keep coming out of this.



Carissa Andrews 05:24

It is so amazing. I've always loved to pull in history myself, but I don't know that I have the patience to really sit and research the way that historical fiction authors, you guys could do some amazing work with studying and learning. And I mean, it's just incredible. Where did you Where do you think your fascination with that came from? Like that? Being able to pull history into your reading?



Orna Ross 05:46

But see attraction for me, I have to stop myself. Self is always easier. So I did briefly, I was a historian, in fact, and yeah, so my and my MA is in history. And I, you know, I probably have some academic history back in the day, and I used to teach at university and stuff like that. But I always wanted to write a novel that really was for where my heart was. And there was this family story isn't there always Every family has stories in their coverage. And I wanted to write about that I had, when I was 14, I told the girls who sat beside me in school, I said, I am going to write that story someday. So love it, I was I came up to my 40th birthday, I forgot to write the story, I better get on with it. So I actually put it into story format. I've never really looked back, I left academic history behind them. But I have to be careful, I can just get sucked into the historical details. I just love all that stuff.



Carissa Andrews 06:52

For sure. Me too, for me was always ancient history I love I love the ancient history and the elements and where we come from sociology, all of that stuff just really wraps up into, like, everything I'd love to do. And so I like to pull in, you know, mythology into my stories, and I love to go back in there. But that same thing, it's like I would I probably would fall down rabbit holes and stay there. If I let myself. It's just but it's so it's so interesting to see the lessons and how they replay. And sometimes we learn them. And sometimes we don't.



Orna Ross 07:24

Absolutely, I just posted on my Twitter profile there just a week or so ago, I came across a quote by Cicero saying that, you know, if you don't know your history, you will forever be a child, you know, intellectually, sociologically, in every other way. I think history is so

important, and our society doesn't really value us enough, I think, you know, we were so in the moment and the 24 hour news cycle and everything that a little history goes a long way in giving you perspective and even an easing anxiety, you know, so I'm, I'm very keen to see more history taught and produced and stories told, Yeah, I agree.



Carissa Andrews 08:06

You're right, the more that we spend time, at least, remembering the past and remembering where we've come from as not necessarily our own lives, but sometimes because it can bring out some interesting patterns in ourselves that we need to let go of. But even as a society as a whole, it's so so interesting to be able to look back and go Okay, this is a cycle that continue to play out throughout the generations. And maybe if it continues, we're in this particular part of the cycle and it will drop off or it will be an extinction burst or it'll be you know, something along the lines of like, let's just ride this out. Let it go.



Orna Ross 08:39

Absolutely, absolutely.



Carissa Andrews 08:42

Okay, so you like you said you started the alliance of independent authors in 2012 great year, by the way. I'm really interested you said that it was because you didn't find an organization that would be there to support you. So is that really what brought you and your husband together to build this whole thing up? Or was that a friend or what was the catalyst then?



Orna Ross 09:05

That was the catalyst you know, if it had been out there there wouldn't have been the need to do and it's very much like the book you know, the book that's not there on the shelf so you feel okay. All right. That one then yes, it was that kind of of motion and there was absolutely no big intention for us to you know, it was going to be small. It was going to be live it was going to be a thing that was going to be fun for us to do together. And we were going to gather a few nice people around us that we were going to make you know an association based, provide support for each other and it just grew didn't this it just kind of mushrooms and year on year it just became pretty immediately became International. And you know, within literally our first month we had people all over the globe. And it was

a big learning curve. So I was going through a kind of, you know, the learning curve of publishing my own work for the first time, at the same time as learning everything that was happening through ally and both the community needed and stuff around copyright. And you know, there was so much to learn and so much to do, but then also for both of us, Philip, my husband and I, and he brought a huge amount of experience on the business side, legal management, all that kind of stuff. And I brought the media and publishing background, and I had worked as a literary agent briefly as well. So I have a lot of background in rights. And so it just was the perfect, it just kind of was a very organic thing that just grew. And it then we realized, one day, we looked at each other and said, like, you know, this is amazing. This is just, yeah, it's just the way it developed. Yeah, we haven't looked back, since we got to take it really seriously. And at the end of 2013, realizing this isn't going to be small, this is something that needs to be bigger, you know, needs to be worthy of the community breathing, because it's quite an impressive community of people is it Oh, yeah. In the office are, you know, they're just so such doers, they are such they bring together very integrated people usually because they, you know, they have to balance the creative on the commercial. Do you know, we're dealing with these powerhouse, people, and so the organization has to be reflective of that. So yeah, it just kind of Here we are,



Carissa Andrews 11:48

oh, man, I would love to have been in the room with you as things were starting to explode. And, and everything was really growing for you, I but that was just an amazing feeling, to see the excitement. And people actually, I don't know excited to do the things that you're you're teaching and growing. It's amazing.



