

# Episode 111

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## SPEAKERS

Carissa Andrews, Craig Martelle

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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, potential. We've doubled the demands and continue to be rebels in the face of adversity. Now, after years of hearing the shelter, hustling, grind, we indies are rebelling again, gone are the days of publishing a book a month until we drop in 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. Welcome back to the author Revolution podcast, my writerly friend. Boy, oh boy, I have a podcast episode for you this week. So I don't know if you guys know this. But in 2017, I stumbled upon this Facebook group that one of my friends was really adamant that I should join, I was just finishing up the Pendomus Chronicles, I had Book Two was in the works, Book Three was going to be coming out shortly after. And I wasn't quite sure what my release strategy was going to look like. And so my friend was like, hey, you need to check out this 20Booksto50k group. It's like, the What the What now. And I remember when I first stumbled into it, and I was looking around at some of the posts, I remember thinking, Oh, my gosh, these guys are either incredible, or crazy, because they were putting out some incredible numbers truly incredible numbers. People were writing books, like a month, they were putting them out every single month, they were posting numbers that were just absolutely blowing my mind. And I remember thinking, Well, I don't know that I could do that. But I do know that I have two books that I could probably release back to back, right. And as I was working on some of the strategies I was kind of hearing about or learning about inside the group. I did put out polarities and revolutions a month part so they came out at the end of October 2017. And so it was one of those things where I was just like, Okay, how is this gonna look. And using some of the strategies I learned in 20Booksto50k, I was able to learn about promo stacking, I end up using promo stacking to help get the Pandavas Chronicles into an international bestseller status, which was incredible. So throughout the years, I've continued to be somewhat a lurker inside of 20Booksto50k. Because there's always so much information

coming at me all the time. And that group in particular, it is so aspirational and inspirational, that really honestly just soaking up the good vibes and the cool stuff that's happening is so awesome. But for me, you know, I am an information like sponge, I love my information. I love to hoard information, I love to learn all the things possible. And so 20Booksto50k has been such an incredible, supportive group of people who just are in it for the business side of things and truly have inspired me throughout the years to be a better author to become a better coach. That's why today I am super pleased to announce that we have Craig Martell from 20Booksto50k on the podcast today. Now guys, I have no idea how to explain how excited I am that he joined us today. So why don't we just get into this incredible episode, because I know you don't want to miss it. Craig, thank you so much for joining the author Revolution Podcast. I am really excited that you're here today.

 Craig Martelle 04:18

It's great to be here, Carissa. Thank you.

 Carissa Andrews 04:19

No, thank you. Okay, so I have explained in the intro a little bit about you and about 20 bucks to 50k and all that stuff. But why don't you tell my audience so that they can hear from you. You know who you are, what you do and why they should be paying attention. Oh, geez. Is that loaded? Yeah.

 Craig Martelle 04:38

Well, that's everything. That's right. I started writing back in 2015. I let myself on fire and decided I couldn't be trusted doing stuff outside. So I came back in and I said hey, I'll write that book I always wanted to write and that was October 4 of 2015. And I've not stopped writing since. So I have some 6 million words. published, I've got a lot of bestsellers, a lot of good stuff, a lot of Award nominations, stuff like that. But what matters is a huge fan base and growing. So I've established my chops as a writer, and writer right away. After I published three books, I've met Michael handily. And that's when he started the 20Booksto50k, I was one of the first 50 people that came over and joined him. And about a year later, after I'd already written a few books with him after I've had some some pretty significant commercial success with my books. He asked me if I would run 20Booksto50k the group, and we I think we had 4000 5000 members at the time, so it was already fairly substantial. But now we're, we're well over 55,000. We've got 10 or 11 conferences under our belt around the world, from Australia, to Bali, to Vegas, to Edinburgh, Scotland, and next year, it'll be Madrid. The reason we wanted to run the shows is because of our premise of giving back, okay, 20Booksto50k. Let's go take a step back. That is a retirement plan. Michelangelo, he was sitting in on the beach in Cabo. He had three books published at the time, and each of them so he's making about \$24 2022 to \$24 a day between those three books. And he said, Okay, in Cabo, I can, I can live for 35,000. But if I have 50,000, I can live comfortably. And he did the math 750 per book, he needed 20 books earning that much to make 50,000. And that's so that's a retirement plan. Yeah, so here's your I need the books, they each need to earn this. So let's, let's rock and roll. And the group is premised on that. It's about the business of being an author. We don't do a lot of craft stuff. But we do a lot of craft specific genre stuff in the conferences, because that's part of your

