

Episode 167

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SPEAKERS

Martha Carr, Carissa Andrews, Anthony Strong



Carissa Andrews 00:03

The indie author revolution has been around for more than a decade, the Wii 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. Now after years of hustling, grind, we indies are rebelling again. Gone are the days of publishing a book a month until we drop, and in its place, we're sowing the seeds of a better way away with more ease, abundance and flow. Get ready to learn about indie authorship from a whole new perspective. We're about to cover everything from releasing your poverty mentality to manifesting your millionaire author destiny. I'm Carissa Andrews, and this is the Author Revolution Podcast. Well, hey there and welcome back to the Author Revolution Podcast. Today you are in for a massive treat. I had the wonderful privilege of speaking with and interviewing Martha Carr. She is such an incredible person and such an incredible inspiration to those of us who are writing and wanting to do what she does. Now. I originally met Martha, I mean, I've known about her for a while. But I originally met Martha at a 20Booksto50k Vegas conference last year. And she did a wonderful speech that just it literally moved me to tears. And I knew that as soon as I got back, she was one of those people that I would have to reach out to to see if she'd come on to the show. And I'm so pleased and honored to say that, of course she did. And we've talked about so many things in this podcast interview, including that starting point of writing through adversity, and what it was like to write when she had a very life altering and earth shattering diagnosis in 2010. But we moved on from there to talk a lot about other things too, like the right mindset to have as an author, the usefulness of having a PA or someone else by your side to be a sounding board. And also we talk about her upcoming Kickstarter project as well. And what it means to have a Kickstarter in this day and age because Kickstarter has become a massive thing. And she's got some great tips for you. All right. Well, without further ado, we're gonna hop straight into it, because I know you're gonna want to hear everything she has to say. Let's get to it. Well, hello, Martha, thank you so much for joining the author Revolution Podcast. I am so excited. I'm thrilled that you're here today. I did mention in the introduction, how you kind of came into my sphere, I don't know that I came into your as much but I was definitely enthralled. And I was just hoping that you could tell my audience a little bit more about who you are and what you write and what you do in case they haven't heard of you.

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Martha Carr 02:45

Okay, so I write urban fantasy. I've been writing for about 30 Some years must be 35 by now. And I know isn't that and I started as a journalist in newspapers was my backup because they existed since Ben Franklin, where were newspapers knowing who knew. I wrote for The Washington Post. And I was a freelance for a long time that I had a national column on politics that got 4 million readers a month, I wrote thrillers that critics loved and no one cared about. And I switched to urban fantasy, and they took off like a rocket. So I have about 200 books in urban fantasy, created a universe with Michael annually, we co created called or sarin. And now I'm working on a fun, you know, you always kind of keep finding ways to make it fun for yourself. So I'm working on a project solo in I'm going to do a Kickstarter that'll come out in May clean in the flightless dragons. So keep your eyes peeled for that. Yeah, so I'm very excited about that.



Carissa Andrews 03:53

Yeah, I would say did so I'm gonna have to circle back around to the Kickstarter thing, because I know that was a huge one at the 20 bucks. convention when I think it took three of the different talks on that. So it's an it'll be interesting to talk to you about that. But when it comes to urban fantasy, I'm also an urban fantasy writer, but I love it so much, because it allows me to kind of shift out of like the norm. I don't know, we've got enough crazy things that bog us down, but it's nice to expand into something that is more fun or more freeing. What do you think it is for you that drew you to urban fantasy when you first started?

M

Martha Carr 04:28

So you know, well, first of all, I was a little kid, I remember I threw my little brother, a birthday party, and I did the magic. So it was kind of already in there. And urban fantasy as opposed to fantasy is the idea that magic exists all around us. We're just unaware of it. And it also can be about the better self of human beings and the darker self, and that we possess more we're capable of more than we realized. Or you know, going neither direction. And so who wouldn't love that? And also, right. And with urban fantasy, you could do a thriller still. I mean, you could do action adventure still, you could do a romance still, you're just wrapping it in magic, and you get to make up the rules of the magics. You know, it's within certain constraints. But really you if you can make it make sense, you can do it. So why not?



Carissa Andrews 05:25

I guess I love it so much that I love that it's expanded in different like aspects as well. Like even now with the paranormal women's version of it. Adding in that midlife character, I love how we keep as authors, kind of mixing it up and making it fresh and coming at it with new eyes.

M

Martha Carr 05:44

And litRPG, you know, is really has, you go to different levels, but it's urban fantasy, because they're creating real worlds there where magic exists in the same creatures. They've just

twisted it a bit. I don't know that they'd be happy. I said that, but it's true.



Carissa Andrews 06:01

I think you're probably very right. Well, I had a question about, you know, obviously, you're so inspirational and prolific. And I think you already answered my question. But you have 200 books out so far?



Martha Carr 06:13

That what I think it's just about and some of those, I may have accident, so other people right in the universe, so I may have accidentally included them as well, but it's somewhere in there.



Carissa Andrews 06:23

Wow, that's amazing. How does it feel? Like, do you still like look back and go to what book was that? Like, I would get so lost?



Martha Carr 06:32

The only thing I tend that's the weird thing, you know, I can't remember people's names very well. And I just figure my head's crammed full of characters. And I can remember I can generally what I lose is details like what arm got blown off so that I can remember not to use the wrong arm the next time. minor details, but I also know when I don't know. So to go in as fans and fans can even tell me the page number pretty quickly. I know I don't know how to do.



Carissa Andrews 07:00

That's amazing.



Martha Carr 07:02

Yeah. So, um, of all the things in my life, sadly, the one thing I can really remember doesn't really exist. So whatever.



Carissa Andrews 07:11

Those things happen, that's more fun that way. We can almost get philosophical, like, does anything really exist? Yeah.



Martha Carr 07:21

Maybe magic is real?



Carissa Andrews 07:23

Oh, good, right. So one of the things that I one of the reasons why I wanted you to come on to this podcast is because I went to the 20 bucks Vegas conference and your your talk your speech was probably one of the most inspiring ones that I've heard in a very long time. And as in definitely there. It was one of the ones that just kind of really touched me in a place of my heart that it means something to me, because as you're you and I were talking before we started, my brother was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer when he was really little. And so I've always had like this need to try to, you know, write through adversity. And that was the name of your, your talk, working through adversity. And so you mentioned in 2010, that you had a surprising diagnosis. And I was wondering if you could tell my audience a little bit more about what that was like for you and how it impacted your writing during that time.



Martha Carr 08:12

So in 2010, I was diagnosed with terminal melanoma and given a year to live. And back in 2010, the only treatment for melanoma was surgery once if that didn't fix it, then there was not a lot else they could do. Chemo did not in those days work. And they seem pretty convinced it was just a year. And I called the first person I called was somebody I knew, who didn't operate on what was me? And she said, What do you want to believe for? And I said, I want to believe I'm going to live and she said, then that's what we're going to believe for. And she never wavered. And I chose carefully who I would speak to about it. Because it's when you know, time is like money and or its energy. And so when you spend your time with people who have to tell you their story, have to put their fear on you, then I have to work twice as hard to get back to where I started. And I just spent my time. You know, it's like going to eating an old hotdog from a gas station. It's not a good idea.



Carissa Andrews 09:20

Until it's really not.



