

Episode 129

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SPEAKERS

Carissa Andrews, Calista Jayne



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 impostor 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 doubled the demands and continue to be rebels in the face of adversity. Now, after years of hearing the shouts of hustle and grind, we indies are rebelling again, gone are the days of publishing a book a month until we drop, and in its place are 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 there millionaire authors. I hope you've had an incredible week. And I hope some of you are participating in this week's millionaire author challenge. I am having a super fun time myself kind of going through all of the stuff trying to get the worksheets together. This was mostly last week actually. But it really opened my eyes to the way that our stories, the ones that we hold in our head, really impact the way that we allow ourselves, the joy, the abundance, the amazingness to unfold around us. So this week, I have a question for you, because we haven't really talked about Radish. And it's a platform that I have used myself, but haven't found super huge success on. But it's got some interesting qualities. And I think you're gonna agree when you hear this week's guest talk about it. So let me ask you this. Have you ever wondered if there's a way to get paid while you're writing your book? Well, I know I have. And in addition to the Kindle Vella platform, which we've talked about, there is this platform called Radish that's been launching some authors into incredible royalties on their platform. And this is even despite changing their royalty rates not super long ago. So today, I am interviewing Calista Jayne. She's a romance author who has made bank with two serial stories written and published on Radish. Now, I met Calista ages ago, she and I had been running in the same author circles for quite a while. And we have similar interests and the other side of the business and in life in general. In fact, she's another one of the authors who is loving the concept of reality hacking. Remember, when I was digging into that last year, I still do it. It's just not as prevalent because I've been doing a lot more with Abraham Hicks this year, following my internal guidance, to learn a little bit more

about that. But she and I started talking a lot more about reality hacking, and we started implementing some of those strategies. She wanted to see if reality hacking could work for her budding author career. And in specific could it help her increase her royalties? So she obviously has a millionaire author mindset, too. And she certainly is well on her way to achieving that goal, because truth be told, she didn't have to wait long for reality hacking, and in specific, using Radish to produce the kind of results she was hoping for. So last year, she had one of her serial stories on reddish takeoff, and it went into epic proportions. We're going to talk about how it went viral and discuss like how many views this thing has had. It's pretty awesome. So today, Calista and I are talking about her read success, and how indie authors who are new to the platform, or even those who haven't had massive success, but they've tried it, how they might be able to use the platform to their advantage, where indie authors with big millionaire author destinies. So keeping an open mind and utilizing every avenue available is one of the ways our inspired action can bring us straight to everything we've been dreaming of. So are you ready? Let's get into the interview. Hey there Calista I am so glad that you're on the podcast and agreed to join us today. So I talked a little bit in the introduction to my audience about how we met and all of those good fun things, but can you tell my audience a little bit more about you and what it is that you write? Yeah,

 Calista Jayne 04:43

First, thanks for having me here. I'm excited and nervous. I'm living in California with my family. Like everybody listening I love books and I have for many years. I don't know what else to share. I'm addicted to like stationery and pens, and pencils and notebooks and stickers and all that kind of fun stuff. As far as writing, I've been doing it for years, but I only recently jumped into serial fiction. That is awesome.

 Carissa Andrews 05:10

Okay, so speaking of that serial fiction, we need to talk about Radish. You're obviously doing extremely well on that site. So before we dig into the nitty gritty of how your works are doing, can you explain a little bit to my audience about what Radish is, and maybe why they should consider publishing on it?

 Calista Jayne 05:28

Yeah, so it's a serial reading app, or it's a reading app catering to serial fiction. For the most part, the simple idea behind it is that readers purchase coins, which they can then spend on individual episodes of a book or series. And it's nice that they can do like, so it's just like little microtransactions. And if they enjoy it, they keep going. And if they don't, they can Peace out, you know, before spending all that money on sometimes like an epic saga. You know, some of these series go on for several seasons. And I think authors can, you know, authors can publish their backlist there, even if it's not technically a serial piece of fiction. And some of my favorite reasons for being there are getting to interact with the readers. I know that's actually a no, no, like, some authors don't want that. But I really, really love it. And I also really like getting paid while I'm writing a book, rather than having to write the whole thing before seeing any money.





Carissa Andrews 06:27

So how would you describe them? And that's a really great point. But how would you describe serial fiction how and how it's different than from just like writing a normal book?



