

# Episode 131

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## SPEAKERS

Sonya Sargent-Strong, Carissa Andrews, Anthony Strong

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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 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 have juggled the demands and continue to be rebels in the face of adversity. Now, after years of hearing the shelves 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. Hey there guys, welcome back to the Author Revolution Podcast. Now this week, I want to dive in to a really awesome interview that I'm having with the creators of the anthology turning the tide. Now, this is a project that I'm actually personally involved in. But I didn't even know some of the details that I found out through the course of interviewing Sonya Sargent and Anthony Strong, they are a husband, wife duo that is in the process of creating this anthology that is all about supporting the humanitarian efforts for the war in Ukraine. I don't know about you. But for me, it's been a very tumultuous time because as heart centered individuals, as people who are seeing what's going on in the world, we have a couple of choices, right, we have the ability to look at the things that make our heart hurt, and try to make them better. Or we have the ability to kind of tune out a little bit and not look so much at the things that we do not want to perpetuate in the world. So we have choices. And sometimes that choice to not look at the thing that is bringing us down or making our vibe kind of dwindle or hurting our hearts. It's still a tough one because you feel like you're not doing enough. And so when I got tapped by Sonia to be a part of this anthology, it lit me up in a way that I didn't realize I was feeling like I was missing. Hopefully that makes sense. Because it was like I didn't know what to do in order to put my energy towards the good that can happen from the conflict that is going on over in Ukraine. And so she has gone through and vetted a few different 501c3 nonprofit organizations that are dedicated to the humanitarian efforts happening over there. Some of them dealing with animals, some of them dealing with the like hospital efforts. So for me, when I was invited into this anthology, it

was like, my heart expanded, I felt like, Yes, this is the thing that I can be doing to benefit. You know, the good in the world, the change that we want to see in the world. And so of course, I job jumped in on it immediately, because it just felt like the right thing to do. And I am so thrilled to be a part of it. And to have been asked by Sonia to be a part of this team. Now what was interesting is that I met Sonia and Tony, she is it must have been a year ago now or almost a year when I was actually presenting for the bayou writers down in Nola. So New Orleans, my friend, Paul Heingarten. He introduced me to his writing group, which is this bio writers group. And I got to meet both of these amazing individuals there. And so they happen to think about me a year later, after I did this presentation for their group. And it was just like, such a divine providence type situation. And so for those of you who are following my millionaire author mantra, my millionaire author, Destiny, stuff, I don't even know how to call it or how to describe it at the moment. But if you're following that stuff, I really do believe that we call into us the things that are meant for us because of our, our desires and the things that we put into our vibrational escrow as Abraham Hicks calls. And so for me, it was like I wanted to be of service I wanted to do something that was good and that I didn't understand or know how the best way to do it and to be able to marry up My love of writing and what I do for a living through my fiction with being able to help the humanitarian efforts, it was just such an incredible and wonderful thing. So I am so thrilled, like I said, to be a part of this anthology. But I'm also here to do this interview, because I want all of you to see number one, that when you are a part of something bigger than yourselves, you can actually move mountains as well, some of the things that you do, or some of the things that you're involved in, can be of tremendous help of starting some super change in your world. And so don't be afraid to join into things and to be a part of things that are bigger than just one person because it can do such good in the world. Number two, when you put up those rockets of desire, or you're putting up those wishes of what you want to see in this world, and how you want your life to live. Don't be surprised when they show up unexpectedly, because they do. And that's how this one came about. For me. It was just such an unexpected, wonderful surprise. And so I am so thrilled, like I said to be a part of this anthology, there is something like 34 of us so far in this amazing mystery thriller and dark fantasy anthology. And so so without further ado, I am going to let this interview speak for itself as we speak with Sonia and Anthony. Well, thank you so much for being on the Author Revolution Podcast. I am so excited that you're here, Sonya and Tony, I talked a little bit in the intro about how I got involved, how we met, how everything kind of came together. But could you tell my audience a little bit about who you guys are and what you write and what you do?



#### Anthony Strong 06:41

Sure, sure. Well, we write we do two different genres. We wrote supernatural thrillers under the Anthony M strong brand. And then we have just started our streets mystery thrillers, under new pen name am strong. And those are more in the vein of David Baldacci or the maybe a trust between Bob Archie and Jeffrey Deaver. So they're they're still dark, they still have have some dark elements in them. But they're they're not supernatural. They're they're straight mystery. So. So we've got both of those going on right now. And of course, the Anthology for Ukraine that we're putting together as well, which, which encompasses people from from various different genres.



#### Carissa Andrews 07:34

That's awesome. And Sonya, how about you?