Orna Ross 12:05

It was so exciting. And to see to witness, you know, gave me such joy. What was so exciting was the empowerment in our community, you know, that sense of, it's affecting the entire author community. So as I said, I worked as a literary agent for some years. And part of the reason I became frustrated was, I was running a writing school and our authors were getting offers from publishers, and the contracts were absolutely scandalous. I mean, absolutely appalling. And so I was, you know, I came in at that time, I lived in Dublin and I came to London to do a course in REITs. And, and back home and start to say to people, no, don't, don't expect that clause with this and take that out. And then eventually kind of accidentally tumbled into being an agent for a couple of years. Because I just couldn't, couldn't keep doing all that for nothing. But it didn't really suit me that being a literary agent, and it was a temporary thing. But I think, you know, I was very aware of how disempowered the author was, and of course, we seek to see it in all of my son works and

film and you see it in lots of industries, the creator, the disempowerment are the creative and the appalling money that we're supposed to accept. And you know, all of this kind of stuff has always infuriated me. And so it's just so wonderful, you know, we're about 15 years in now to to this change to having an alternative, but I think it's only really now in the last three years or so that we're really seeing authors waking up to the, you know, what's possible, and their sense of, Hey, you know, I can do this I can do, I can also do something over here that I never even thought I could do. And I think as that continues, you know, watch this space, we're going to see some amazing things in the next 10 years.



Carissa Andrews 14:03

I agree with you there, that that was such a great segue to because on your website, you have the section, where it's why I'm an indie author. And you mentioned the creative business like author publishing makes a positive difference in the wider world, conventional business is profit powered, and what has poisoned so much human interaction in recent centuries. And what's poisoning the planet we live on? Is this single minded pursuit of commercial profit without the balancing force of a deeper creative or spiritual purpose. And when I was reading that, I was like, Oh, my gosh, I resonate with that so much. So do you think that mindsets always really been there for you? I mean, it sounds like it has been that you're you're really about that empowerment of the author and the creative and it being about that that almost spiritual Joy of Creation, but still being rewarded over it versus that, you know, constant power push of money and profit. Do



Orna Ross 14:56

Yeah, yes, that's, that's, I suppose the Central interest of my life, you know, as a person as well as, as a writer, and as a business owner and nonprofit owner, all of the things, I think this is a central I mean, it's it's enacted every day, in our own selves every day, we'll have that, that kind of struggle between these different parts of ourselves, you know, Freud called the ego, you know, you can put different names on those, but I think of those as the creative spirits on one side, to the conventional or commercial pressures on the other. And we have to kind of marry these two, it's really important that they integrate that we don't deny one side or the other, but our society has denied the creative spirit. And, you know, it started with the Industrial Revolution and things became very mechanized, the harnessing of people as labor. I mean, of course, if we go back further slave labor, you know, and that whole treatment of the planet, that's just an endless resource for us to to, you know, we don't factor in, in the clothes we behave, I mean, I'm going off topic, you're probably even in close right with the food we eat. We're not factoring in the true cost, the true cost of if

we pay people properly to produce this cost of if we factored in the environmental cost to the pollution cost, how much this item actually showed, we've been just driven with this kind of cheap sales mentality for decades and decades. And we're all enculturated into that. So yeah, I'm I'm endlessly faster not gonna solve any of these things. But I am endlessly fascinated and endlessly drawn to writing about and thinking about how those two things, how we can integrate better the two sides of of life,



Carissa Andrews 16:59

for sure. For me, it's, when I think about it, I am also drawn to that I've always been very deeply impassioned about all of the the diversity versus the Justice versus how do we create more equality in life, whether it's, you know, socially, or economically or whatever, it's always been something that's very fascinating to me, as well. And I really think some of the ways that we do combat that though, is through creativity, because I think when you're you're going through the educational system, and everything is so black and white, you forget that there's all those colors and all the grades and all the things in the middle. And when you can think creatively, whether it's through writing or Arts in another form, it opens up your mind to be able to find those differences are to see that maybe this isn't the right way to do this, there's got to be a better way. And then we you know, we as creatives, I think, are more nudge toward finding a solution versus just accepting what is, don't you think?