Calista Jayne 06:36

Yeah, that's a big one. And I think it looks like different things to different authors. For me, it, it's very similar, although I am a lot more conscious of how my chapters or how my episodes and one of the complaints, but I think a loving complaint that I get a lot is Oh, no, another cliffhanger. And I'm like, Honey, that that's the point of how we do. You Yep. But a lot of like, some of the longer cereal pieces that I've that I've read on Radish, have more of a soap opera feel to them, you know, there's just there, they are episodic, they have several points of view, sometimes might have three. And I've toyed with the idea of including the antagonists point of view. But I don't necessarily want to do full arcs for all of those side characters. So you know, some of them will get spin off episodes later on is kind of the plan.



Carissa Andrews 07:41

That's really cool. So how long have you been writing and publishing on Radish?



Calista Jayne 07:45

I started uploading my first story in July last year, so not very long.



Carissa Andrews 07:50

Wow. I didn't realize it was it was that, like, sort of a time ago? I mean, I remember kind of you and I were talking about it, I think when you started but that's amazing. I guess. For some reason, I figured you'd probably been toying around with it for longer than that. That's so cool.



Calista Jayne 08:06

I had been spent some time on the app before publishing anything, you know, I was I was looking at it. I was curious, like, what, what it's all about. And I'd read several serials, or at least pieces of them, I don't have the kind of patience or staying power to like go several seasons. But I did like getting sort of the feel for how it works and how readers are using it. I think that gave me some pretty good insights to just how I wanted to operate there as an author.



Carissa Andrews 08:37

That's cool. So in your mind, are seasons kind of like different books? Or how do seasons? How are seasons kind of played out?

 Calista Jayne 08:44

So I'm looking at for the one that I'm writing right now, each season is going to be a different ebook in a series even though they follow the same main characters. But, you know, other people I've seen have done, almost like a series of stand alones. You know, like how, how Romans will have like, a different couple in each book in the series. Yeah. And so they would call each of those a different season. That's one way to do it, too. That makes sense.

 Carissa Andrews 09:12

Okay, so let's talk about your cereals that you've got right now. One called their baby doll, which has 1.4 million views. Holy cow. And Cinderella's daddies has 184.8 1000 views. So okay, so you've been doing this since July of last year. Wow. Did you expect either of these stories to take off like this?

 Calista Jayne 09:37

No, not at all. Like, no idea. There'll be we'd all didn't do much during like the first month or so. It had a few of us and looking at what other other authors have talked about. I see now that it was kind of a special case to begin with, because I had some subscribers right off the bat. Whereas a lot of people do out. And I was okay with it not doing very well in my mind at the start, because I wanted to write and publish it anyway. And this is just a way to start it off. And then in late August, it started getting more views. And I don't know, why necessarily, I think it could have happened organically, you know, just it started picking up and then maybe Radish started noticing it. I began seeing it on the homepage, you know, like under different categories. And then once it started getting in house promotions, the views really started going up. That's awesome. So

 Carissa Andrews 10:35

do you have to apply for in house promotions? Or is that something that just kind of comes from Radish and they they do their own thing?

 Calista Jayne 10:42

You definitely should apply? Early. And often if you're going to start using Radish, they have like monthly promotions that they'll advertise for and then they have like sort of these constant ongoing ones. I'll like, I'm always clicking the button like Yes. Give me promotions. Yes. Put me on the list for consideration. now or later. You know, even though I've only got two stories up, I'm I'm applying for everything that they fit under. Right.

 Carissa Andrews 11:10

So is that all in the back dashboard, then Radish that you can see those things?



Calista Jayne 11:13

Yeah, they also have an author mailing list. And so you want to make sure that you're on that some people don't get those for some reason. But you usually like a couple days after the newsletter goes out. You can see it on the dashboard under announcements.



Carissa Andrews 11:28

Okay, cool. Okay, so if you don't mind me asking with that many of us, that's incredible. What are you earning? Then from your stories on Radish?



Calista Jayne 11:36

On average, it's low, four figures a month, it's gone a little bit higher. But for the most part, yeah, around that much.



Carissa Andrews 11:44

That's amazing, though. I mean, for a platform that a lot of authors don't even understand exists. I mean, that's incredible. So yeah, relations. Thanks. Okay. So in addition to the serialized stories, you're also launching them as books is from what I could tell, and you're it looks like you're doing them wide. Are they being as well received, you know, in out and wild as they are on Radish? Or how are you finding that Radish is more engaged with the stories like what what are your findings.