Martha Carr 09:23

Right? And so I was very careful about who I would even let speak to me. And something about you know, being given that diagnosis made me a lot bolder than I had been. And so if somebody started do that, oh, I would stop them and say, Nope, I can't do that with you and I would walk away. And that was one of the gifts of that too was I learned how to stop taking care of others. I stopped letting others be my outer regulation of how I felt and it started to come more inward. And I made peace with it that makes it easier to prioritize what it is I want to do Do. And one of the cool things too was that was back in my thriller days, you know, when I was writing books that no one really cared about except critics. I understood that even if this the diagnosis turned out to be correct, I was happy where I was, I mean, I wasn't famous or financially successful. But I still knew I'd made the choices I wanted to make. And that was a really cool thing to find out too. And clearly the diagnosis was wrong,



Carissa Andrews 10:29

Obviously, well, thank goodness for that. I think it's really powerful when you have that decision, and then hold the belief that oh, yeah, there are a lot of people when they when they get a diagnosis like that, who will shut down and just assume the worst and like, then start going down the rabbit hole of like, Oh, these are the signs I need to watch out for, these are the things that are terrible coming to me. And that could really devastate the person,



Martha Carr 10:51

It can. But I also want to be really careful everybody's journey, when they're in that kind of journey. Actually, everybody's journey, no matter what you're talking about, is uniquely their own. And however they choose to do it, I'm cool with if somebody does want to go down that rabbit hole, I may not join you if it's pretty dark, but I'll try and at least sit and listen. And so this was what I chose to do. But, you know, I had a friend who died from breast cancer. And she talked to the very end, what she was going to do about the spring, to the point where the doctors were worried she didn't realize she was dying. And I kept saying, what doesn't matter, I don't think that's going to change things. Yeah. And that's the way she chose to handle it, I was cool with it. So you know, anybody who's hearing this and thinking, I don't have the capability to do that. Really trust you, if what you need to do is get angry and shake your fist, get angry and shake your fist. It's your journey, you know, you get to own it. And I think that's the biggest gift I got out of it was, then I finally fully own something instead of trying checking in with others about how do you feel about it, it just really didn't matter. To me,



Carissa Andrews 12:00

That's a really good point, I think a lot of people going into it beforehand, you know, are gonna think that they're, I don't know, just almost the person who isn't in control of it, the person that isn't capable of making those decisions. And so having that power, like back in your hands, I think that's really, that's really a place of empowerment, I mean, for lack of a better word, it's just, I think that's wonderful.



Martha Carr 12:27

Imagine what if you then apply that to your writing career, how powerful that becomes. Because, you know, if you're on social media at all, and if you're a writer, you are on social media, hopefully, because you got to be, there's lots of people who love to post about how well they're doing. And here's how they did it in great detail. And that's somewhat helpful unless you feel like you have to do everything that everyone's doing. Right? Because journeys are not the same at all, as a writer. And people make themselves nuts, they spend a lot of money that doesn't come back to them. And they blame themselves. And so being able to take the power back and say, Nope, this is the this is what I love, being able to trust your own gut and say, This is what I want to do. This is what feels right. This is what's within my budget. And I'm kind of

trust that this will get somewhere. That's very powerful. So you can take that's what you know, you can take that lesson from other parts of life, where you stood back up and apply it to writing it works or any artistic career,



Carissa Andrews 13:28

they're hard because you don't have a building where you can go for an interview, and see if you get the job, you're creating your own job, and your own audience. And it may take a while. I know for me, that's definitely it felt like that in the very beginning where I began in 2010. Actually, was the first year that I started writing professionally where I knew I was going to publish. And I published the first novel and in 2013, but it was after like a crazy life mishap divorce, remarriage a bunch of craziness. But it doesn't it isn't always that instantaneous thing that you think it might be. Yeah, and you were saying for a long time in your talk, that money wasn't the easiest thing to come by. And that it actually took a while to get there.



Anthony Strong 14:14

What could have been 20 some years. Yeah, I mean, I had enough. I had just enough, I was so good at stretching \$1 I look back on that now and think how did I do that? When it was like if that was magic. And so if I could talk to that younger me who didn't cut you know, I have the luxury of First of all, finally being financially successful. And secondly, looking back, and if I could, I would tell her to enjoy the ride more than I was able. I was so focused on I need to be there that I didn't enjoy it as much as I could have because even though thrillers. I also wrote nonfiction about us orphanages spend a lot of time living on them to research the book. Look, I wouldn't change any of it. I've written in about every form except screenplays that you can, and I haven't written a play. And I wouldn't change any of it, it makes up an entire life. And I wish I'd realized that,



Carissa Andrews 15:16

Sure, and be more in the moment instead, I think.



Martha Carr 15:20

Well, I'm more accepting and more accepting that that I was okay already, that getting here really wasn't going to change who I am. And it didn't. Yeah. Because you know, you can be financially successful and still worry every day if you want to.



Carissa Andrews 15:37

Absolutely, absolutely. I think it's, it just depends on what your worry is, like, what what your brain is latched on to, they say that it takes 17 seconds to create momentum of thought. And so as soon as you have a thought for 17 seconds, and you're holding it that long, more of similar thoughts are going to join it, and it will continue to snowball until you can't get off that train.

M

Martha Carr 16:00

Right. But you know, the opposite can be true too. So I can feel I can worry about what might go wrong. But what if I thought about what might go right? Because I don't actually control the future. So why not just spend it imagining what could go right. And I'll just keep, so I'm in the do the work business, I'm not in the results business. So I'm not sitting here trying to get anywhere in particular, I'm taking the steps towards what I hope to get to, but I'm open to what happens. Because frankly, everything that I have was not what I was initially going for. But if I had known better, I would have known this is what I want it.



Carissa Andrews 16:39

Gotcha. Isn't it interesting how we still we do that where we think there's a goal that we want, and we think it's the thing that's going to make us happy. But life will lead us down a different path. And eventually we'll get to a different place. And you'll look back and go, you know, this is actually what I wanted all along. It's no wonder these other things didn't work out. Right. But at the same time, when I was younger and worried as a single mother, I was determined to get to the place I decided and I cut off a lot of paths, because they didn't look like they didn't look like. And so yeah, that's another thing I would tell myself is just go with what the door is open. Because I don't know where it's leading, and be more willing to just let things unfold. It's all

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Martha Carr 17:22

I think that's really important. It's also hard to be a part of a team if I'm really determined to get to a particular place, right? Because you bring other human beings into it. I mean, just talk about Christmas, when you're married to somebody, and you think you're a reasonable person until they want to fake tree. No, if you know if I can be open and willing, then I'm more willing to try something that they want to do. And you know, I can bring myself to it too. And also, it means when things aren't going smoothly, which is going to happen. I'm more willing to stick with it and to let it ride and to see where it goes than to pull the plug and go in another direction. Sure. Yes. So bring your willingness and just go.




Carissa Andrews 17:22

Okay. Yeah, it's all about those experiences and how we dive into the contrast and the the lived experience of everything, just how we want to, like incorporate everything that we're walking into talking to whatever and pull it into part of our being. Absolutely. I think there's some benefit to that perseverance and resilience. Yeah. And the resilience of it. Because especially with the in the author career, I'm losing my voice for some reason. Oh, my gosh. In the indie industry, it doesn't feel like there's many of us who are those overnight successes, it feels like it's more of this testament of this is our love. This is the thing that we're really wanting to do. And I'm gonna keep doing it. In the hopes that yes, someday it will bring financial success. Yes, someday I will bring whatever it is, I think I want. But if you can stay in that moment right now and just enjoy where you're at. Right? So many more of the beautiful things can unfold for you


as you continue to move forward. Maybe maybe you're even then guided more on that path of the things that will bring you more joy, because you're more open to what those are, if it's an interesting new door that comes at you and you didn't know it was there.

 Martha Carr 19:18

Yeah. And also, there was a time in the early 2000s. Where, or I guess it was 2010, where I was exhausted from the pitching just the constant pitching. And I went got a corporate job as an editor for a few years. And it was actually great. I had an insurance card in my pocket. I knew where to show up. The job was pretty much the same every day had a cubby, every two weeks money magically appeared. And it was great to take a break. So there's also nothing wrong with that. You're still a writer I wrote when I could. And it just I just could take a breath. So this journey is a long one and you get to make it whatever you want. Whatever you choose, is great. It's got nothing to do with anybody else's opinion. By the way, when I first self published, I was traditionally published first. And when I first self published, someone I knew sent me this long screed of an email, saying I was embarrassing myself and I should turn back and blah, blah, blah. And it was very long to they take a lot of.

 Carissa Andrews 20:22


Oh my gosh.