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 07:37

Well, I'm just mostly the backup person. I do all the backend stuff for our little guest publishing company. I do the the marketing, I'm the initial editor before it goes off to another editor. We plot most of the stories together before everything. So that's why I call myself the grunt. The grunt



Carissa Andrews 08:01

You need a better name, you should be like the the back end queen or have another name.

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 08:05

I'm not gonna say the boss, the boss, he calls me the boss is the boss, but you know, somebody works for somebody, everybody works for everybody here.



Carissa Andrews 08:16

Yes, that works. That works. Everyone's the boss at some some point in the whole fiasco. Right? That makes sense. Okay, so Anthony talked about it a little bit briefly. But let's talk about turning the tide and kind of where this concept came from. And like, what what was the How did the origin story come about for this anthology?

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 08:37

Well, I mean, the funny thing is we it was on our on our anniversary, wasn't it? Yeah, yeah, we were out to dinner. And I had received an email earlier that day, from some animal charity that I give to you, we have, I should say back up a little bit and say that we have two dogs. And they're both rescues and animal rescue and animal charities are something that's really close to my heart. And I'm super, super passionate about. Back before the book writing was a thing. I used to have a pet product company, and I created a line of bamboo, organic bamboo dog collars and pet products. And then I gave 10% Of all the profits to various charities that were doing, doing things for the environment and animals. So anyway, I've sold that that was a while ago, but but Oh, charity and pet charity in particular has always been a passion of mine. So anyway, I had received an email earlier that day from some pet charity that we give to and they had mentioned this this company, this organization called the harmony Fund, and the harmony fund was going into Ukraine and rescuing all of the abandoned pets and getting food to them. The people that have taken their pets and were displaced from their homes, and they gotten over three tons of food to animals in need, and the, you know, the humans, you know, who were taking them with them. And, and when I started to read about it, I really wanted to do more to help, you know, we of course donated, but I wanted to be able to donate more than we could afford to donate. Because it's such a worthy cause. And it's such a terrible tragedy. So I was talking to Tony about it over dinner, this this harmony fund, and, you know, he was like, Well, you know, what can we do? We could use, you know, we could use our talents, and, you know, see if we can raise more money. So what if we do something where we, you know, put

something together and see if we can just raise more money for, you know, for the various, you know, charities because this, this war is absolutely terrible. And I think especially, you know, when it first was happening in February, and March, I think everybody was shocked, and, you know, feeling feeling really helpless. And what we can do to, you know, make the situation better ourselves. So that's, that's how it came around through through that. Yeah.



Carissa Andrews 11:10

That's really cool. Do you have anything to add to that, Tony?



Anthony Strong 11:16

Yeah, I mean, it really was a an organic idea. It started fairly small. And our original plan was just to get together a couple of thriller authors, and put together and unfold anthology that way. And then as we talked about it more it began to expand into other genres and started to become more about supernatural. And also, like, Sunday Assembly got a couple of sci fi authors in. So it really it really did grow from a germ to become something a lot bigger. I think we've got 35-34.



Sonya Sargent-Strong 11:53

There's no, I think we have 34 and 34. Right now, and we're still gonna question Yeah, because it became more about, you know, where we were like, Oh, we can do a thriller, you know, because, you know, you kind of go with your community first. Yeah. No thriller, and we know some authors and, but as we started expanding out, we wanted it to be more about the author's coming together to create something, you know, meaningful, something that's going to change, you know, people's lives. So we were able to meet with other authors and expand out into other genres. And the thing is, I don't know very many people who only read one straight genre. I read everything from cozy mystery to thrillers to supernatural to hauntings, but not horror. I don't read straightforward. No, it's true. And he writes, or sometimes hard when I'm editing, I'm like, don't make it gross.



Carissa Andrews 12:47

Not correct or psychological go psychological. Yeah.



Sonya Sargent-Strong 12:51

urban fantasy. I mean, I love urban fantasy. So there's, there's a lot of, you know, we feel honored that we have been able to get so many wonderful people involved in this. And I'm really hoping that we can make the difference.



Carissa Andrews 13:03

Yeah, it's just, it's been amazing. I mean, just seeing that you've got some new york times bestselling authors in there, you've got some USA Today, bestselling authors in there, who do international best selling authors, and then just some amazing authors who are up and coming in the in their space, it's just, it's been incredible to watch it continue to grow. Like every time, I'm like, looking, I'm going holy cow. Last time, there was like 28. Now there's 32. And now it's 34. And so it's just like, This is so cool.