business in the group, it doesn't work, we tried it, because people are in so many different genres. And what works in one doesn't work in another. So we just don't we avoid those kinds of conversations, and let it let it focus more on the business of being an author. And I tell people that if you're smart enough to write a book, you're smart enough to manage the business of all the rest of it. Right? The hardest thing you'll ever do is write a book. Yeah, until you've written the book, and then you find out that it's only half the battle, especially if you want to make money with it. And I believe everybody's words have value. And how do we realize that value? There's a business of dealing with our our words, and getting them out there and putting them before buying public?



Carissa Andrews 07:45

Right? Well, I know for me, when I first started in 20Booksto50k, it must have been 2016, I want to say where I started kind of hanging out in there. And just seeing what's going on, the whole idea of rapid releasing to me was fairly new. I mean, I kind of jumped on the bandwagon a little bit because of NaNoWriMo back in 2010. But it never occurred to me to write it faster all the time. Like it was just a lot of life stuff going on and things that were getting in the way of that. But it was like the first experience then to think about rapid releasing, and how to publish books faster. And, and to have that business mindset behind the writing and the publishing side of it. Right. I think for me, in the beginning, it was just I love this story. And I wanted to tell it, and I think a lot of authors are like that when you say



Craig Martelle 08:28

they are and the good thing about writing and writing to market that that nuance, I write what I want, with the reader in mind. Yeah, so and that that nuance is all you need to take a passion project and turn it into a commercially viable passion project.



Carissa Andrews 08:47

Right. And I think that's where a lot of authors fail. I know I have a good number of friends and even a couple of students where it's like we're trying to, to help them see that differentiation, in that you can still write what you like, but you have to almost have your your finger on the pulse of your genre that you're trying to market to so that you know what the readers are really expecting from your books. You don't have to do everything exactly, but at least be able to portray it if nothing else in the book blurb, so they they purchase the book and start reading it.



Craig Martelle 09:13

It has to be similar, but unique. And similar in that and genre equals marketing. So genre is a commercial construct, right? Because the marketers, and the traditional publishing houses and anybody who sold books, said let's clump the readers in groups of that will like certain products. So we don't waste time and money marketing to a group that's not going to like a book. So genre equals marketing. And in making sure you hit the expectations of the readers

within that genre. You can go a little bit crazy and you have to everything has to be unique, but it still has to hit the expectations of the readers in that in that genre. Especially if you want to sell the book and then sell more copies and more copies of the book.



Carissa Andrews 09:59

Absolutely. Okay, so one of the things with 20Booksto50k for me to like you were talking about how you've, you've tried out different things. And over the years, I've really seen so much camaraderie and some really cool expertise and things coming out of that group. Was that an intentional thing by you and Michael? Or was that something that kind of grew and you went, Yeah, this is the direction we want to take this particular group. Because it's just really, it's such a, whenever I am feeling confused or demotivated, I love going into the group and just perusing everything that's in there, because it's so inspiring and aspirational. But it just, it's transformed into this really close knit group of people who just do some amazing things and share that information with everybody.



Craig Martelle 10:41

The those were a couple of premises that Michael and really established right at the front, is we celebrate wins, and only say what works for you, we're not going to dictate to anyone. And because we're all in these, you make the business decisions, do not give those decisions over to others, because they will fail you because they don't know your exact situation. So here's the smorgasbord, you bring your plate, you come and pick and choose what you want. And as apropos because we're filming this on Thanksgiving Day, right? So I have a I have a four pound pecan pie in my in my garage waiting. And we're going to Alex's house. And yeah, I'm sure it'll send three and a half pounds at home with me. But as long as I get some turkey and some real stuffing, I'm good.