 Martha Carr 20:24

Yeah, they had very strong opinions on it. And they weren't a writer, but whatever. I deleted it, because what's that got to do with me? They were bringing your own opinion, their own fears, their and their own feelings of self worth based on what you do. If I had to I'm self published and crashed and burned and gone back to did it traditional. Who cares? Yeah, yeah, it's my journey. So I mean, the most important question there is in the world is what do you want? And it's fluid, it changes all the time. You check in with yourself and say, What do I want? And then go for it. And sometimes you try it, and you think this is horrible. And so you make a different one. Nothing is wrong. You just crossed something off the list. That's all

 Carissa Andrews 21:09

Yeah, it might not have even been the right decision then. But it left you with an experience that will help you later on, you just never know how it's gonna come back.

 Martha Carr 21:17

Well, even those experiences are right ones because you learn what you don't like, which makes what you do, like stand out more.

 Carissa Andrews 21:24



Carissa Andrews 21:24

Absolutely. Absolutely. And it makes it more clear. So then you've if nothing else gained clarity.



Martha Carr 21:29

Yeah, you're not gonna stand around saying, uh, well, what about that? And by the way, you know, I'd mentioned the Kickstarter, I tried doing a solo project, three years ago, pre COVID, which feels like 10 years ago, but it does. Yeah. And I tried too much at once. And it was too much work. It was too, you know, it was also doing or sarin, and all of that. And then I had this other thing I was building, and it wasn't fun. And so I killed it, about a year into it and thought, hmm, and but what I realized was that I had answered a question for myself, do I want to build something that big? No, I do not. And so now doing a Kickstarter, it's actually more fun, because there's no part of my brain going. But what about this? And I learned a lot from it. Yeah. So you learn from those experiences to nothing is wasted.



Carissa Andrews 22:23

Do you value do you think now looking back? Do you value fun, then a lot when it comes to like, how your experiences are unfolding? Do you do look at the fun aspect of it?



Martha Carr 22:32

Well, actually, what I'm always saying, and I'm probably sit in that beach was if you're not having fun, why are you doing it? Yeah. And I know, people like to say to me, well, there's some things I have to do in life that aren't very fun. And I totally agree. But while I'm doing those things that aren't very fun, I'm trying to figure out how to adjust. So if I have a job that I don't like, which happens to all of us, and you can't afford necessarily just walk out the door, but I can recognize that I'm not having fun here. And then what can I do to change jobs, change this job, whatever. And keep going. So or me finding out I mean, I wasn't having fun when I had this huge project going. I mean, every hour of every day was now eaten up. So there was nothing else to do. And I'm too old for that. Maybe if I was 30, that would have been fun. But I'm 63 it was not fun. Yeah. And so I adjusted, I made sure everybody was taken care of, and I killed it. And got to come back. You know, now I'm coming back around a second time, we're just gonna do it smaller, so that it's just me, much more fun for me. That's good. But yeah, if you're not having fun, especially writing is can be tough. You know, critics, whatever, it can be tough. If you're not having fun at it, why are you doing it?



Carissa Andrews 23:52

And I think so many of us especially, I don't know, it's it seems like a cycle. It's like, we start and we're having fun. We're like, Oh, this is the best job ever. This is like the greatest thing. And then all of a sudden you start learning Oh, then there's keywords. And there's like, you have to understand copywriting. And there's these covers, and the covers have to match the genre, what's the genre, all the all the things are coming at you. And it's like it sucks the air out

for a bit high. And you have to find a way to decompress it and let the fun back in so that you can figure out which aspects of those things you want to focus on and which ones you want to just let go.

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Martha Carr 24:24

Yep. And also to, you know, on a day, if I'm really overwhelmed, I know it's time to quit for the day. And that teaches me that nothing, nothing, nothing that I do absolutely has to be done right that second. So that I don't start thinking I'm in control of the universe, because that's a tough place to live. Where it's Worry, worry, worry. And I'd rather let something go and pick it back up the next day then teach myself that the universe is a very narrow, unforgiving place. And yeah, so pick the things you want to do you If you've got to do something for a while you don't like, while you're doing it look at how necessary it might be, is there someone you can farm it out to doesn't need to be done? How can you make it better?



Carissa Andrews 25:10

I love that. I love that so much, I think we often have to do that. It's so hard in the beginning, when you think as an indie author, everything's on your shoulders. And it's like, it's also pressing. But as soon I think I've mentioned this on the podcast before, to where it's like, as soon as I hired my PA, which was 2018, the thing is when it was end of 2018. So it's like, mostly 2019. It was like that's, that was the turning point in, in my mindset, it was a turning point in my reach, it was a turning point with my income, it was like, allowing someone to finally come in and help, instead of me having to be the only one doing all the things that was like the light switch that kind of let things go forward. And let me to see, let me see things better. And I think a lot of authors, they think it's like they're scared to let other people in maybe it's finances, maybe it's because they're perfectionists or controlling their universes with whatever they're doing. But it's so freeing to finally know that someone else has your back. You know what I mean? Sure,

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Martha Carr 26:11

life is all about connections. And the more we can connect with others, the and show vulnerability, the easier and more fun it gets. And, and again, I'm teaching myself, I'm not in control of the universe, and that that's a good thing. So you know, if you can't afford a PA, then choose the few things you can do. And just trust that that's enough, which is how I started how everybody started. And when you can afford a PA by just a few hours, figure out the thing you really don't like doing and give that as the first assignment. That way you get to know each other too. And the wonderful grace Snoke is my assistant now. But that's not the first person I hired, you know, it took a few. And so you know, you just keep going and trust that you will find the right person. And yeah, my I've been able to expand my business because Grace exists. And I don't think I could if she didn't, because how am I going to spend so many hours writing if a million other things need to be done. Plus, I'm not any good at math, Grace loves spreadsheet. No, she keeps track of that. And you know, if you run into somebody who doesn't do what you hoped, who you don't feel like had your best interest, then you let them go change your passwords. It's not a big deal. It's okay. And you just keep going. You don't need to be. You don't need to make it into a thing. It's just what happened. And yeah, just keep going. And

all those things have happened to me. And it's fine. I mean, life's too good to even think about it. I just got going, um, grace, grace is wonderful. And she has a book about how to be a good pa Ooh, what is it is called free your time how assistants supercharge successful authors, I love it. So if you want to be a PA, it tells you how to what you need to know. And if you want to hire one, it tells you what to look for.



Carissa Andrews 28:12

I love that. When I started, I didn't know what I needed. I just knew what would feel good. If they did it, it was kind of like I was trying to figure out so I had to begin with spreadsheets. And I kind of I guess went into it where it was like for the first four months, I would try out for different people. And then I would come back to the ones that felt like they work the best. So like each one knew that they get like a month trial. And then I'll come back to them at the end of this like period. And that's how that whole situation went. And I was able to see what I liked what I didn't like. And I think sometimes maybe that's helpful to just be really clear and upfront in the beginning of what you need and what you're looking for. And you're going to know working with those people pretty quickly whether or not they're the right fit.



Martha Carr 28:55

Yeah. And if you can take ego out of it and understand you're not responsible for others, then it's easier to say this is what I need. It doesn't seem to be working. I wish you well. But this is where we part. And if you're going to build a universe, by the way, you better learn that as well. Because not every writer it's not gonna always work out and or cover designer, etc. And if you put ego into it, then you're dragging around a lot of resentment. And you may be putting resentment out there in the world. When it's not necessary. It's just be clear. And if you need to say something, say quickly, say I mean by quickly. I mean don't wait days or weeks or months.



Carissa Andrews 29:32

Let it stew yeah, don't don't do that.



Martha Carr 29:35

Anybody? Yeah, give people the information they need. Yeah,



Carissa Andrews 29:39

I agree with you there. Okay. Now, you mentioned both in your talk and then just a few minutes ago that you're now earning a full time income from it. You're a millionaire author, and this is something that over the past year and a half, I've been talking a lot on my podcast about trying to elevate the indie author community out of that poverty mindset. They seem a lot of them especially the newbies and have this idea of like, I would never be able to earn a lot of money, I would never, I'll never be able to. And that's like their go to mindset like this, this concept of like, I'll never make it. So therefore I'm not going to dream that big. And so I've been trying to

help them kind of shift through those limitations. And you were talking about in the talk before about how you in the beginning, especially being a single mom, and going through your cancer situation, everything with money was very tight, and you stretch the dollar. But you were able to turn it around, in part because of total honesty. And I thought that was so key in that talk. I was like, That is powerful. Can you tell my audience a little bit about what you meant by that?