Orna Ross 17:55

I completely do. And I think this skill that we develop, you know, because we define as creations and, you know, devote ourselves and dedicate ourselves to producing our our thing be or books or whatever it might be, we have to learn as we go different skills. And those creative skills, I think, are urgently needed. By our wider community, I think there's a lot to offer there. Because essentially, the creative approach is something you can bring to everything in life. We aren't we're not we're bringing very conventional, very old, tired, our politics is so tired, you just have to listen to the sloganeering and the words that are being spoken to, to hear and feel in your heart has stale as always, you know, creativity is needed now as never before. Similarly, our business world, you know, there's there really exciting things going on in certain places, but then there is this kind of mentality that underlies it that is very stale and very old. So yeah, I think as creatives we have a lot to offer, just in our understanding of the creative process and how it works, things like facing fear, you know, learning by doing, exploring and experimenting, not being afraid to fail. You know, all these things, I think are really key skills that are really teaching our kids if they're going to do things differently and we can see from the young generation coming up that they really want to and absolutely need to so yeah, we've a lot as older and

creative So speak for myself.



Carissa Andrews 19:53

I agree it's it's really interesting to like you said it's it's almost that dynamic between like the fear and and The old fear energy and the oppression of it versus like the joy, that's almost income, combative war, I guess with it, it's it's like, there's those two sides that are trying to you know, love, joy, you know, creativity, whatever. And it's, it's like they're trying to push and pull trying to see which one's gonna win. It's like, let's just, let's get the fear out of there. Let's move it



Orna Ross 20:23

doesn't Yeah, absolutely. And you know, isn't that does not describe your morning when you're trying to get going.



Carissa Andrews 20:33

Definitely my morning this morning, I'll tell you



Orna Ross 20:37

you know, so we live that as our daily reality in a small way inside ourselves. So we can when we see it writ large in society, we recognize it for what it is, but I'm not hearing that conversation much outside of our own, you know, communities. It's not having an impression of societal levels. Yes. And yeah, I think that's that's kind of what's called for.



Carissa Andrews 21:02

I agree, I agree. Oh, my goodness. Okay. Well, now that we can solve all the world's problems. One of the things I noticed on your website, when I was digging into your just your you, I can tell you and Joanna are friends, because you guys are very dynamic, when it comes to all the ways that you're, you're testing out how to be an indie and what that looks like and how it works. And so one of the things I noticed is that you use Patreon. However you want to say a Patreon, Patreon, out or whatever, for yourself as an author, and as a point. Do you use it for your podcast as well?



Orna Ross 21:37

I can't remember if you do or do not. But no, I do just an exclusive workshop once a month for a smaller group of people. Yeah, our podcast is crazy available to everybody.



Carissa Andrews 21:47

Gotcha. So one of the things like I said, it's really interesting that you're using that though, for your books. And so could you explain kind of how that came about? And if, if it's working well for you? Is this something that Indians should really kind of think about incorporating as well?



Orna Ross 22:03

It depends, is is what I would say. So you're absolutely right, about trying out all the different things, I think that's my kind of duty, almost, as director of ally that I have, you know, given things a try, and I don't always stick with them at all, but I kind of need to know about difference, or I can't know all of the most any service that's looking like it's becoming central or important in the community, I kind of give a go and find out what it's like from a user perspective, not just observing it from the outside. So with patron that was there's really I wanted to kind of see, because I feel myself, it's a feeling I have, and it's being borne out by a statistics now. And the trends are definitely heading in that direction. That the personal connection between the writer and the reader is the most important thing. And you know, we were talking earlier about the whole empowerment thing, that idea of 1000 true fans who will really support your work, really, like get you and really live what you do. And even now, you know, people are talking about 100 true fans spending enough money to keep an author supported and so yeah, we're seeing as writers are actually leaving the day job because they're making enough Be it through books. So there are many, many, many ways we can do it. And it's Patriot, by the way, cuz I asked them



Carissa Andrews 23:39

That's good to know.