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 13:28

It's just, it's hard to get a hold of the people. If I can't find their information any other way, I'll join their mailing list. And then, and then see if I can get the address that way. And then sometimes we have to also tag them on Facebook, it can be hard to get through spam filters, and, you know, just just, you know, reach all the people that we've been trying to get involved with this.



Carissa Andrews 13:48

I bet I bet. But it's been I mean, the fact that it's growing and it has snowballed into this big anthology has just been really kind of a neat thing to watch for, at least from my perspective, as someone who's writing a story to go into it. It's just been like, Wow, I can't believe how cool it is that everybody's kind of coming together for this cause and willing to, you know, put in the effort for it. It's just It's been such a you guys in your brainchild, I guess for this has just been incredible. It was such a neat thing to, to have it come about and have it explode the way it has.

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 14:18

Thank you. Well, it's you know, I think it's also going to be a benefit to the authors above and beyond giving to charity, because it's also an opportunity for all of these other people and their, you know, their fan base to, to buy the anthology and then discover some new offers to hopefully fall in love with so so I'm hoping it will be you know, an additional benefit to everybody putting in so much hard work.



Carissa Andrews 14:41

I agree. I agree. And it's just been neat to see like, like you were talking about the difference of genres that were in there because I think like you're saying originally it was just going to be thrillers and it was going to be thrillers and mysteries, and then a little bit supernatural. And then it was fantasy and it was dark fantasy. And then it was just like it's just continued to grow into this like really cool conglomeration and so I I don't know, I think readers who are especially readers who are listening, who are looking for, you know, new new breakaway authors or new avenues, just to kind of see what they're interested in right now and be able to help such a great cause this is such a great anthology to be able to get, like involved with and start, you know, obviously donate their money to by purchasing the, the book, but





Sonya Sargent-Strong 15:20

It's just helping to be the change, you know. And yeah, we did the anthology by invite only. So everybody, everybody that we invited, was vetted, you know, everybody's writing was looked at, we wanted to make sure that the authors were all good writers that they are all professional, that they are going to provide a great source of entertainment for anybody who buys the anthology that was important to us to make sure that that it was going to be like, really well and professionally done.



Carissa Andrews 15:49

Absolutely. And you can tell to I mean, I don't know how many people are already starting to market and I know it's coming out soon. We'll talk about that in a second. But I've noticed, it's already gotten, like, number one bestseller tags on Amazon, it's already been like high in the rankings. It's just been phenomenal already. And it's like, is anyone even talking about it yet? I'm like, what's happening here? This is so cool. Have you guys noticed that it's gotten those types of ready?



Sonya Sargent-Strong 16:13

Yeah. Well, I fiddled with the categories over the weekend, and contacted Amazon to make sure that because when you put the book up, you know, you only get the three categories. So I looked up all the other categories that it should be in and I contacted them so that that helped to make a difference. And we started promoting it to our email list in our readers, and we're most active on Facebook. So we've started, you know, promoting it to all of our Facebook people as well. And we're getting a really great response. And I even asked all the readers to also please go and share it. You know, let's get the word out. We've the more the more that we can get the word out the better. You know, the more we can get it. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Why did I never do that? We never usually do that. We don't do that with our really I don't know, we don't normally advertise ourselves, we don't normally ask them, you know, to also share or anything like that. It's the first time that we have ever done that. So Oh, my



Carissa Andrews 17:09

goodness, that's amazing. Well, I've shared it in my newsletter already so far, obviously, you're gonna be on the podcast, go figure. And I've heard I was talking with Paul, and he was saying, you know that some of us are doing tic TOCs. And I already have my tic tock, like done and loaded. And I'm kind of waiting until we get a little closer to May to launch it to my draft folder. But I'll be doing more obviously in the month of May, because obviously, that's when it's going to be launching right. So let's see, what is this book coming out?



17:37

The book is releasing on May 31. And it is going to be available only through the month of June. So June 30 is the last day it will be for sale and then it's going to be taken down and then the story is redistributed to the authors to do with as they choose. So it's only a short time anthology.



Carissa Andrews 17:57

Gotcha. So it's very limited edition guys. And so if you're hearing this and you want to support this cause and want to support authors get some new reads in your, your Kindle or your Kobo reader or whatever you're reading on, it's going to be an amazing anthology. It's just really it's been really cool.



Sonya Sargent-Strong 18:14

It will take a while to read through I think, yeah.



Carissa Andrews 18:17

You mentioned one of the nonprofits that you're recommending, can you tell us which other ones you're recommending for the authors who are part of the anthology to donate?