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Martha Carr 30:40

Sure. So if I can't be rigorously honest, then I should, we all know that honesty means you don't stand there and say a sky is red, when it's blue, mean those those are obvious. But there's a nuanced side to honesty, rigorous honesty, where you're kind of lying, but you call it other things, and it chips away at you. So if I can't say, this is where I'm at, this is how well I'm doing and own it or not doing, then I'm lying. And I'm really harming myself. And I'm also putting myself, I'm kind of make myself pray for other people who like to tear at you. And I'm just heaping shame, more shame on myself, because now this person is like the person who sent me the email with the long screed because I was choosing indeed, if I hadn't learned to find my sense of worth from myself, then I probably would have stood over the email for days. Instead, I just deleted it and thought it was kind of amusing that he spent that much time on it. Because surely wasted probably a good hour anyway. So if you're, if you're feeling like, I cannot imagine making that much, frankly, what I'd say to you is that makes sense. Because you've never done it. So it's not it's not a fault. How about we start with where you feel comfortable internally. So if you're making, say 30,000 a year, if you make 36. Does that feel like doable? Like it's like you can envision yourself with 6000 more dollars a year, do you think is 500 more dollars a month? Does that feel like attainable? Just start there? Because like you've mentioned, not Nobody I know at least except Michael maybe went from zero to 100? overnight? And we all built to it. So that's fine build to it. What's the goal that you think you could get to that you can envision? What would you do with with 500 extra dollars a month picture that when you get to that goal, pick a new one. Just do it that way? Because you'll have more fun to trying to envision something that you that you just don't feel good about. It's not gonna work. Pick the thing you can the rock is still rolling in the right direction.



Carissa Andrews 33:00

Absolutely. It's those incremental upgrades and going with the momentum of it for sure.

M

Martha Carr 33:04

Yeah, I didn't dream about where I am right now. I'm not sure we've known how to but I did dream, you know, I had smaller dreams. And so every birthday, my friends, and I have this thing where we'd like to save money, were no object, what would you want? And this one young lady, she was in her late 20s. And she said, with all her heart, I would want a gym membership in a Kindle. And this is you know, a fictitious game where I always say shafting a driver, by the way always. Chef driver. Yes. And, and what I thought was wonderful was she actually picked something somebody said, Well, I think out of all of us, you're the more most likely to get it. And, and years later, she did attain both those things and surpassed it. And maybe she had the right idea because she picked attainable goals, and then drove right over them.



Carissa Andrews 33:58

Yeah, you pick the thing that feels good that you really want right now.



Martha Carr 34:02

And you know, it's, it can be a stretch, it can be a slight stretch. I mean, it doesn't have to be like, I know, I can do it tomorrow. It's what if you check in with yourself internally, does this create anxiety? Or can you picture what you would do with the money? If really what you want if you're, you know, like a single mom, and really what you want is to not worry about where the diapers are coming from, then that's your goal. How much does it cost to get enough dirt? That's your goal. Just start with that Shane Silver's worked in a bank when he first started and his goal was to make as much as he did at the bank. And from what he says it wasn't a lot. So it was a it was an attainable goal. And that was all he wanted and then he you know, drove right over it. Yes. So, okay, did so pick something we're internally it can be small to whatever it is that into Normally, you can handle. It's okay that that's that's not going to stop you from going beyond it. This is just where you're headed today. And things change.



Carissa Andrews 35:10

And it's okay to pick those smaller things as long as it's something that you feel really joyous about. If it gives you that anticipatory like elation. Go for it. Everything is different.



Martha Carr 35:20

That's right. And it can still have if you if no matter what you pick, you still have some anxiety mixed in doesn't matter. true courage is being afraid and going forward anyway. And, you know, the Kickstarter thing, I have a lot of joy around it. But occasionally I have a twinge of what if no one shows up? Sure.



Carissa Andrews 35:39

I think that's pretty normal.



Martha Carr 35:41

Yes. And that never goes away, by the way, you can make as much as you want. And you can still try something new and think, Hmm, wonder if no one comes in, it's not gonna stop me. And I'm still having fun. So that's normal to where you're never more, as far as I know, we don't get to a place where there's no anxiety at all. It's just I know my limits. And if the anxiety is above it, then I what I've come to learn is that's my inner self saying you want to be here. This is not set up correctly, something is missing. So you're either Yeah, you're either doing it too big, or you haven't asked for enough help, or you don't have enough information. But I use it as an

internal, like alarm system instead of turning it on myself. Oh, it's me. There's something wrong with me. No, that's not no, that's an I would say that's never never never never the case. So if you know, if you're approaching something like you know, me trying to build a second universal, that was too much all by myself, then ask yourself, what is it about this? I don't like and change it? We're right back to what do you want? And are you having fun?



Carissa Andrews 36:50

Yeah, absolutely. And that we have those things when they're not fun. Right? Use it as your guide. Yeah. And yeah,



Martha Carr 36:57

I adjust word count all the time, depending on life's what's going on in life. Because that's my guy too. Are you having fun? Or are you just sitting down thinking, oh, dear Lord, I to get to X number? Or am I done so early? That it's like, well, what are we doing for the rest of the day. So it's all fluid to what you what you think you need to do today may not be what you want to do need to do tomorrow. It's all good. If we could all just trust ourselves more, and get our sense of self from ourselves, and be okay, and be able to ask for help. See, you're talking about, you know, the shame and the honesty. If I can't be honest, then I can't ask for help. Because I don't want you to know, so I'm not about to ask you. But if I if I asked for help in you know, you find it as an opportunity to throw out aspersions, then you're just not the right person to ask. And I can go as someone else I can let go of whatever's going on with you. It's not about me, and go as somebody else. But all I'm gonna do if I can't be honest, which is what I did is isolate myself.



Carissa Andrews 38:05

Ah, gotcha. I think that happens an awful lot. I think that so many of us authors are isolating ourselves, because we don't realize that we need those other people to support us. I mean, we're, we're social creatures. So it, you know, in a logical sense, makes sense. But we think we try to protect ourselves when we are feeling shame or doubt or feeling like we're not good enough. And that that aspect is not going to bring the results that you're looking for.



Martha Carr 38:33

No, and the one thing that I've all again, take what you like and leave the rest for all of this. But the one thing I found that can cure that sense of I'm not good enough, is actually exposing it to light. And so the very thing that I need in order to kill it is to go and be honest with others. And, but pick and choose who you're who you're honest with. And if you choose somebody and they turn out to not be an ally, okay, go choose somebody else, you'll figure it out. And that's another thing I think I said that speech was, um, find some writers who are kind of right at your level, who you admire as well. You're all kind of that's your class, like when you were in high school or kindergarten, and you're gonna grow together. And those are the people you can call and say, here's what happened, good or bad knee and they're either going to dice help you dissect it, or they're going to cheer for you with some and you'll do the same for them. And you're going to keep them forever. I mean, I have them. So if you don't have them, that's one

of the best reasons to go to 20 books. If you're new, you're gonna have so many people to choose from, and collect numbers and keep in touch and you know, do sprints virtually all that stuff. So that you have you've created your own class. Yeah,



Carissa Andrews 39:52

That almost like the not necessarily a critique group, but like a Yeah, a friend group of writers that are in that area. entitled, like you're in college,



Martha Carr 40:01

I guess you know, you're all taking same. You're all taking courses maybe not the same. But you have the same goal of graduating. Yep. And, and then once you get to certain places, you know, you still have each other. That way you can support each other. And also a lot of not just me, but I hear it from others. It's, it's like we all naturally get to this place, you start picking someplace to go and gather physically. So like, a lot of people, they'll pick a resort, and they'll show up together. So you know, yeah, find your allies, find the people that you can talk to, who won't make it personal. Who won't say, yeah, that's terrible. You don't need that. The ones who can support you and help you dissect it and say, Your blurb is terrible here. Let me help me write it. Or or you know, it looks like you're doing everything right. Maybe you haven't given it enough time. Whatever it is,



Carissa Andrews 40:56

That's really smart, too. That's having those people that can take a look at things and say, you know, there's nothing wrong with this thing. Just give it a little more space and bland.