Calista Jayne 12:10

so I am not getting a lot of feedback on the ebooks, like I think there may be a couple of reviews up. And that's great. I'm like, thankful for those reviews. I don't have an ark team or anything like that. So, but they're like, I'm not getting the purchases of the books, like the subscribers of the story. And the purchases of the books don't match at all, like from what my readers are telling me. Some of them are buying the ebooks too, which is actually super humbling, like they're paying for my books twice, which makes me feel really, really good. And also makes me want to like give them more and better things. So that's kind of a cool experience. But no, there's not like a whole lot happening on the ebook avenues yet.



Carissa Andrews 12:51

That's interesting. So it has, have you been publishing them just then since those books started launching? Or did you have a couple of books prior to that? Prior to using Radish?



Calista Jayne 13:00

I had a couple of books prior to using Radish just little sort of like writing challenges that I took part in. One of them might have unpublished because I liked it so much. I turned it into Cinderella's daddy's so I unpublished it and expanded it. You know, it was like a, I don't know maybe 15,000 word novelette. And, and I really, really liked the characters and I thought that the story could go farther.



Carissa Andrews 13:28

So I have another question then. Some people consider Radish as a way to get almost like page reads like Kindle Unlimited right? But still be wide. So obviously it's in my mind. Anyway, Radish seems to be closer to what Kindle Vella is at the present moment. But I found anyway that the readers out there are really more like in Radish and maybe even a little bit in Vella, are more like veering towards the romance or the erotica side of things. Do you think that those are the genres that best fit for Radish? Or do you think there are other genres out there that do really well, as well?



Calista Jayne 14:04

So for Radish, I would say just based on my own explorations of the app, definitely, it's predominantly romance and high heat romance, especially, although, you know, there's, there are other options on there. So I think for the people who are looking for that they can find it. But given the audience that seems to be there and what they're mostly reading, you know, the books that you see as the top 10 You know, on this site regularly, it's mostly going to be romance. I haven't heard of anybody with runaway success stories and like ya or fantasy. And I was thinking like for authors who want to do serialization for other genres they might consider crazy meet the studio. They have the kiss app, which is romance, but they also have another app called screen, which is like mystery thriller. They don't know what else they've got on horror, maybe not Chest. That's really cool. Okay. Well,



Carissa Andrews 15:03

what about Kindle Vella? Have you tried Kindle Vella, then as a way to test things out, too, or



Calista Jayne 15:09

so yeah, when it first started, I uploaded part of their baby doll. And then I realized that KDP was going to allow returns on episodes, which just rubbed me the wrong way. And then it was also fairly evident early on, that they were expecting the authors to bring the audience to Vella, rather than the other way around. And I just didn't really have a lot of faith and how they launched it. So I pulled baby doll off, and then took it exclusively to Radish. And sidenote, I think that being exclusive on Radish, even for just a short period of time can kind of boost your chances of getting promotions. And that might have helped with baby doll starting off. Awesome.



Carissa Andrews 15:57



Carissa Andrews 15:17

I guess one of the questions I was gonna ask you then is if you did, like, how did the two platforms compare? But it sounds like they're pretty comparable other than the returns on episodes, right? Or?



Calista Jayne 16:08

Oh, there's actually a lot of other differences. Let me see. So Kindle, Vella has the weird. I don't know if so my experience with Kindle Vella was like July last year, but they had this weird thing where each episode has to be approved, right? So you hit publish, and then it's like, you wait a few days. And so then you have like, say you upload like 10 episodes, you've got 10 emails from KDP, saying your episode was approved, or it wasn't. I guess in some cases, that's not on Radish, once you're approved as an author, you can just publish there. I've heard of some issues where writers are putting things that are maybe a little too taboo on there, and they need to change. But it at least goes up at first and then they find out later that they need to make adjustments. One thing that I think Vella and Radish are both doing right is they're allowing tags, sort of like people see and fanfic, which is a great way to be able to search for the things that you want. You're like, I really just love me a second chance romance. And that's what I want to read today. You can find that because it's tagged. I'm not sure how sophisticated the tag system is on fella, but I know that it's at least there Right? Yep. Let's see what else is there? I think Radish is prettier. That's important to me. I love that hot pink complex, like, yes. Yeah. And it just looks very sleek. And you know, it's established. And then the main difference to me though, is the reader interaction. On villa, you can get thumbs up in favorites, I think. And on Radish, you can get like a little heart, you know, readers can heart an episode, they can leave comments on individual episodes. I think they could do that in Villa as well. Oh, can they? I didn't know that. That's cool. And then the writers can respond to the comments, or not, if that is there a want. And then there's also for like, three hours after an episode goes live, or is released, there's a live chat. And so readers can hang out together and the author can pop in if they want to. And just kind of like chat about the episode or, or whatever, really. And that that I think is really cool. Like I didn't know I was encouraging a community by interacting with the readers. But that's kind of like what I ended up with. And it's really a neat experience that I've really enjoyed.



