

In Search of a Story: The Reluctant Author I

by Michael Camarata

Author groaned.

He had grown weary of well constructed stories with linear plot lines and clear beginnings, middles and ends. Life, at least for him, had never been so cut and dry. It more closely resembled Mr. T. S. Eliot's "heap of broken Images" than anything so prosaically contrived.

So, with the click of a mouse, Author banished his latest endeavor into the electronic limbo-land of his computer.

Author's bedroom, not so coincidentally, also resembled something of a heap of broken images. It was as he contemplated these surroundings for fresh inspiration that there was a knock on the door.

Author sighed.

"Yes?"

The door cracked open.

Andy, a particularly large and lumbering Armadillo who was one of Author's roommates, poked his pointy pink snout in through the doorway.

"I'm going on a beer run. Want anything?"

Author gritted his teeth.

"No." he said. "Thanks."

Andy shrugged, turned, and left.

Now one thing about Armadillos, especially eight-foot long ones, is that they are particularly noisy creatures.

Anyone who has had the misfortune of living with one knows that the way that their four bulbous feet pound across the floor is only a small portion of the problem. Even more annoying is the way that their outer plating rattles. Andy's rattled so much, in fact, that he was a good four blocks away before Author could put it out of his mind and get back to the pursuit of his latest story idea.

"Can't think of anything to write about again, ey Author?"

The voice was deep and guttural, rattling the windows and threatening to topple the delicate piles of papers and books that surrounded Author's work-chair like a privet hedge-work maze.

Author turned to glare at the large red Dragon whose head had emerged from beneath the covers of his bed.

"Oh, just go back to sleep. Will ya, Genevive?"

"Grumpy, grumpy," she muttered.

With a flick of her long, forked tongue, Genevive snagged a corner of the thin blue sheet and pulled it once more over her head. But it was too late. The idea which he had begun to formulate, like a dream upon waking, had vanished forever from his conscious mind.

As Author began his contemplations afresh, there was a loud crash of breaking glass. The window to his right burst inwards, followed quickly behind by a stocky troll in full plate mail. As the troll rose to his feet, brushing away the pieces of shattered glass from his sir coat, in through the window lunged a handsome knight in shining armor. Waving his broadsword about his head, barely missing from taking off Author's own head at the neck in the process, the knight advanced upon the troll.

"Hold," Author squeaked. Then, regaining his voice, "Hold, I say!"

The two fighters, presuming him to be a registered marshal, dropped to their knees as it was customary to do when a marshal yelled "Hold!" and waited impatiently to see what the problem was.

"I am attempting to write a story here!" Author yelled. "Would you fellows kindly take this battle elsewhere?"

"Oh. Terribly sorry," replied the troll, reaching for

the door.

"Yea," said the knight. "We really had no idea. Sorry to have troubled you. Won't happen again." With that said they left, making sure to close the door behind them.

"Sheesh," Author heard the knight say as they headed away from the door. "What a grouch."

"You said it man," the troll replied. Then they were out of ear shot.

Author looked back at the blank computer screen one last time, but knew that he would have no luck writing today. Too many distractions. So he turned off the computer and crawled into bed beside the dragon. Hopefully, he thought, some idea would come to him while he slept that he could use when he woke.

As Author drifted off towards slumber, and images of the mind began to flutter through his head, a cold breeze suddenly blew across his feet.

"Oh, come on," Author grumbled at Genevive. "Would you mind sharing some of those covers with me?"

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Originally Self Published in Tales of the Reluctant Author: Christmas, 1993
Also Published in Show and Tell Magazine: June, 1996

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