Martha Carr 41:05

Right. And, and because a party of one is an echo chamber. And if you're having chats with yourself, I mean, it's still just you. Yep. You talking to you will not get you out of the problem here in the first place. So yeah, little vulnerability may be required. Being able to own it and say, I screwed up quickly is awesome. You won't carry it around, you'll get help. You can laugh about it. And you can say you're sorry if that's required too.



Carissa Andrews 41:35

Absolutely. Okay, so I want to talk to you a little bit about this the Kickstarter thing? Is this your is the Kickstarter, your first thing or did you? Did some of your friends be like? No. Did you? Did you like hit up Paddy?



Martha Carr 41:52

Yeah. No, see, yeah, I'm talking to Paddi next week.



Carissa Andrews 41:56

Nice.



Martha Carr 41:57

So I'm a big fan of gathering information. When people say the reason that won't work. And they have gathered no information, I call that contempt ahead of information. What are you basing it on? Right, so go and gather, gather gather. I talked to Dakota crowd, he had a successful one. Just recently on working, he's doing a board game based on a series. And yeah, and I talked to the there was a woman there 20 books from Kickstarter, who's in charge of all the books, talk to her. And, yeah, I'm a big fan of gathering information. Because then you can sort through it and figure out what you like and what you don't. And it's always about take what you like, leave the rest. But that takes trust. Again, we're back to the I don't have to do everything. I'm going to trust the and what resonates with me is the part I'll do, and I'm also taking the attitude of I'm gonna keep it low, the amount to reach 1500. And, you know, there's still a part of me is like, please let me hit the 15. Yes, absolutely. Yeah. And then I'm gonna build from there. And it's, it's kind of fun. It's kind of fun. When is your Kickstarter launching, it's launching may 1, I will have a temporary page up short, soon. I'm waiting on some artwork. And that people can then follow if they want so that when it comes out, it's called Queen of the flightless dragons. It's urban fantasy set in Austin. And, yeah, it's a lot of fun.



Carissa Andrews 43:31

That's amazing. That just sounds like a lot of fun. I know, the concept of Kickstarter. For me, I've always gotten small. I've done like, I think three of them in my, in the past and always done small. And it's, it is it's that concept of oh, gosh, I hope people actually turn up and for this thing, the last one I had done was it was almost like a class of us prolific works had, like, pulled us all in to like, test out if they did Kickstarters. Like, how would that work? Like, would it be a thing and it was it was a lot of fun. And I learned a lot but it's just the whole time you're still white knuckling it like is it you want to go?



Martha Carr 44:08

Right? Right so Russell Nohelty is that he has a Kickstarter class and I think he has they have like almost maybe 100% success rate and to teaching people and also to keep their expectations reasonable so that they always get their mark. And with Kickstarter, I'm, I am looking at it as a store. So lots of people who aren't authors browse Kickstarter, looking for things. It's the biggest seller of board games now. And not Walmart, not Amazon Kickstarter. And so I approach it as a new kind of store that's easier to bundle. It's the only place that if you as an author sell something you actually get the emails of who you sold to right. And so you can actually build an audience that isn't dependent on somebody still being in business still liking you. And yeah, you can have a lot of fun with it the stretch goals. Yeah. And you can cheer others on. I can go on and join in on somebody else's. Claire Taylor had a recent one on Enneagram for authors. That was a really good one. It's been for Queen of the Flightless

Dragons. It's actually helped quite a bit to recognize what Enneagram I was doing with the main character. And to keep it in mind. She's extremely helpful if you're stuck. Stuck, stuck. Yeah. Find Claire Taylor. Also, I think she has a special going on right now. I don't know when this is when you're doing the podcast, but yeah, weeks. Yeah, absolutely. Look up, Claire. Because Claire tailoring. Enneagram for authors, because, yeah, you will learn a lot and about yourself. You know, I went into it for the books. And I learned what my Enneagram is. And I kept thinking, Yeah, sure. But she described scribing me to a tee. And I that's kind of annoying. Yeah. And so yeah, so but also, with any agreement, what you learn is, and it's useful in developing characters is, what does it look like as it gets healthy. And so that's the arc you create through the story that takes the character from here to here. And even if the no reader has ever seen an Enneagram in their life, they still internally know what rings true for its particular set of behavior. And you're not the reader. You're the writer. So you got to know how to get it there. It's not it can't be by chance.



Carissa Andrews 46:51

Yeah, absolutely. I think it's really cool. Enneagram is really interesting. I also liked Becca Syme, she had a conversation, or I did that one, too.



Martha Carr 47:00

Yeah, that was a really cool talk to ya but I mean, didn't she doesn't she have an she had a Kickstarter recently to talk about how to get unstuck. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Yep. I joined that one, too. So clearly, I'm also a regular browser of nice. And it's a good thing. It's also fun. You come across somebody who's this is their first book. They have zero fans. They've got this one little book. I love it. So if it looks at all, like they can pull this off, I'm gonna join in. Yeah, yeah. And I think it's so much fun. Yeah. So yeah. You know, are you having fun? What do you want to do? So Kickstarter, and then the Joseph already spoke it 20 books on this. And when he said Kickstarter, sell from your website, go wide, then k, you. Okay. And you build a very strong audience that belongs to you. So, you know, even if everything else burns down, you're still there.



Carissa Andrews 48:01

Yeah, absolutely. Well, that's a nice way to build that foundation, I think, yes, you know, if you're not quite sure where to start, or how to build it in a way that's sustainable, that's a great way to do it.



Martha Carr 48:12

Right. And also, if you really are thinking, I don't understand ads at all. You know, as you get to know though, Kickstarter doesn't require it quite so much. People do advertise Kickstarter on Facebook, you know, when they have one, but it's not as necessary. And so it's a way to get going without all the pressure and without all the expense. Because you do a Kickstarter, you figure out how much you need and take Russell's class, because that's the number one error

you can do is you don't ask enough money. But see, you've already paid for you get money in. And you can use that when you get to Amazon to pay for ads, so it's not coming out of your pocket.



Carissa Andrews 48:53

That's great. And especially since when you're first putting anything on to Amazon, you have that two month buffer, it's like, even if you started selling your books, it's like you have to wait two months before you actually get your first check.



Martha Carr 49:04

So right right, but also in the first 30 days Amazon's algorithms will help you and so if you go into it with some a little bit of of a headwind, then it will pick you up and help you rise, but you got to do a lot of work before you get there. It's kind of like with Kickstarter too. If you bother to do a bunch before it opens, then you'll have a successful Kickstarter because I'm basing this on what Russell and clearing patty and everyone else in the first 48 hours is critical. And so you want to actually have done all the work before you get there.



Carissa Andrews 49:39

Yeah, it's like any kind of launch runway you want to have that beginning phase where people are aware of it. They know that this is coming you build this excitement



Martha Carr 49:47

Yeah, yeah. You could do a prequel for if you're doing a series you could do a prequel give that away. So that when they show up, they know they like your style. Yep. And then just have some fun and pick up pick like I'm doing picking them out you feel you could do? Yep. Because you know, if it doesn't stop you from from going higher? Absolutely. It just means that now it's funded. And you know that that's the amount that you said to do to cover whatever it was that you were trying to cover for sure. Right. And then you just keep going. Yeah. Right. And you can think of stretch goals that don't cost anything. Yeah, you don't have to do Yeah, just keep it simple. The first time, that's what I'm doing. At least I'm gonna keep it simple, because you learn from doing and so I you know, this is a trilogy. By the way, I already know the next series I want to do this with. So three kick starters to begin with. But one, two, and three, the books are longer than I normally do. They're about one and a half times as long or more. Yeah, so and the covers for Kickstarter, we'll be exclusive to Kickstarter. And then I'll have another set of covers when I venture out of Kickstarter. So that you know, yeah, create a little exclusivity. Yep. And but if you can't afford multiple covers, don't worry about it. Just do one start from where you are, where you are, is great.



