

Why I Write

By AY Dorsey

Why do I write? For money? To create beauty? Because my business card says “author”?

I write juvenile novels, most of which are translated, published, and distributed through bookclubs and bookstores in various countries across Europe. In Canada, my publishers have been Scholastic and Dundurn, and I recently started a publishing company, Enchanted Pony Books, to make my backlist available to English-language readers around the world. Currently, I’m writing a fantasy series, Talismans of Thunder, to be released this fall in Europe, and I’m working on three screenplays, two original and one adapted.

So do I write for money? In a way, yes. But if I wasn’t able to make a living at it, would I still write evenings and weekends, as I did before I “broke in”? Oh, yes! So money isn’t the core reason.

Do I write to create beauty? This was my main desire when I started, oh so long ago (no, you don’t need to know *how* long ☺). I wanted to create beautiful stories – and no matter how often I look back and wring my hands at the terrible writing in my first book, I still love that story! Each novel has literally been my favourite as I’ve written it, and now each screenplay too. Like my children, I love them for the glorious individuals they are.

So do I write to create beauty? Again, yes. But when a story is sad and terrible, and the most a protagonist can hope for is to emotionally survive, what then?

The answer is so elemental and ingrained in my psyche that it’s almost indiscernible. I know in my heart that *writer* is my niche in life, at least for now. It’s my slot, my role, the place from which I get to help others. I write to give my readers courage and strength as much as I feebly am able. I write to support them in choosing and following their individual paths in life. I write to encourage them to accept each other and help each other along the way. All compassionate acts, whether in person or in fiction, have the power to educate, bolster, and inspire. I know this is true, not only because of the mail I’ve received from kids and sometimes even their parents saying how my stories have given them strength, but because of the stories that have changed the way I view the world, stories that have taught me about life and love and the person I want to become.

The effect of words to inspire, to make a difference, is truly magical. And that is why I write: to add to the magic, in my own meagre way. I feel incredibly blessed to do so.