Carissa Andrews 11:31

There you go. There you go. We've got ours in the oven right now. And it's like it's wafting in here. I'm like, a fun day. Oh my gosh, that's awesome. Okay, so you and I talked briefly through messenger about 20Booksto50k's conference from from Vegas, because it just wrapped up. It's a conference that I have always wanted to go to. And I just it's always fallen on like a weird timeframe for me. It's just never worked. This year, obviously COVID. We have our six year old who hadn't quite yet had his vaccines. He's only had one so far. And so it was like, Okay, I can't risk it this year. But next year, I would like to be there. It's obviously one of the biggest indie author conferences that I've ever seen it probably in the world, I would imagine. And it's just it's such an inspirational thing. And I've always caught the videos afterwards to see what's being said, How are how are things being done, you know, what are people who are the big players, obviously, too. And I'm just I'm curious about how that spun off. Like we started with the group, the group, 20Booksto50k group, but then it grew into something so much bigger, like, how did the conference aspects of that spin off of it?



Craig Martelle 12:34

Oh, like the conference? That that was because I had the very first author conference I went to

Oh, like the conference. That that was because I had the very first author conference I went to was horrendously awful. Oh, no. And, and grossly overpriced. And I'm like, This is bullshit. I hope you'll allow swearing on your. Yeah, because it was it was BS to the max. And I'm like this guy, I can do it better. I can do instead of a two day conference, we're going to do three, instead of 800 bucks, we're going to make it 100. And we're gonna feed the people to it. And we, and we did by setting it in Vegas, we were able to get some and moving it off the strip, we were able to get a lot of price concessions and make magic happen. So that and so it was basically because I was pissed off at a conference. Oh, also, but also because people wanted to meet in real life. Yeah, like I I learned better when I talk to somebody and most people do. And that's even though we exist online, we exist as a Facebook group. And it's all volunteers is still so much more opportunity and meeting in person. So 2017 We finally said, Hey, let's let's have a conference. And we did 100 bucks each. Yeah, we had to raise the price next year. Because I think Michael and I both took about 25 grand out of our pockets. pissed. And to prove that it was it was a sharp stick in there. i Yeah. And I did talk to those guys who ran that conference. They're like that was the worst conference ever. Come back later. I'm like no, because it was awful conference. Make it better. Once you guys come to my conference. There you go. And it's not my I mean, it was that first year, because it was just me we had jeez, like 12 or 14 sessions is all that's still a banjo. And we started off with 150 and by the end of registration, and 417 I think that first year, wow. So this year, we had 2100 people sign up and actually 1300 1720 At the end, and then about 1350 Is all that showed up. So which is okay, because it was the first time in Balis but we needed to be able to scale up. So Balis allows us to scale all the way up to 4000 attendees if need be. I expect we'll have 2500 next year because COVID will be behind us. Yeah, whether it kills us all or not. doesn't feel that? Well, we'll be we'll be coming. Now if we're going to be in a good place. So 2500, I'm going to cap it, because I know we're going to have that many. And we have all of the vendors. I've talked to those vendors who presented remotely this year, as well as ones who didn't and wanted to. And we will have all of the major audiobook producers, we will have all of the distributors like Amazon, Apple, Barnes and Noble. It's everybody who is anybody because this is the biggest show on the planet, when absolutely indie authors and authors as a whole, especially once we put 2500 bucks of seats, RD, our vendor day or two spectacularly this year, because people checked in and they went in so your vendors had exclusive access to over 1000 budding authors signed up that first day. And they went in so exclusive access for six hours to all these authors. So face to face. I know pretty much anybody who was selling anything off their support tools sold out that first hour. Wow, that's crazy. Yeah. So we had a lot of interest from people already saying, Hey, I absolutely have to come on in for next year. I was in this year and uh...



Carissa Andrews 16:22

When do you open for next year, then?




Craig Martelle 16:25

January 8,



Carissa Andrews 16:26


Okay. January 8, guys, make sure you have your finger over the trigger button.

 Craig Martelle 16:32

And I will post it online because we have opened it up to wider than 20 books at 50k. Okay, just because Balis is expensive. And we're not going to raise prices, but the only way to offset our classes then we just need more people.

 Carissa Andrews 16:45


Right? What is the price, then?

 Craig Martelle 16:47


\$299.99 for five days, five full days.

 Carissa Andrews 16:51

That is amazing. When I saw that it was five days this year. I was like holy cow. There are so many videos to watch. It's incredible. I mean that there are so many that I still have to get through.