Carissa Andrews 51:12

Yeah, absolutely. Because people will see what you're trying to do and what you're trying to accomplish. And yeah, if you're new, they're gonna know that too. They're gonna like you just

accomplish. And yeah, if you're new, they're gonna know that too. They're gonna, like you just said, if they look like they're doing okay, let that it's possibly gonna go for it. It's like, why not? Give them a little help?

M

Martha Carr 51:27

That's right and it feels good to give someone a boost. You can't really figure that out looking at Amazon, there's too much. It's just too hard. But on Kickstarter, you can get an idea of oh, okay, they're new at this, and it looks reasonable. And then also, sometimes you come across somebody who's been doing it a while, and they've got another new book, and you like them, and then it's clean and funny and whatever. Yep, I join those two. And I think I did one where the book is based on the ocean or something. And so there's a stuffed octopus coming my way. Cool.



Carissa Andrews 52:03

Then you always get like these book mail things where you're like, What is this thing? Oh, it's a mystery. Do tic TOCs. Then when you get like the book mill from?

M

Martha Carr 52:11

Oh, no, no, I don't know. Oh, well, how cool. Yeah, Tic Tac is not something I really investigated. But I have noticed how a lot of writers are using it to their advantage. Yeah, there's always going to be a new shiny object. If you've got time, then go have fun with it. If you don't, okay. There'll be another one right behind it. Yeah, agree with that. Yeah. No, there was I mean, because I've been doing this now long enough to remember the things that we were all crazy about that don't even exist anymore.



Carissa Andrews 52:42

Isn't that interesting? Yeah. Like, like actual handheld newspapers.

M

Martha Carr 52:47

Yeah, but yes, but even in the past five years of indie writing, there was something I don't even really remember their name anymore. But people were using it to give away books. It was a big hot thing is to freebie. And my my friend Insta freebie. Yeah, it merged with or it became prolific works, is kind of how that went. But yeah, even talking about it, and now everybody's moved on. And some of the things survive in a new form, or not quite as hot as they were. But yeah, you all remember BookBub how getting a book Bob was everything. Oh, yeah. Yeah, I mean, people were throwing I think Craig Martell kept posting 950 sevens try, right, mentally. But it is great to get. They just don't seem like you know, the thing to do. Maybe Kickstarter is the hot new fun thing.





Carissa Andrews 53:48

I think it is right now. It definitely seems like it especially since Brandon Sanderson and his big, ginormous Kickstarter. I think authors are like, Wait a minute. I didn't know you could do that.



Martha Carr 54:00

Yeah, but you know, I don't think a lot of they're over there yet. Because, again, I'm a shopper as well looking. And I can't find much. So we're not there yet. Yeah, I mean, yeah, not flooded yet. It will I keep saying probably will be at some point. Who knows? Who knows?



Carissa Andrews 54:20

I think it just depends on those who are interested in actually putting the effort in because I know for me, at least when I did the Kickstarter with prolific works, it was really detailed, like they had a specific way that they were helping us to create the sales page and all the different things that you had to highlight and the way that you write it. And so sometimes it's a lot more effort. And if you as an indie author are already feeling overwhelmed...



Martha Carr 54:46

Right. Did you make Did you make a video for it?



Carissa Andrews 54:50

I think I did. I can't remember if that last one. I did. I'm pretty sure I did because they had different, different requirements that they're having us do. And so Insta Freebie became Prolific Works. Yep. And now they're helping people. That's very clever of them. They morphed into a new thing. I don't know if they're still doing the Kickstarter thing. This was back in 2019. I want to say that I did the Kickstarter with them, where they kind of took up a group of us, they had emailed us and said, Hey, we're thinking about testing out this new thing. And I don't know if it even went anywhere after that. I just know that they were helping us develop our Kickstarter, I think they they got like a cut of whatever happened. Because interesting. Yeah. So it was it was really a neat process to go through. And just to learn from them, we had like a, one of the Slack channels where everybody got to talk at the same, you know, in there and talk about how this is working, and what what are we missing, and it was coordinated through prolific work. So if you were missing something, the the coordinator would be like, hey, you know, at whoever this person was, make sure you get your little whatever thing uploaded. So it was like, there was always this ongoing conversation. You knew what was necessary, what was needed and what the deadlines were. And so it worked pretty cool. I mean, it was it was like clockwork, it was great. But I don't know if they continue to do that or not.



Martha Carr 56:05

Well, you know, doesn't matter if you keep doing Kickstarters than it's doing then it did what it was supposed to if I was a little author's keep, you know, figuring out how to start a Kickstarter,

but don't let that be the where you stop. I love Joe's idea of hit all the marks. Yeah, you know, instead of choosing just Kindle Unlimited or just going wide, why wouldn't you just do it like an arc and hit them all? Oh, I agree.



Carissa Andrews 56:28

And try different things. Because you might find Kickstarters way more fun than just like just going wide.



Martha Carr 56:35

That's right. Yeah. And yeah. And, and as I progress and get comfortable with it, and do more of them, then you start offering fun stuff. Yeah, yeah, I'm not gonna do it the first time though. There's enough to do without trying to figure out how to get things manufactured and mail. Right.



Carissa Andrews 56:53

Right. Like, embossed covers.



Martha Carr 56:57

Playing cards or? Yeah, there's a million. Yes. Yeah, I'm yeah, let's just keep it simple.



Carissa Andrews 57:03

Yeah. Because then you have to do all that. It's almost like coordinating a big conference, you have to have all the details up front. So you know how much to charge people? Yes. So anyone you talk to about Kickstarter, who's who's teaching others, that's the thing they talk about the most is not getting it correct on cost. Sure. That will shoot you in the foot faster than anything. Yeah. So yeah, try and keep it simple. But yeah, I'll have one out in May. So wait, that's so exciting. Yeah. Yeah, I'm excited. And it's, I've been having more fun writing the book to it just because it's new. And it's longer form. And I gave myself more time. Yeah, while doing the other stuff still. Yep. So are all three books coming out this year? Or is it going to be over?



Martha Carr 57:52

Only? It's going to expand over a little bit of time? Okay. And yeah, and that also, that's what I'm hoping to is that I can build an audience there where their expectation is, it takes a little longer, so that, you know, possibly I can take this into a kind of retirement, where I'm actually still working. But there's just lots more time in between.



Carissa Andrews 58:10



Carissa Andrews 58:12

I think that's great. I think that's so smart. Because there's so many people were headless chickens trying to write a book a month, and it gets nuts. And it's like, I don't even know how you people do that.



Martha Carr 58:23

I do that. But I have I know people who can write even faster than I can I have no idea or people who are using voice recognition and I've tried it it does not work for me. So you know, like anything. There are people are faster than I am there are people that are slower than I am. But I'm 63 so I'm nearing where I would like to do other stuff too. Absolutely. Yeah. And so this is a way for me to test the waters and see if I can get it to where it's still fun to do less of it and make money and I think I can and I think Kickstarters you know the Kickstarter stuff on my website, go wide KU Pat will see work test out Joe's theory. So if anybody's watching the 20 bucks, Joseph Laurie's presentation was really good.



Carissa Andrews 59:15

It was.



Martha Carr 59:15

Paddy's, Russell--I think Russell did five presentations he did a number of them and then the the panel where all of them were on the panel for Kickstarter was great too. Okay, and so yeah, I would go check all of those out and check out Russell's I think Russell's got these short little videos you can watch on on that will get you at least the basics and then just go browse through Kickstarter. Try a few you can try them for like \$10 I mean, it's not. Yeah, absolutely. And then you can you find things like Claire and hers. This was so helpful. And then the other person you mentioned who had the getting unstuck, Becca said, oh, yeah, yeah. Yeah. So yeah, you might A trip over something that's really super useful. Absolutely. I'll let Claire know you've held up her book. Awesome.