Orna Ross 23:40

Okay, cuz I never knew what to say either. So it's Patreon. Based on Patron, so yeah, I originally just tried it with poetry because I thought, well, that'd be interesting. Try it with the most, you know, of the three macros, genre fiction, nonfiction, poetry, poetry is the most specialist, give it a go with that. And yeah, that was that was interesting. And then

when I needed to, I wanted to do a smaller workshop for creative business planners who were interested in my goal, creative method. I thought, well, you know, I'll organize that through Patreon. It's something completely different. But this is the joy of this is that you can have different tiers and offer them different things. And it just makes all of that very, very convenient. And now I have just literally also put up the similar sort of tiers that I was offering for poetry. I've just literally put my fiction stuff up there as well and I begin to reach out on that. So ensure to a long answer to your question. It has been good for me, I am making it now central to my whole operation. I am producing Yes, it's guiding my productivity. So I am producing a chat book a poetry chapbook in the valley each month for my patrons that is exclusive to them, they're kind of with the novella. Each one is a section from a larger work. So they are witnessing the work as its unfolding. And the topics of poetry later will be collected in different ways in different collections for those topics will be completely exclusive to the patrons. And I love it. I love it, because it draws the productivity out of me, I have to reach those deadlines. And I just love the close connection. And you know, I can't, I can't, because of just the size of the task, I can't run my email in marks, you know, my general email inbox. So I have people who look after that for me, and I kind of lost stuff in that that I have regained to a patron because I can I go direct to my patrons. And I love that I like that we can have a bad direct kind of contact. So I think this is important, though, I'm not just talking about myself here, I think it's really important for authors to think about the fact that the reader cares about you, more than anything you are as a brand. Your books are what are most important to your readers. And I don't think authors are cognizant enough of that. Were too inclined to just, you know, go with what time they may be, or go with what we hear about, it's really, really worth experimenting and trying new things. Just give it a month, or give it a quarter to try something else with no return. And no expectation that it's going to give a return, we just do it, do it for the fun of it too, for the heck of us. And you just never know what might happen. Because, you know, it's amusing to me, I'm using D authors who will tell you, you know, 100%, the only way you can make money as an indie author is to do A or B, or C or D or E or F and it's the only way and of course, I'm seeing people doing ABCDE, f g, h i, j k all the way to set up the arm, you know, succeeding in so many diverse ways. There's just so many ways to do this. So I would say to people who are listening, stop doing anything you're not enjoying. Only do things you love. outsource as much as you can and things that you don't and I do realize a different point in your career or you're in your business, this is not possible. I do accept that but as soon as you possibly can. But more than anything, if you have a hunch, give it a go. If you know bring your creative and your commercial goals together as much as you can in terms of making your decisions of what we like to do and which I do because the choice is endless. And there is no one right way, you can make a go of any way you choose if it's the right way for you.



Carissa Andrews 27:59

I love that. What's really interesting, like when you're talking about how you use Patreon, Patreon. Oh my God, I've already forgotten how you said that.



Orna Ross 28:09

Right? There, Ryan's with patron. Yeah.



Carissa Andrews 28:12

Okay, well, the thing that was really interesting to me was that it's like, almost the way the concept of like what Wattpad was trying to do or is trying to do and what Kindle Vella is trying to do with everything. But it's it's more enclosed, it's more personal, it's like, that's almost seems to me a more enjoyable way to do the exact same thing as, as they're doing. But you have that, you know, closer knit community that can get to know you better. That actually feels way better. Why are people doing that?



Orna Ross 28:45

Exactly? I think because we don't know we can maybe or you know, or we think we have to do you know, here's so many people saying you have to be on Amazon. But actually you don't know unless you want to be on Amazon that's complete. I'm on Amazon, I want to be on Amazon. But you don't have to be I know lots of authors who are not on Amazon. We're doing very well, indeed. Thank you. So you know, you don't have to do anything you don't want to do and and the thing is we returned when we hear these things, we take them too much at face value. Because at the beginning, we don't know what we're doing. We're all over the place. we're overwhelmed. We're learning like crazy. You know, we're trying to just keep up with ourselves. And we hear people who've been doing the job for a year or two we see they're doing okay, and they say something we think they're right. But you know, they are right for them, but they're not necessarily right for you. It takes a little while to get the confidence to step back and think about you know, is this way right for me or I would like to develop it in a different sort of way. And you know, the whole selling direct to your readers, you know, having your transactional website where if a reader happens to be on your website and likes what you're saying? They can actually go across and buy a book, you know, download an E book, it is not difficult at all to set this up on your website. Yet, so few authors are doing it. And you know, it's a really, really, it's a big oversight at the end, you will hear people saying all of this tax implications really complicated and assist the rest. And when you actually go into it, it isn't at all. So that's, you know, one example, the patron thing is another, everything that Amazon is doing, you