Carissa Andrews 18:34

I think that's a really key feature that that little event because it's like I was just talking about on the podcast of the last podcast that I just recorded. So this this podcast episode is going to air a little bit later, but I was doing the one on Brandon Sanderson's crazy Kickstarter thing. Yeah. I mean, it's amazing. But one of the lessons that I wanted indie authors to learn is that, you know, there's power in creating an event for your thing, whatever it is, whether it's your launch, or whether it's, you know, whatever it is you're trying to do. And so it's cool that Radish is doing this in almost like in little micro doses. We're creating an event we're making it special. We're making the launch of this particular episode something that's a neat thing to interact with. I like that.



Calista Jayne 19:17

Yeah, I love popping in again, I don't know to like, I don't know any of my author friends that

attend the live chats, but I really enjoy it especially like at the end of a season. One time I like left my heroin in a burning building trapped you know, and like, going into the live chat and I was kind of afraid they were gonna burn or even just like the end of the baby doll cereal like that was a really special event to be a part of for me just because everybody was so they're just happy and I was happy and we were all emotional.



Carissa Andrews 19:55

So is that one done then? Is that cereal? Done? Yeah,



Calista Jayne 19:57

Babydoll is finished every now and then I'll get comments on the last episode saying like, Hey, how about you know, a reprise? Yeah. But those those main characters are actually side characters in Cinderella's Daddies. Because none of us wanted to say goodbye to them entirely. So I ended up setting Cinderella in the same town and there's gonna be there's some little overlap.



Carissa Andrews 20:21

That's funny. Isn't it interesting that they're the side characters in the other one, but the side characters are doing better in a sense when it comes to views. That's crazy.



Calista Jayne 20:29

Yeah, they'll um, hopefully Cinderella's Daddies will catch up soon. I mean, like Cinderella is in January. And I'm hoping to do four seasons instead of three. So, you know, it's not that it's doing worse necessarily. It's just the same time. Yeah,



Carissa Andrews 20:47

absolutely. That's super cool. Okay, so do you have any tips or tricks for others? Who might want to give Radish a try, but they're not quite sure if it's the right fit for them?



Calista Jayne 20:57

Yeah. So I guess the first thing is to just like, it sounds maybe patronizing but download the app. Yeah, look at it, you know, see what's on there, see how what you might want to write might fit in or not fit in? And if what you have in mind isn't going to fit in? Maybe don't waste your time with it. I mean, I'm not going to tell anybody not to try something that that they want to test out because you never know you could have the next runaway success. And maybe, core is the next big thing on Radish. I don't know, I think it would be hard to get approved for a horror story. You don't know, though. And once you're approved, I don't think that Radish is going to tell you not to publish something. But yeah, I would, I would look around at what's on

there, see how readers are reacting to different kinds of episodes, see what their activity is, like, see what Radish is pushing. Because they they know what is hot. And you know, they're they're paying attention to what readers are searching for. And what they're spending their coins on. The pricing options can be kind of confusing. So explore the app, see, you know, how you would want to structure your stories to and how it aligns with your goals. So that's one thing. And then another thing is to consider that it was built for serial fiction. So kind of like we talked about before with episode endings. You know, even if you're uploading your backlist, check those episode endings, or what were your chapter endings. They should be awesome. You know, and not in like, Oh, what a nice snap that our hero is about to take how pleasant you know, you don't want them to take a breath. You want them to be like jabbing that next button, you know, for the next episode, even if they're gonna have to pay coins for it, you know? Yeah. So you know, stop when the heroine is trapped in a burning building. Or right after the daddy DOM orders her to take off her clothes. So like a high note, it doesn't have to be a cliffhanger. It can just be like, you know, or a big reveal, without giving your characters a chance to react to that big reveal. You know, all of a sudden they learn. He's been hiding in her car all along. I don't know. And then you just add right there before? Yep. They can read anyone can make it like what? Yeah, and you kind of just want the readers to be like, What the heck is gonna happen next, you know? Absolutely.