Carissa Andrews 1:00:07

I look forward to that. I can't wait. I actually just got it three days ago. So I've been kind of looking through the first few chapters, like when I get a chance when I'm doing other things. And so it just happened to be right here.



Martha Carr 1:00:18

Yeah, it's really been useful to me Kickstarter. So you know, in a Kickstarter, I got the level where there were, there's coaching, etc. That's another fun thing about Kickstarter. She'd get things you weren't, you're not gonna get on Amazon. Yep.



Carissa Andrews 1:00:31

I think Patreon is a lot like that as well. I've been envy. Yeah, yeah. For me, I'm kind of burnt out with the whole idea of social media. And so this year, I was talking with my PA and she's like, why don't you just stop doing social and shifted over to Patreon you can do like public posting. But then the things that are like more in you know, like, the works in progress, or cover reveals or things like that, you have to be a paid Patreon. I'm like, that kind of makes sense. Because it's more fun. It's got one kind of central location, central hub, and I don't have to feel like I'm spread out across all the different things. So that's, that's my test for this year. It's just to see, do I like this better?



Martha Carr 1:01:08

That's a clever way to use Patreon. Yeah. And yeah, there's a clever way for you to say I'm not having fun. How can I make this fun? Yeah, by the way, all my social media is connected. So I post one place and it hits all of them. Moran, my often It's Grace, who's doing the posting. So that's another way to stay on social media. I go on looking for briefly looking for comments that I can respond to. Yep. Instead of having to post post post,



Carissa Andrews 1:01:34

Right? That's that I think that's the hardest thing where it's like, you sit down in the morning and batch a bunch of social media, at least that's what I do. And it consumes a lot more time than you think it well, especially if you're designing a piece that goes with it like a an image or something along those lines. And it just gets to the point where it's no longer fun, because you're trying to figure out like, how is this image going to work on Instagram versus Twitter versus like, oh,



Martha Carr 1:02:00

Yeah, yeah. Then I would check out Grace's book.



Carissa Andrews 1:02:03

Yes. I'm looking forward to that man. Definitely.



Martha Carr 1:02:07

Yeah. Grace does all of that she does the graphics for me. Yeah. I don't know how I would do what I do if I didn't have somebody doing. And you know, at first I resisted turning things over and Michael would lap Michael Anderle would laugh. And, and I and he'd say, Why are you still doing that? And that became another question that I can ask myself. Why are you? Why are you still doing that? Sit? Yeah. So I could not be pulling off what I'm doing. If I didn't have a grace,



Carissa Andrews 1:02:36

I love that. Okay, I love Grace. But I'm gonna have to like segue back to Michael. So you have a great conversation about how you and Michael kind of, I guess met met? And then yeah, what's what was that like? And how has it been working and co-writing with Michael.



Martha Carr 1:02:53

So for the two people left who haven't heard the story, meet up. You know, if anybody doesn't know what Meetup is, you can literally put any topic into it and find a club or group within your town that's meeting. And it's low commitment, because you can show up once and never show up again. They even have things for like going to see Christmas lights, or writers groups. And I was in I was in a writers group one. So I got the emails, and there was this guy coming to talk back in 2016, or 17. And he'd only been writing for at most, five months, and was already making six figures and in fiction, which is supposed to be impossible as an entity. And that's supposed to be impossible. And I thought he's lying. But I'm gonna go. And maybe I'll pick up a marketing tip. And I had a teenager with me, he'd already written three space operas. And she wanted to go and so there's about 90 authors and writers in the room. And halfway through, I realized Michaels had noticed accidentally noticed something the rest of us had missed that whale readers, which is somebody who reads at least a book a day, didn't have enough to read. Michael's a whale reader. That's how he tripped over it. And so he was trying to write something that he wanted, in the style he liked, which fit them perfectly. And so of course, they gobbled it up. And so at the very end, he said something he will probably never see again, which was I will stay as long as anyone has a question.



Carissa Andrews 1:04:37

Especially the books conference good for like, three years. Yeah.



Martha Carr 1:04:43

And I had this teenager with me and thought, Oh, well, I can't stay because I need to get her because I thought he'd be stormed by 90 writers. Yeah. And the people going by me were saying he's lying. He's a fake. He doesn't know what he's talking about. So I turned around and looked and there was just too old Guys, and that was it. And so I went up to him, I was the only one who said, What's your phone number? And now I love that gave it to me. And I was the only one who followed up out of all those people. I was the only one. So then Michael claims to this day that he said, Do you want to do a series? I swear he said, Do you want to start a universe?



Carissa Andrews 1:05:30

Probably in his mind it was the same thing



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Martha Carr 1:05:31

But, well, I'd like to point out that even if he's right, when I started the universe, he didn't stop me. Hmm. So he jumped on board, I guess. Then we started our sarin. Nice. And that was because I've got finally gotten to a place where it's willing to listen and willing to be part of a team and let go of outcome, all those things I finally figured out to do. And so instead of micromanaging it, or saying it should look like this, or wanting to sound smart, I this guy's doing what I want to do. So why did let's just do it? Yeah. And it's been a lot of fun. I mean, in the very early days, we would finish the cover five minutes before we had to hit. And that's always pretty familiar. Yeah, we don't do that anymore. And there was one time a brand new series, first book, Amazon put the wrong book inside the right cover a very large preorder. And then yeah, and then they also said, prove it. And that, but we had fans by then. So I could actually ask them, they saw I had proof, they fixed it. But instead of like, Oh, my God, what will we do? We were laughing because it was totally out of our hands. We watch people one star us for it. And we had no control over it. But then we also watched the fans come after the people who we just sidelines and watch. And two weeks. Right? And two weeks later, the book took off like a rocket net series was very successful. And I'm not sure we even actually know why. I mean, was all the hullabaloo. But the thing is, we kept a sense of humor. We didn't sweat it. We were willing to wait and see. We did what was necessary. I went and found fans who could show Amazon screwed up not us. And so maybe fix so what we needed them to do was send a new book to everyone had already gotten one. And in order to do that they wanted proof. So we got that. And so yeah, you got it, you're gonna have to have a really big sense of humor, because things will go wrong. Sometimes it was you. Sometimes it was something else. And you just got to be able to laugh and say, Okay, how do I fix it? And then let it go. Don't let it burn a trademark in your brain. Just let it go.



Carissa Andrews 1:07:51

So do you have a lot of fun with Michael?

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Martha Carr 1:07:52

Oh, yeah, I look at the early covers. We didn't think Oh, boy. And we paid more for those. We didn't really know what we're doing. Yeah, we paid her too much for those. Or he was sick ones. And I was doing the early renditions of the troll who became famous. And it's just the worst looking thing. And even now he'll say, what were you thinking? And I'll say I have no idea.



Carissa Andrews 1:08:16

I love it.

 M

Martha Carr 1:08:21

It's off. And then there are other things that I loved. He didn't and people love it now. And so you know, He shrugs? Yeah. Then again, there's no echo chamber. There's two of us and we check in with each other. But I'm heading out on a project on my own. So we'll see how that

goes. Yeah, I Yeah. And yep, we'll see. Grace is my person I can ask what do you think I have, actually. And then also, I have all the writers I started with who I can say what do you think? But also, at the end of the day, I'm going to trust my gut.



Carissa Andrews 1:08:53

That's great. Well, Martha, thank you so much for being here.



Martha Carr 1:08:59

This has been a lot of fun.



Carissa Andrews 1:09:00

Love it. It's been so fun. And I wish they long trust me. I'm like, I would love to pick your brain. You're just it's amazing to listen to your talk. When you know you can also call me outside of this. Absolutely. We have to do that. Have some tea. We can have tea sometime.



Martha Carr 1:09:16

Right? Somebody gave me for where did I stick it for Christmas? A Justice League Cup warmer. Ooh, nice. into your computer tech.



Carissa Andrews 1:09:27

Yeah. Your keep your mug warm and like modeling. I like it.



Martha Carr 1:09:32

Right. And then they also came with an Aquaman with an Aquaman pen.