 Craig Martelle 17:03


I think we had I think we had 162 sessions. I was telling people 150

 Carissa Andrews 17:08

That's some that's some like finangling right there. That's a magic did you put RJ in charge of like finangling that because that woman is insane with the spreadsheet magic.


 Craig Martelle 17:17

I got it i i have everybody organized as we need to fight. The AV team is behind a chin. And Jen green now she joined the team. But then at the show, she was the go to person Ira between the two of them, they made all the magic happen to make sure that we were and I mean, we bought a bunch of equipment ahead of time. But next year, I think we're gonna have a new contractor supporting us and what to see, bigger, better, all of it.


 Carissa Andrews 17:47

For the audio visual, is that what you're talking about? Yeah, yeah, I saw one of the posts in there where you you said that even the sessions that were supposed to be expertly recorded and whatnot, they weren't as good as you had anticipated that some of the smaller sessions?

Yeah, yeah.

 Craig Martelle 18:03

That's still all the sessions were legible. Were you could hear them. And, and they delivered. So especially if we went back through and I think by this weekend, any session that had low sound is being remastered because we recorded all of them. Oh, was being remastered and re uploaded. So look for the new uploads on certain sessions.

 Carissa Andrews 18:25

So are like some of the smaller sessions? Is that what you're meeting? Yeah,

 Craig Martelle 18:29

there were those that were in the palace rooms, because we did not have in the bronze rooms, we had formal setups with the HD webcams. And the sound system was linked in to the speakers to the microphones rectly. So we didn't have to get the sound to be a secondary, a secondary source, like we did in the palace rooms, that was pretty much an iPad sitting close to speak, right.

 Carissa Andrews 18:56

But it still works. I mean, as long as the information gets relayed, that's really what you're there for. It's not necessarily for like the best thing ever. I mean, most of us get it. I mean, we're used to like watching zoom meetings, you know, like this, in order to be able to get the information. So I would say that people are way more forgiving about that sort of thing.

 Craig Martelle 19:16

Yeah, they are. And for 300 bucks if you're in person because you couldn't go to 12 sessions simultaneously, they needed the material as well. And for the virtual attendees, you could pay as little as nothing, and you still get all the access now next year that's going to change to get live access, you are going to have to pay but only charging 20 bucks.

 Carissa Andrews 19:37

Sure, oh, that's a really good deal for people who want to be able to access that way. And

 Craig Martelle 19:43

then they can also ask questions of the AV team because AV team is live through a Facebook live stream, so they can ask questions there and the Avici take them up to the speakers. Yeah,

that's a great opportunity. And if you want to watch them for free, you just wait The next week when they come out on YouTube, because we're not going to deny anybody the information or making it available to everybody.



Carissa Andrews 20:06

That's awesome. One of the things I wanted to mention too, is that I mean, you, you guys are so good about constantly giving new information. And one of the things I think it was this year that you started implementing, are those successful indie author five minute focus things. First thing in the morning, I love kind of checking in on those when some, some of them are, like, really eye popping. I'm like, what is that? I gotta check that out. They're like mini mini vlog, first thing in the morning, just five minutes, and then you're on with your day. How did that get started? Like, what was that your idea as well, like, just to



Craig Martelle 20:35

it was right away when COVID happened and the lockdowns happened, and people were freaking out. We had a one hour long, Craig and CNM show. Yeah, where I had different guests, I had a guest actually, if you if you look closely, you would see all of the guests I had on. Were guest speakers for 20books, Vegas 2020, which I kept it live all the way through until the hotel canceled on me in October. I had planned on going and actually I did go to Vegas and worked on the contract for 2021, then, but so every day, so we did. She's 45 sessions, and in five weeks have an hour long and it's after she's about three or four months of that. It's like this is killing me. That's a really long, it's hugely time consuming. And my internet sucks. It was getting worse and worse. Oh no. So. So then I went with let's do the five minute let's do something very short and focused. And so I started that, I think in August of last year, as a supplement, and a replacement to the CNM show, which was an hour long conversation, which kind of meandered that was taking a lot of people's time as they were trying to get back on our feet. So just going to the five minutes. I think that worked. worked best. And it's still I like the format. And that's I'm going to continue that I've got episodes what I just did 323 324 Today, something like that.



