

12 Things I Love and Hate About Being a Writer

By George Cunningham

Let's face it. Writers are insecure little whiny babies, who think they have something to say that other people will pay money to read – which makes them also arrogant, not a good combination. I'm a writer and I love being a writer, but I also hate being a writer. But since I love and hate it, and because I'm whiny and insecure about what I do, and because I obviously think you want to read what I am about to write, I am without doubt qualified for my chosen profession.

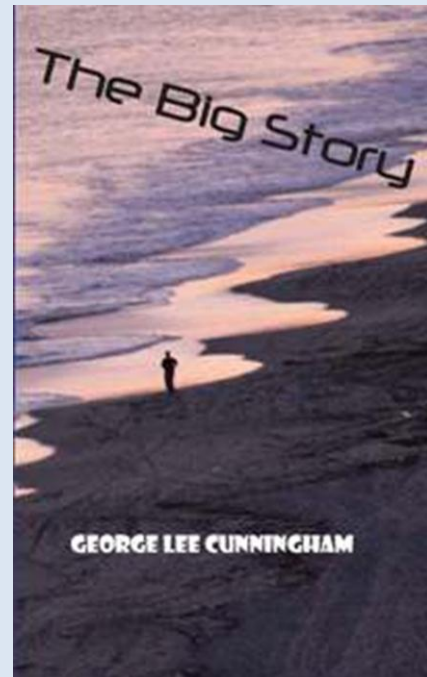
Confused? Yeah, me too.

That's the other thing about writers. Almost all of us, at some level or other, are a little confused about what we do and why we do it.

But one thing we're not confused about it that we all love being writers. And we also hate it. Here are 12 reasons why:

1. We love getting up in the middle of the night with a sudden inspiration and rushing to the computer to write it down before we forget. Those early morning forays, when everybody else in town is sound asleep, make us feel special – like we are creating while everybody else is lying around

George Lee Cunningham's



A hard drinking reporter has to decide whether to keep chasing his big story or to make his bosses happy, rekindle the flame with his ex-wife, and be a responsible adult. Guess what he chooses. Mobsters, corrupt police, sissy editors, and the body of a naked girl on the beach. What more could you ask for?

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semi-conscious.

2. We hate nodding off at lunch after being awakened in the middle of the night with a sudden inspiration. All those other people – stuck in their sleep-through-the-night, bourgeoisie world – are suddenly irked by our need to relax and refresh. i.e., sleep. Don't they realize that we are creative and that we don't respond to their little pucker-butt schedules.
3. We love reading what we wrote, laughing out loud at the funny parts, getting a lump in our throats at the sad parts, and thinking to ourselves that the written word is ours to command.
4. We hate reading what we wrote, realizing that it is worse than pig swill, and we have not only chosen the wrong profession, but we have been making fools of ourselves for years, believing that anybody other than our mothers would want to read the talentless crap we keep churning out.
5. We love it when our characters fall in line, behave as we wish, and help advance the story. Our characters are our children – both good and bad – and we want them to behave accordingly. Being a writer is like being God. We create evil, so good can triumph.
6. We hate it when our characters misbehave. When the good ones end up having hidden motives and the bad ones are suddenly sympathetic – unless of course, that's what we planned. The problem is that once you create a character, they don't necessarily belong to you. They have their own personalities and their own needs. If you wanted them to be different, you should have made them different in the beginning.
7. We love reading other authors and being inspired to create the same kind of eloquence and beauty that he or she has achieved through the written word. The demonstration of what is possible helps drive a writer through the lonely hours of sitting alone at a computer, searching for that elusive phrase that will help make our story special.
8. We hate reading other authors and being suddenly aware that we will never, not matter how hard we try, ever be as good as they are. Why are some born with such talent while other hacks, such as ourselves, have to work so hard to fall so short?
9. We love writing dialogue and having it sing. We love watching each character reveal him or her self through their conversation in ways that enhance the emotional bond between the character and the reader. When it works, it works, and there is nothing better in the world.
10. We hate slogging our way through dialogue in which the characters say what we want them to say, but their conversation is stilted because we're trying to shoehorn it into our plots. The more we struggle, the more the dialogue becomes redundant. Irrelevant details become part of the discussion between characters, and what should have been a plot turn in the book, becomes a

quagmire of blather. This is a time the author needs to walk away and rethink where he or she is going, but that's not going to happen – not until he or she beats his or her head against the wall for several hours trying to make it right.

11. We love when the finished book arrives from the printers, all shiny and new. We love the way it smells, the way the words fit neatly on the page, the way our name looks on the cover, and the way we feel when people ask us what we do for a living, and we say, "I'm an author."
12. We hate the day after the finished book arrives from the printers and we discover the first grammatical error, which proclaims to the world that despite our feeble claim to author-hood, we are actually illiterate morons and if we had an ounce of pride we would warn people not to buy our phony book.

In other words, we love being authors, we hate being authors, we are confused, arrogant, insecure, and phonies. If you have a problem with that, don't buy our books. On the other hand, please buy our books. We may not be worthy of your patronage, but we really, really want your support.

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