can do yourself, you can have your own subscription model, you can have your own home office, you can, you know, you can do everything that that you can learn from them, you have a business, they have a business, they are sure, you know, not worrying about your business. The person who does that, and, you know, again, ally has encouraged us strongly principle of non exclusivity, going wide being on as many platforms as you can, selling to as many territories as you can, producing your books in as many formats as you can. And recognizing that all of this takes time. And it is a long term business, it isn't a short term thing for most people, it takes two years to get up on your feet. Generally speaking, long birch Pentagon, kind of books you write about your personal situation is in terms of how much time you can give us. But it's very, very doable once you acquire the skills of writing and publishing. And it's, it's fantastic.



Carissa Andrews 31:35

It really, yeah, once you get past that those first two, like headless chicken years, you start realizing how it works, it's, it's so empowering to to kind of realize I can be in control of my schedule, my editorial calendar, how I want to publish when I want to publish all of those things. And that's, that's a lot of what I teach as well of trying to figure out, you know, it doesn't have to be, you know, the crazy lunatic publish a book a month, you know, kind of routine, it can be a more laid back, you know, four books a year, it could be two books a year, it could be one, as long as your, as long as you're feeling comfortable, and you're moving yourself forward into that prolific author hood, down the road, and you know, that that's the direction you want to move and take for the rest of your life. And it's like, it's so empowering to know that that's up to you. To determine what you want to do, it doesn't have to just be like, I feel like writing today, you could be like, I don't feel like writing today. But I'll write tomorrow, you know, but you know, you're gonna do it. Because your your whole business is built on, you know, publishing however many books or whatever, it's, it's so fascinating the way it's evolved in the past 10 years, where it was all very, it felt like becoming an indie author was all done by our seat, the seat of our pants. Were all cancers, it didn't matter. We were Yeah, and now we're kind of starting to get that no, we can actually have a plan here a little bit.



Orna Ross 32:56

Definitely, and what you say about the editorial calendar, the editorial content as well, you know, we can we can produce books in different sorts of ways. We don't have to simple example, you know, the, the average book was generally considered to be about 70,000 words, but we're finding that about the community what most readers want, depending, of course, on the genre, some some nice big fat books, but generally speaking, the shorter the better. And for authors as well, by race, you know, or big 100 word 1000

word, you know, if you can make it three. So, you know, we can, we can decide how we're going to do this, we can decide, we want to, if we want to, we can bring three books together, and we can, or we can, you know, I wanted to do, I mean, publishers won't let you do a series, you know, turn up and say, Okay, I want to do nine books on such and such, they just want to encourage you to do that. They'll take one, and then they see and they will very slowly, carefully, tentatively, you know, to country series, and you want to get nine of them out and you want to get them done while you're on the creative flow as well. Right. So, yeah, it's magic to have that. Of course, it also is challenging, and all that freedom brings responsibility. And you know, we can rush things or we can take shortcuts, cut corners, you know, we've to be careful about all of that, too. We've got all this power and control. So we need to also kind of take up the responsibilities that go with our sports. And yeah, so many authors are I think this is an amazing people in the publishing industry, because they always, you know, writers just want to write, but actually somebody else is showing Well, I quite like publishing too. Thank you.