Carissa Andrews 22:01

That's awesome. Yeah, they're really great. I, it's a nice little shot of inspiration or something to think about. Like for even for me in Minnesota, I mean, you you typically post it early enough that it's morning for me as well. So I'm able to check it out and then move on with the day. And it's like that's something that cool to think about, or I didn't think about that before. Okay, good. That validated whatever my thought was on that. So it's they're really cool. So I hope you keep doing those. Those are really great. Okay, so you were talking about? Well, obviously, you and Michael are certainly you certainly put your money, where your mouth is when it comes to writing and publishing books very quickly. So how many books do you have out now? Do you know?



Craig Martelle 22:39

I have a hallmark I think it's 115 115 books



I have a ballpark I think it's 115 115 books



Carissa Andrews 22:44

since 2015. That's, that's incredible. That is absolutely incredible.



Craig Martelle 22:48

I have co authors on a lot of them. But this year, in 2019, I published 30 books in the first 30 weeks, and it almost killed me because of the costs were up sales were down. Even with 30 books I made less than so that last half of the year, I only publish my own books under my name that I wrote. And I made as much in the second half of the year as I did the first half. Wow was six books, verse 30, because my readers want books by me and some of the books, they're good stories, but they just weren't what the readers wanted John wrinkles, marketing, right, because they're a little bit different than and my readership that I have developed, doesn't like that much different. So I stopped that, and I am co authoring titles. But there, I read every word of every one of these books, I go through them, and they make sure that they are aligned perfectly with what my readers are expecting. So those are doing well, much, much better this year than previous years and also have expanded. I do publish Geez I published with for four or five different publishers because of why not? Different different chances to bring readers into my brand. Because one thing I do insist on is, if I publish a book with you, I want my entire back list listed in the credits. Absolutely. We're able to bring people into my brand.



Carissa Andrews 24:14

That's great. Now for people who are listening who might not know what genre are you reading because they might want to go check out your books right away.



Craig Martelle 24:21

I write science fiction. I have some fantasy. I have thrillers so science fiction, thrillers are my two main ones. I do nonfiction, but that's only to forestall questions because 20 books at 50k. I could be answering questions all day every day and never do anything else. So I wrote five books on various elements within the self publishing business. And I have some mysteries. And I have a new three different series of coming of age. And so those I'm trying My two, those are all co authored and some, I actually have authors now that I just published her stuff. So act as a publisher, and one is 16. She just turned 17. Her book comes out on in on December 20. It's coming of age fantasy mark of the assassins. And it's interesting because it's it's dark, it's a lot darker than what my readership is. And I've got another coming of age trilogy that the last one is published on December 13, I believe. And so those I want to have a synergy between them. And also the targeted audience of 13 to 18 year old year old girls, maybe darker is what they're feeling as they're growing up. I agree the coming of age. And I know in Vegas some two of the most successful authors there one right start romance and other human rights, psychological thrillers, which is domestic and dark. So I think maybe there is a an audience for those dark themes. But also, she's 17 She wrote it when she was 16, for Pete's sake, right? And my daughter is ready to



Carissa Andrews 26:13

go off and she's right there. I mean, she she loves those those darker. I mean, she originally like probably about nine years old started reading, obviously, the Hunger Games, because that was a big deal with within the group. But like, it's dark as hell, right? Right. And we're watching the girl in the woods right now that the show up version of it. And now she wants to go back and read the story. But I mean, it's dark. There are pieces of that where you're just like, Oh, my okay, but she's loving it. And and so I agree there. There's something about that age right now where that they're, they're kind of going into that darkness, maybe to maybe to bring it in, you know, back to light. I don't know. I'm just kind of curious to see what happens with it. It's really interesting, but I agree that they're, they're willing to dive right into that.



Craig Martelle 26:53

And maybe to shine the light and not fear it as much. So because this one it's dark, but the main character turns out to become an assassin. Wow. So which I mean, it gets pretty dark. Yeah, I have I have I have an assassin thriller, my Hitman with a conscience. But he has a girlfriend and yeah, that it's it's completely and wholly different. The darkness is not is how they shine the light into the world through what they do, and not how the darkness absorbs them. So yeah, we'll see. We'll see how this does.