Sonya Sargent-Strong 18:24

Yes, I can I printed it out so that I can sound like I know what I'm doing. Yeah, basically, the authors can donate to whoever they want, you know, whoever they see fit, but we had looked up and researched some of the the charities that are going into Ukraine and are working hard to make things better. And we wanted to make sure at least in the ones that we recommended that the bulk of any donations are going into into the actual work being done and off the top end that they're all 501 C three for you know, us authors and all that so the harmony fund was the one that got it started for me another one that's a great one is UNICEF, USA I don't know if you ever did this but when I was a kid and we go trick or treating on Halloween, we used to have our little you know, trick or treat bag and then we'd also have like a little UNICEF box I don't know if they still do that I'm sure that they probably don't we used to go I never heard of that. We used to go trick or treat UNICEF and what it was was they would give them to all the kids now I'm old I'm 49 so ancient, but they used to give them call the kid every year at Halloween to also go around and try to get you know like people to you know put in quarters or dollars or whatever for UNICEF so we used to go around and every year trick or treat UNICEF so it was like a it's been a long running charity. Yeah. But they specifically tried to help save and protect the world's most vulnerable children. And they're really one of the best charities to donate to. less than 3% of every dollar spent goes to administrative costs, which I think is amazing. To me, that is amazing. And then another one is med share. And med shares mission is to improve the quality of life for people in the planet med shares dedicated to improving health care and the environment for the efficient recovery, and redistribution of the surplus of medical supplies and equipment for those most in need. So they really focus more on the medical attention that people need absolute Direct Relief Fund is it's a humanitarian organization, it's active in all 50 states in more than 80 countries. And their mission is to improve the health and lives of people affected by poverty in emergencies. So they're going in there and helping with food and housing and things like that. And then another one that is specifically UK because we have several UK authors is the Disasters Emergency Committee,

and they're helping to meet the needs of refugees and displaced people. So those are all some really great charities that are that are working their butts off to, to help make a difference and help make make people's lives better over there right now.



Carissa Andrews 20:57

That's awesome. And I'll definitely make sure that in the show notes, if anyone's interested in taking a look at those charities and donating just straight out that they have access to all of them as well, so that they can just go ahead and check them out and do their part in a bigger way. Even Yeah,



Sonya Sargent-Strong 21:12

that'd be amazing. And all this Oh, I was on the websites yesterday. And on all these websites, they're showing, you know, what they're doing and the difference that they're making. And you know, what they what they've been doing is they've been going in there. So it's interesting, too.



Carissa Andrews 21:26

Oh, absolutely. That is so cool. Thank you so much for like vetting it. And going through all that process in order to figure out which ones are really doing the best work. I think that's one of the fears that a lot of us have, when you're kind of wanting to do something, but you're not sure how to donate to it. And you don't want it to go, like you said to the top end and not to the people who really need it, or the Yeah, we need it. Yeah, it becomes a bit of a struggle. And if you don't have the time, because we authors, you know, we're all headless chickens. If you don't have the time to vet it or go through it, sometimes it feels overwhelming to even like where do you begin? And so this, this list is really beneficial, I think to a lot of people who are listening



Sonya Sargent-Strong 22:03

Good. I'm glad Yeah. And it's one I'm a researcher anyway. So you know, like I said, I'm the back end grunt. So, you know, I do all the backend stuff, and more so much more than he wanted to work together. But I do bring him his coffee. So.



Carissa Andrews 22:19

So you're the PA to go look at this.



Sonya Sargent-Strong 22:21

Right. Yeah. But um, but yeah, so I wanted to make sure when we were going to get into this that, you know, we could recommend Good, good strong organizations, you know, where it would be most beneficial to people.





Carissa Andrews 22:32

So what made you guys think about like having the author's themselves donate it versus just like the author giving over the the royalties to you guys that yes, everything that happens, just go ahead and donate like you choose the donation?



Sonya Sargent-Strong 22:46

I'd say that was really our accountants. Because we've never put together an anthology, or a group of authors or anything. So when it came down to thinking, Oh, my goodness, there might be 30 to 40 people here, how do we take in the funds? How do we distribute it? We talked to a couple of the the wonderful companies out there like draft to digital, you know, they they will a lot of times, take a book, and then they'll send it out to Barnes and Noble, and Kobo and all the other Google Play and all that. I actually don't think they do Google Play. But all the other ones they know, yeah, several of them, they'll distribute it out. And they also have a way of doing a royalty share. So that it's split. But we were unable to do that, because one of our strategies is to do a really heavy push for pre orders. So that we get it all, you know, kind of sewn up by the time it releases, since it's only available for such a short time. And they were unable to do Amazon pre orders. So we ended up needing to put the book up for sale individually on every site ourselves. So when we spoke to our accountant, you know, he had suggested different ways of doing this, that was going to make sense and ended up settling on the basically putting it in our our accounts, setting it up and then distributing it when all the royalties come in distributing it to the authors, every author will get their share of it split evenly, and then they can donate it that way. They can also put it on in their taxes as a contribution.