Carissa Andrews 34:48

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. I think the part that I enjoyed the most is the the I mean, I love the creative part. It's a different part of the brain. I mean, I when I'm writing, it's completely I don't know, it must be the What is that the right side of the brain? It's like I can tell it's a completely different flow than when I'm in my zone for marketing or you know something like that it's like that no problem whatsoever and so it's like you know morning is all about creativity for me I've learned that about my brain and how it works afternoons all about like the functionality because my after lunch I don't know what it is creativity goes down. So give me something I can like organize



Orna Ross 35:26

things so many of us follow that that's exactly my routine as well. If I don't get creative stuff done in the morning, it just doesn't have the same flavor you know, I can I can beaver away is just in the afternoon buzzer doesn't seem to work. So yeah, organizational brain works much better on the energy, it's more energizing to do with that way as well, you know, less likely to have the afternoon slump. So yeah, that's my routine to say



Carissa Andrews 35:50

my husband is the exact opposite, though. Like he he is like dead to the world until about noon. And then all of a sudden, he's come to life, and he can do just about anything else. Gosh, yeah. It's so funny. It is interesting, you do have to find your own version, I guess of

how you want to become. And that's the cool thing about being an indie. I think, personally. There's so many different ways to do it. But okay, so you mentioned your website, I want to go back to that real quick, because you said that your you have your books listed for sale on your website. And that was another really cool thing. Because that's something I don't think a lot of authors think about doing either. It's like they have, they'll have buttons, you know, go buy it on Amazon, go buy it from, you know, Barnes noble, whatever, but they don't think about how they can actually incorporate that into their own website. And I think that's really a powerful thing to do. Where? I don't know, I don't know why, again, why authors Don't think about doing that sort of thing. Do you think that's just a systemic part of it, that we think we have to give that control over to a store to do it, or whatever the thing is,



Orna Ross 36:53

there's a few different reasons, it's a bugbear of mine is you know that we don't do this. And I really, really encourage everyone to do it. So and I think there are reasons why we don't do it, you know, if you people want to drive all those sales to Amazon, because you know, if you go up the ranks, there's a chance that you will then get picked up on there'll be more organic sales, and you will do better in the end than if you just stick to your own site. And that's a valid, you know, criteria, but it doesn't explain why you wouldn't have them for sale on your own site. Any way for the reader who's not going to find you on Amazon and tumbles across your website use. You know, it's it seems to me crazy that at the moment where they find out about to your you're taking them away? Well, it seems really crazy, though, and so many authors do that. So, you know, I really, really question is paying a fortune for Facebook ads, to bring them to Amazon. And you know, why not use your Facebook ads to bring them to your own sales pages? And then you get the email address, you're growing your list, you know, you're developing a relationship, you they have your email address, you're just bringing them in closer, you know, that's you. Yes. So you know, I'm not saying don't have a relationship with Amazon. But you know, have your relationship with Amazon, have your books on Amazon have an Amazon strategy, maybe, maybe really focusing on one or two books on Amazon can also make a lot of sense. And getting higher up the rankings and putting some, some juice behind that can absolutely make sense. I'm not saying never do it. But I am saying for heaven's sake, your website is the core of your business. So think strongly, what you're investing in, and you will never find out from Amazon, who your readers are, you will never get an email address. They're collecting your people, as you bring them over as you pay Facebook to, to send them over who are also benefiting, you know, right and wake up to the power of your own business.



Carissa Andrews 39:01

I think that circles right back around to why authors don't realize that readers want to have a connection with them because they're they're so busy putting everything outside of themselves, that they don't realize that all these all these readers who are reading want to get to know that author better. And then they again, it's that whole resistance thing they don't want what do I write in a newsletter? Why should I do a newsletter you know, so it's like then they don't even do that aspect of it either. And it's like, oh, you need to build those relationships and then you'll feel closer to your readers and you'll feel almost more joy from doing the creation because it's it's lonely enough You don't have to have like the the marketing and the getting the books out there be lonely to get noticed, noticed and notified when people are enjoying it.



Orna Ross 39:45

Absolutely. And it's, you know, back to that idea of empowerment, you can gain such a sense of power and confidence from your readers, you know, and from having that closer connection. It's it's a really beautiful thing. You No. And your imaginations have melded in your words, you know, why not have, you know, take that a little bit further. And I think, you know, you touched on it there around the email, I think that's very key. The author who doesn't want to send a newsletter, all of that is around confidence in communication. So it's almost like we pour our skills and our hearts and everything else into the books. And like, we don't have that bit left over for that other other bit of communication that needs to happen. But if you think about the amount of time and thought and energy that goes into promoting in other ways, and to other people, I really think it's very worth by putting a little bit of time into building that confidence by taking some tentative steps and just want to feel that reader love you. You know, it can go from there. It's very, very different experience to having the reader and you know, that close then reading your reviews on Goodreads, they're not the same experience over and over. Yeah.