Carissa Andrews 1:09:40

We're good. That is way cooler gifts than I got



Martha Carr 1:09:43

I'm a giant nerd at heart and everyone knows it.



Carissa Andrews 1:09:46



Love it. I love it. I think I bought myself all the books that I got this year. So like people forget I'm a book person.



Martha Carr 1:09:52

So I think that intimidates people to buy your book. That might be Yeah, yeah, I actually last year I joined a book club, because I knew would get me to read books I don't normally read and it would give me a deadline to get the book read. And it's turned into something really useful because only one person in there likes urban fantasy. And she was a big fan though. So that was nice.



Carissa Andrews 1:10:18

There's people like that. What?



Martha Carr 1:10:20

Oh, they look at me like, and yeah, they called Neil Gaiman horror. And it's like, he doesn't write horror. Well, that's yeah. So the bottom line is, though, I've ended up reading a lot of books, I would have not known about our chosen. The best one was lessons in chemistry. And, oh, it's so good. And I love the fact that this woman, she's 65. And this is her first book, and it's really, really good. Lessons in chemistry is my one check it out. Thank you. Yeah. So that's also helpful to join a book club and just be a member. Yeah, yeah. You'll read stuff. I'm reading black cake right now.



Carissa Andrews 1:11:04

Interesting. Okay. I'm reading the things we never got over by Lucy Score. That's the one I'm



Martha Carr 1:11:11

I think I've read some of Lucy Score as well, in the book club.



Carissa Andrews 1:11:15

Oh, nice. Yeah, this one that I've read of hers. My pa, I'm actually transitioning a little bit over into a contemporary romance pen name that I'm going to test out this year. And so I've been reading a lot of Colleen Hoover, because you know, obviously, she's the queen of this genre. And Lucy is the first time this is the first time I've read hers. And I've read a bunch of others in similar vein. And so it's just, it's been fun to switch it up a little bit. Because for me, I'm that big fantasy geek. So I read a lot of urban fantasy and paranormal fantasy and paranormal and so it's night. It's been actually kind of a breath of fresh air, almost like a palate cleanser.



Martha Carr 1:11:51

Yeah, exactly. Yeah, I think it's part of the reason why Queen of the Flightless Dragons has been more fun to write. Because I'm being influenced by the sentence structure of the books I've been reading, and a different way of looking at things. And yeah, it's been a palate cleanser. And yeah, it's made this more fun.



Carissa Andrews 1:12:09

Isn't that neat? When that happens when you test something else, or you read something else and how it does influence us. I know a lot of authors, especially in the beginning are so scared to read anything, because it might influence them. It's actually that's that's good. That's a good thing.



Martha Carr 1:12:22

Yeah, yeah. I'm a product of all the books I've read. So yeah. Yeah, that's great. Yeah. Well, this has been so much fun.




Carissa Andrews 1:12:31

Thank you for being here. And if my audience wants to find you and track you down and get your books and all the good fun stuff, where do they go to find you? So, right now all the books are on amazon.com. Under Martha Carr, you can sign up for the newsletter at MarthaCarr.com. And which makes it super easy in that way. You'll also hear about the Kickstarter. On Facebook, there's an author group, Martha Carr, I just kept it really simple. If you can remember Martha Carr, you kind of got it. Yep. And that is where the fans can come and chat with each other. And also, every first Friday of the month, I started during quarantine thinking I would do it for a few weeks and two years later, still doing it. You can sign up in during the month to win a pizza. And then on the first Friday of the month, we all get five fans when every month. And then on the first Friday, we gather together on Zoom. And they're like family. They're the craziest bunch of it's herding cats. It's so much fun. It's so much fun, and they look forward to seeing each other they get very put out if they if the Zoom isn't working because you know we've been doing this for two years. Anyone can they come from all over the world to join in. And occasionally other authors will show up. People who write our sarin are regularly there. And so once we 1pm 1pm Central Time, first Friday of every month if you're in my Facebook group you'll store on my or you follow my author page, you'll see the sign up for a free pizza. You don't have to come often people when and don't come on Friday. That's cool. The only reason why you can only win a pizza domestic US domestic is because I don't know how to deliver a pizza in Holland. But which that who comes to every meeting who lives in Holland, I think or Denmark. The NFF sees that she will correct me. But she will. She's always pointing out that she should get a pizza by the way to during. So I had reoccur a recurrence of the cancer last year. And the fans found out that I was doing chemo because now chemo exists for melanoma. And so I was it was during still during quarantine, which is a very weird time because you can't take anyone with you. I had to go into the building alone. And it takes all day. And so suddenly I started getting those direct messages and they were super long. And they read more like a story. And they were from fans. And I started thinking that I was going somehow that found out


what day? Oh, word got around. And so they were trying to entertain me from afar. And fans that have sent flowers from whatever foreign country she's in. And yeah, fan sent all sorts of things to try and be there. And I mean, how amazing is that? It's amazing. It just to know that what you do and who you are and the way that UV impacts people so deeply that they're willing to do that. That's amazing.

 Martha Carr 1:15:46

Yeah. And that were more like family and friends. Yeah. So yeah. And yeah, Scott Walker, another author shows up all the time for pizza Friday. Love it. Tear camera comes all the time. He's my favorite. He writes in our sarin, and he had been coming for at least a year. And I kept saying, So what next book do you have coming up? It wasn't until a couple months ago that they all said he's real. We thought that was your pen names. He was laughing. Fortunately, he was laughing quite a bit. Because I mean, he's been sitting there the whole time. And they thought it was me. Why did they think I was asking him? What book do you have coming out? That's yeah, we've just referred to him as an AI ever since.

 Carissa Andrews 1:16:29

Nice. He's a non player character.

 Martha Carr 1:16:33

That's how much I go out for fans. I will make someone show up. And name.

 Carissa Andrews 1:16:41

Oh, that's awesome. Now you know what they're doing when they're reading your books. And they're really like, trying to figure out what's actually happening in there. All sorts of leaps going on. Awesome. Well, Martha, thank you so much for being here. Truly. And like I said, Your talk was, it was one of the ones that just stuck with me the entire day. And it was was it earlier in the day, too. I was just thinking about it the entire time.

 Martha Carr 1:17:07

Yeah, because I specifically asked Craig not to put me at eight o'clock. So I know it wasn't, wasn't.

 Carissa Andrews 1:17:12

But I remember just sitting there thinking about it all day. It was just and I think when I was in the 20 books group, the attendee group, like darn, curse you Martha think I was said something like that in there, like making me cry this day thing.



Martha Carr 1:17:29

That's my goal. See, I wanna see how many people I can get to cry.



Carissa Andrews 1:17:31

Yes. It's all good. Well, thank you. I appreciate you being here. And I can't wait to have you on again, if you'd ever like.



Martha Carr 1:17:38

Yeah. So absolutely. Maybe we can come back and talk about how the Kickstarter went.



Carissa Andrews 1:17:42

I would love that. Yeah, it's a plan.



Martha Carr 1:17:45

All right. All right. Well, have a good day. Have a good day. Yeah. And Happy New Year.



Carissa Andrews 1:17:49

Happy New Year, too, as well. Well, there she is the wonderful, the amazing Martha Carr. She is absolutely one of the most amazingly grounded and down to earth, people in this in the sphere. And I'm so excited to have her be on the show and communicate with us about how she is and who she is and what she does, and all the crazy amazing things that she has had happened to her and things that she's learning and all the insights and tips that she has been able to deliver to all of us. Now if you're looking for any of the links to some of the stuff that she talked about, because we covered a lot of things, anything from her pa as book all the way through some of the extra videos that you could find from the 20Booksto50k conference. It will all be found in our show notes for today's podcast episode, which is authorrevolution.org/167. So you can find quick links to just go to other places and see all the things right there. Now I want you to take some of the advice that she gave you in this episode. mold it to be your own, become the amazing author that you're meant to be because that is what this journey is all about. live each day as if it is the most important thing you have ever done because it is right now is your most important thing. Be present. Be aware and go forth and start your author revolution.