Anthony Strong 24:19

And I think it also makes it makes it more alluring for the authors to be known that they can support the charity of their choice rather than having that decided for the



Sonya Sargent-Strong 24:30

right, right. Like yeah, like my passion is our passion are the animals but somebody else, you know, might really want to do something like UNICEF that really helps children or, or mindshare that does the, you know, that deals with like the medical side of things. So we wanted them to be able to also make their own choices on what was important to them to help.



Carissa Andrews 24:50

Yeah, absolutely. That makes a lot of sense. I know for me when I was first because that my assumption like when you were first talking about it to me, I was like Okay, that's great. Everything's gonna be donated and it didn't occur to me that we You get to choose. And so when I found that I was like, Oh, now I gotta dig more into these different charity organizations that you guys have put up. So I thought it was a really cool way of doing it. Because I've never

worked with an anthology like that. It's really neat. Thank you. Yeah. Okay, so we talked about when the anthology is going to be available for my readers, and all of your readers and everybody else's readers. So if they want to preorder the anthology, and help with the incredible efforts, where should they go?

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 25:25

Well, they can go to any online retailer to place to preorder if they go into Barnes and Noble, Kobo Amazon, and just put in Apple, yeah, put in turning the tide anthology, it should pop right up at the top. You can also include links, you know, with your with your podcast, as well, we can send you the links over for all those different stores. And we do have a page on the West Street publishing website that goes to the anthology talks about it, and then it has all the links at the bottom where they can click on whichever store they prefer to buy it on. And that is [www dot West Street. publishing.com backslash anthology](http://www.weststreetpublishing.com/backslashanthology). Yeah.



Carissa Andrews 26:07

Great. That's wonderful. Now if my readers ever my listeners, my readers thing, I guess if my listeners want to find more about the two of you and what you guys are doing, where's a good place for them to go? Would it be that website as well, just now without without anthology at the end of it? Or? What's the best place?

A

Anthony Strong 26:28

I think probably for us would be more of the author website. Yeah. Which would watch we've got two of them. We've got Anthony M. from [Michael strong.com](http://Michaelstrong.com). And then we've got a m strong author.com. Yes. And that depends on whether you want the supernatural stuff, it will be Anthony Armstrong, or whether you want the straight mystery fiction. And that would be a strong author.com.



Carissa Andrews 26:56

Wonderful. Well, that's awesome. Thank you guys so much for being here. And for sharing more information about the anthology and all of the wonderful charities that it's donating to, I know that my listeners are going to find it really, as fascinating as I did, because it's just been such a neat. And I don't know, it's just been an inspiring group to already be a part of and know that your contributions that your words are actually meaning something. So I just yeah, thank you for all that.

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Sonya Sargent-Strong 27:22

Thank you. Thank you for having us on today.



Carissa Andrews 27:25



Carissa Andrews 27.25

Absolutely. Thanks for being here. Well, guys, I hope you found this interview to be inspiring, and to help you to see just how powerful we as authors can be, and how, when we all come together for a collective good, we can do some incredible things together. Now this anthology has come together in such a way that has been fast and powerful. And it's just been fascinating for me to watch from the back end of things where, you know, I got swept up into the motion of it all it all started because Sonia had this great idea Anthony obviously got involved, all of a sudden, next thing you know, there are 34 of us jumping into this bandwagon all wanting to do what we can to support the causes that Sonia has really vetted very well, because we we know that there's something, something more that we can be doing with our creative efforts. And this is just one of the many ways that we can do it. So if you feel called to, I definitely encourage you to download a copy of turning the tide on any or all of the platforms that are out there. Honestly, the more that we can donate to this cause the better to all of these causes, because there's actually five of them that they recommend, the better. And so like I said, check it out on your favorite platform. If you want you can also head over to the show notes for today's podcast episode. So head over to [authorrevolution.org/131](http://authorrevolution.org/131). Not only will you be able to get the links to turning the tide, but you'll be able to get the links to the transcript and of course to Sonya and Tony's information as well. So, thank you so much for listening today. I like I said, I hope it inspires you. I hope that this concept is another way for us to be able to see just how powerful our words can be how powerful our writing can be. And as we come together as a community of creative individuals, we can move mountains, we can do such amazing things and be a radical positive force for good. Alright guys, enjoy the rest of your day. Enjoy the rest of your week and go forth and start your author revolution.