Carissa Andrews 27:28

That is really cool. Okay, so you kind of touched on it a little bit, when you're saying that you kind of got a little overwhelmed there for a bit. So I was gonna ask, do you, you know, being such a prolific author? Do you ever get burned out or overwhelmed with everything that you're doing? I mean, you're you are just amazing. When it comes to getting all of these things done, you must have cloned yourself, did you figure out how to clone yourself,



Craig Martelle 27:46

I have no life. What it comes down to I'm actually very efficient with my time when I do get it. I write part time now I write maybe two hours a day. So all of the other stuff in in my life with the authors and publishers. Takes the rest of the time. I just make good checklists. And I do if something is only going to take 30 seconds, I get it done. It only takes 30 seconds I move on. So I may get 100 things done in a day. And most of them take almost no time, but they need to be done. So documenting, and getting the words I've got my book up on the screen. This is the longest I've ever taken to write a book. But keep in mind in September, I did the drive across America. Yeah. So I was gone from September 3 to September 26. Driving and meeting people all the way from I started in Illinois and I went to Vegas and I drove all the way to Tampa, Florida. 15 stops meant 400 People just showing the flag and letting people know that the world is still out. There is still a great time to be an indie author, and keep pressing. So I think that worked very well for that. I came back and it was all Vegas because new show new location, which is the big, the big challenge. So a lot of shows. Yeah. Oh, just so that was 100% of my

time. So I've taken almost three months to write this book. But I'm on the homestretch now I should finish by Sunday. Finally. That's awful. There's only going to be 60,000 words. So three months 360 1000 word book.



Carissa Andrews 29:21

This month has been the same for me. I've had my next book has been due to come out in December, December 26. The drainer like get it started writing since probably mid August. And finally with Nano, I'm like, Screw it. It's it's coming out now. It's gonna happen. So luckily, I'm like, I don't know. 20,000 words out so it's gonna be done by the end of December.



Craig Martelle 29:40

Good. Good. Yeah. Well, I gotta give it to my editor cuz she needs a week's because we're publishing on the 15th Oh, it's gonna go live. Yeah,



Carissa Andrews 29:48

I feel ya, I'm right there with you. Mine's got it's going out on the 26th come hell or high water.



Craig Martelle 29:53

Yeah, yeah.



Carissa Andrews 29:55

Oh my goodness. Okay, so where does your inspiration come from for your books? Like how do you when you're writing that many Books and even if you're co authoring, where does your inspiration come from when it comes to everything?



Craig Martelle 30:05

Always what if? What if this was this way? What if this happened? What if this was available? What if this technology existed? As simple as that? I embrace one premise for a book, just a single one. And then we go from there, I try to hit the 12 at least 12 side plots, and subplots within each book, as John Truby recommends, and you can see John Truby, if you want to share any of the Vegas videos, yeah. Because those maintain the interest as something as simple as the interaction between a main character and a child. And so how does that develop as a side plot, even though it's the main character, but how are they moving the plot forward. So you've got those actions, and you've got those secondary effects, and all kinds of opportunities to be interesting for your readers and keep them reading and keep them coming back for the next book in the next book. The book I'm working on now is the 14th book in the series. So a lot of

promotions setup for when it launches a lot of promotions. Because we're putting book one on for free books two through 13 for 99 cents each. So all that somebody can buy the whole series for. There's a lot of books, so 1215 bucks, yeah, a whole series of 14 books.



Carissa Andrews 31:20

Are you doing one of those FreeBooksy, like buy the whole series promotion thing.



Craig Martelle 31:24

Yeah.



Carissa Andrews 31:25

That's going to be epic. Well, awesome. Okay, so going back, just really briefly, what advice do you have? Or do you have advice that you can share to new authors who are kind of just getting into the space, maybe haven't heard of 20 books yet, and are just looking to get some guidance on like, where they should really get focused and start.