Carissa Andrews 41:11

Yeah, it especially like if you've been sharing certain aspects of your life that you only share in your newsletter or with maybe your friends or whatever. And someone responds back and goes, Oh, how did that thing turn out? You know, two months ago that you said, and they're just like, they were listening? Oh, my gosh, they actually like, what? It's amazing. It is so cool. It's so lovely. It really is. A great. Oh my gosh, okay, so one of the cool things I want to talk about is I'm excited to be joining the virtual stage. I was gonna say the stage the virtual stage with you for self published con happening here in October the 23rd and 24th. So can you tell my audience a little bit of what self pubcon is and how

ally got involved? And why authors listening right now need to go like race to get their free tickets?



Orna Ross 42:02

Well, it's a it's a, we've been running it since it grew out of India. Rijkaard was the original conception of this. And it was two enterprising indie authors who started back in 2013. I think it was. And then I think it was 2015. They came to us and said, You know, we're kind of a bit exhausted by this. It's hard work. And those just the two of us, would you take it over, so so we did we bought from them. And it's been running ever since. And yeah, it's just it's a 24 hour extravaganza, it was the only word we're so thrilled we have you with us this time. Our theme this time out is writing craft, we almost always deal with publishing topics or going all out on writing this time. We do 24 hours because it's our international audience. And we want it to be like some of the action to be live to everybody at some point in the day, but then it remains freely open and available to everybody for three free days. So yes, it's like self publishing advice. conference.com longest email address, or sorry, a web address in the world. Publishing conference, publishing advice, conference, calm, calm, calm, we'll get right into that one of these days. Yeah, if you just sign up for your free days, then we'll send all the information that you need to to attend and to get the most out of the conference. And we've got some amazing panels and presentations and our social media of choice for the conferences, Twitter. So will there be lots of action going on. So it's hurtling towards us, and it's always a great day, and it's the biggest gathering of indie authors online. And usually, each year or so it, it really is busy and busy and great fun.



Carissa Andrews 43:56

I can't wait. It's gonna be so much fun. And I've been checking over like what everyone else is gonna be talking about, it's gonna mean that these people are just incredible that you've put together so I'm so excited about the conference and joining and being a part of it. It's gonna be so much fun. So thank you for allowing me to be one of the people there.



Orna Ross 44:14

Thanks for being involved. It's great to have you.



Carissa Andrews 44:17

Oh my goodness, I can't wait. It's gonna be so much fun. Well, Lorna, thank you so much

for joining the author revolution podcast I really appreciate that you're you've been here and sharing all of your insights and wisdom. But oh my gosh, I'm so thrilled that you're here so if my audience wants to confine you or confine Li or come find the self published client I will have all of the links available as well but where can they go if they just want to hear you say it and they'll get they're going to type it real quick right now.



Orna Ross 44:43

OrnaRoss.com I guess is is the way to go. Because there are links to everything from there. That's my kind of hope but on the internet, so Yeah, perfect.



Carissa Andrews 44:53

Well, thank you so much. I really like I said, I really appreciate you being here and coming on the podcast and I don't know why you weren't here sooner.



Orna Ross 45:02

I really enjoyed the chat. Thank you so much for having me.



Carissa Andrews 45:06

Isn't Orna awesome? I could seriously listen to her amazing accent all day long. And that's saying something because I live in the same house with two English students. Orna is also one of those amazingly kind hearted women who you just love talking to and feel connected to right away. I am so glad that she wanted to be on the show, and I'm glad and appreciative that she was able to make the time. Now if you'd like to grab links to orna's website, the alliance of independent authors, or the self publishing advice conference happening on October 23, and 24th, be sure to head over to the show notes at authorrevolution.org forward slash 99. I will also make sure that there's a transcript from our talk available as well for downloading. Now definitely grab your tickets to self publish calm while you can. And while you're thinking about it, my presentation is going to be all about the prolific author mindset. And if you've heard enough about me blabbering on on that topic, there are still a ton of incredibly awesome mentors that you can learn from over the course of the conference. Well, that's it for this week. I hope you have a fantastic week ahead getting new words on the page. I am still plugging along with the Immortals, too. So we are in this together my friend, we got this. Now go forth and start your other revolution.