Carissa Andrews 23:39

So is it difficult to get approved through Radish, have you found any advice on that on how to make sure that you do get approved?



Calista Jayne 23:46

I don't really. It seems like they approved a lot of writers over the fall and winter. I don't know if they're still, you know, on the hunt for new new authors or not? I'm not really sure.



Carissa Andrews 24:03

Okay, that's okay. Just curious. Yeah. Okay. So for in your side of things, if listeners are really like, oh my gosh, I gotta check out what she's been doing and what she's up to and like, what the what the stories are actually doing? Where did they go to learn more about you and your books?



Calista Jayne 24:20

So, I mean, probably my biggest like internet footprint, I guess you would call it is on Radish. That's, that's where I spend most of my time hanging out with readers. I have a tiny little website that I finally started in January, months after. And there's a I have a newsletter sign up there. And so I send out a couple of newsletters a month. But yeah, I mean, most of my energy right now has just been poured into Radish, Ivo. So my website is close to jane.com. And that's James J A Y N E and my I have a Facebook page and Twitter Twitter They're kinda sorta, yeah. I mean, I basically just have it there for people to find me if they need to. And like, basic news, but yeah, that's great. Well, awesome.



Carissa Andrews 25:13

Thank you so much for being here today. And for explaining Radish and how it's been working for you, I am absolutely 100% sure that there are listeners, I was gonna say readers listeners out there who are like, Oh my gosh, I didn't know Radish existed. And now I have to like race over to it and see what's going on there. Because I know I've been inspired by what you've been doing in the success that you've been having over there. And, you know, it's even inspired me to be thinking about a pen name that I would like to start. And so I'm thinking about giving ranch a try with that pen name. So I think it's just it's a cool, cool place to check out and just kind of experiment with especially, you know, if you need a almost like a palate cleanser sometimes. So even if you're writing something that isn't necessarily in let me I write paranormal fantasy. But if you want a palate cleanser, like writing some sort of romance or something that is different, just for fun, why not give it a try? I mean, even if you haven't written it yet, it's just, it's such a cool place to be. And so you've really opened my eyes to that. So I really appreciate that.



Calista Jayne 26:11

Thanks. And thanks for having me here. I really think it is an exciting time for serial fiction. Even though I don't have a lot of faith in Kindle, Vella. I think that it is kind of a part of the future. And it shows that that more is coming. You know, it's very big in in Asia. And I think that maybe the Western world might be ready for it. I hope so. Because I think it's a lot of fun. And I'm seeing more and more of it.



Carissa Andrews 26:39

awesome. Well, thank you so much for being here. Thank you. So I don't know about you, but I am definitely going to be giving Radish a deeper consideration after this conversation. Now, like I said, I've been on the platform for a while. But as a YA sci fi, fantasy author, and I never really saw all that much success with the platform. I have a lot of my white books out there and they just kind of they're right, nothing new, like earth shattering or anything. It's just another platform to be out there with. Now, obviously, my life experiences and after talking with Calista, I can kind of see in part why. I mean, I'm not an overly romance writer type of person, at least not right now. But like I mentioned in the interview, I'm going to be launching a romance pen name this year with a series idea that's been in my head for a while. But as a fantasy author, I'm like, why is this thing like trying to come in? What do we do with this thing? So it's more of a side project at present. And it's something to just kind of, I don't know, have fun with but who knows, I am totally open to a runaway success with it to what I mean, what wouldn't you be? I am so lucky to consider Calista one of my amazing author friends, and I'm so glad I was finally able to convince her to come on the show. Because seriously, guys, I have been talking with her for years now. And I've come at her from so many different angles, trying to get her to agree to talk about her experiences. She's a researcher and her in depth knowledge of publishing goes way further than Radish. So Calista if you're listening. You rocked it, girl, I'm so glad you finally said yes. Well, my friends, that is everything I have for you this week. If you'd like to download the transcript from today's interview, or to get quick links over to Radish or Calista stories or website, all you need to do is head over to authorrevolution.org/129. And if there's one thing, one thing I hope you walk away from today's podcast with it's this stay true

to you follow your gut and allow inspired action to guide you had Calista not pulled her story from Bella and gone exclusive with Radish, who knows, maybe it wouldn't have gone viral. But you have to trust yourself. You have to know what feels good and what doesn't. And when those alarm bells go off, you need to take a closer consideration and I'm so glad that she did you do you my friend. Trust your gut and do what feels good. Now go forth and start your author revolution.