Craig Martelle 31:48

To start, what I always tell people is, read the genre you're writing in, and then write the book, write it to the conclusion, especially your first book, write it until you're done, and then look at the other stuff, like editor cover, how do I publish? How do I publish? Where do I get an audio book? They'll get it translated into Estonian, what do I do, you have to have the book first. Because if you start looking at other stuff, you can get easily overwhelmed. And there's no reason to, because you only need to learn what you need to know when you need to know it. Not everything all at once, because you'll never get there. Yes, just write your book. And the best thing you could do is write it for yourself as the target audience, but yourself as a reader of x. I like The Hunger Games, I like these other books. So let me write it in this kind of mindset. So if somebody likes this book Hunger Games than they should like my book, and if you do that maintain that focus that you're writing with the reader in mind, as well as writing to what you like, if you try to just write something like hey, lit RPG is hot. I don't I don't gain. So if I tried to write lit RPG, it would be a complete debacle and waste of my time. Right. And I don't read you an RPG either. Just because I don't have any time anymore. Since that became hot. Reverse harem. Oh, my God, it's so hot. It's a hot genre. I want to get into it. Well, you better start read.



Carissa Andrews 33:12

Yeah, I mean, and you better be able to write like that, because I'll tell you take some it takes effort to try to write that.



Craig Martelle 33:19

Yeah, yeah. So best to write what you know, at the at the outset. And when people say, right, we know, it's not like, Hey, I know what it's like to live in Minnesota. No, no, that's not what they're talking about, right? What the genres you read, and also interpose your personal experiences. Because even people who say they are uninteresting, because they live in a big city, they do nothing. They're still interesting, because they're able to use their imagination to come up with their stories, and the ideas. So that makes you interesting.



Carissa Andrews 33:56

Yeah, and all the different life experiences that you've had, you could live in a city, but be a Reiki Master, or learn how to grow stuff on your roof. I mean, who knows, there's also different different things that you do that maybe other people have no access to, or even understanding of, and so you can interpose that into your stories, actually, yeah. So I have a question about when you have that many books going on and that many different storylines. Do you do use like something like Potter? Do you have a story Bible? What is it you use in order to keep all that together?



Craig Martelle 34:27

I have a spreadsheet. I have a master spreadsheet that has a separate workbook for each series. And that has the notes in there about the characters like eye color, so I don't get the eye color wrong. Right and, and the characters keep the characters on track terminology if there's unique terminology, I put that in there. And it's it's just a it's a mess, but it still works for me. Yeah. And also I have the world's best insider team. I have four readers that read everything I produce, and they have their own story Bibles for it to help helped my consistency and helped me because sometimes they'll say, hey, this character start to sound like this character. Yeah, no kidding. Let me change that. Fix that. And there we go.



Carissa Andrews 35:08

So cool. If anyone is interested in checking out 20 bucks to 50k or all of your awesome bucks, where should they go to get started?



Craig Martelle 35:17

Craigmartell.com CRA je ma RT e ll e.com. You'll find me there. The blog all this stuff is, is there. And you got to go to Facebook to find 20Booksto50k. That's two zero books to five zero. Okay.



Carissa Andrews 35:39

Yeah, it'll pop right up. It is it is very easy to find. You could probably start typing 20 books and it'll pop up. Should it should? Yeah. Well, awesome. Thank you so much, Craig, for joining the podcast today. I am so thrilled that you were able to do this, especially on Thanksgiving. I hope

you have a fantastic meal. Whatever you're doing here today, like you said, and don't have to come home with three pounds of pecan pie.



Craig Martelle 36:05

Going to come home with three pounds. I know it.



Carissa Andrews 36:09

Awesome. Well, thank you so much. Thank you face. Wasn't that a fantastic episode? Craig sense of humor, and his silliness is just amazing. But on top of it, I don't know how this man gets as much done as he does. Both him and Michael Andre are just incredibly successful and aspirational authors that all of us can learn from. So if you have not yet checked out 20 books to 50k I highly encourage you to go onto Facebook and do so I will also make sure that a link to the Facebook group is in the podcast notes as well. And if you wanted to check out the 20 bucks 250 K YouTube channel, make sure you head over to the show notes as well because everything will be right there. Head over to [authorrevolution.org](http://authorrevolution.org) forward slash 111 In order to make that happen. Alright guys, I hope you enjoy this episode as much as I did. I know having Craig on the show has been on my vision board for a while so I'm super excited and happy that he was able to join us and hopefully you enjoyed it as much as I did. Well, that's all I have for you this week. Go forth and start your author revolution.