

I AM GOING TO TALK HERE ABOUT STORY TELLING. THAT IS WHAT I AM - A STORY TELLER. EVERY DAY I SIT DOWN TO WRITE I REMIND MYSELF OF THAT.

- 1) PLOT – ASK YOURSELVES A FUNDAMENTALLY IMPORTANT QUESTION: WILL ANYONE ELSE ACTUALLY WANT TO READ WHAT I AM WRITING?**

- 2) WILL I ENTERTAIN, BEGUILE, AMUSE, TERRIFY, TRANSPORT, MYSTIFY MY READERS, OR BORE THEM RIGID AND DEPRESS THEM??**

- 3) IF YOU TELL A GREAT STORY, THE ANSWER WILL ALMOST DEFINITELY BE THAT YOU WILL BEGUILE, TRANSPORT AND ENTERTAIN**

HOW TO COME UP WITH A PLOT

A GREAT INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE:

YOU THINK OF THINGS THAT ARE AND ASK WHY, WHEREAS I, I DREAM OF THINGS THAT NEVER WERE AND ASK WHY NOT?

*** *WHAT IF* -MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION A WRITER CAN ASK – SEE MY INSPIRATION FOR SEA DJINN**

*** INSPIRATION - GET IT DAY DREAMING. WALKING, READING BOTH FICTION AND NON-FICTION. I LOVE QUANTUM PHYSICS AND STUFF ON PARALLEL UNIVERSES - FIND IT VERY INSPIRING - , LOOKING AT ART, LISTENING TO MUSIC, WATCHING DVD'S, OBSERVING NATURE, LIFE AND PEOPLE AROUND YOU. AS AN INVESTMENT BANKER, I BECAME A BIT OF A SPY, WATCHING SCENES, LISTENING TO DIALOGUE, WRITING IT ALL DOWN, LOOKING AS IF I WERE DOING MY PROPER WORK.**

*** WRITE ABOUT WHAT INTERESTS YOU, ABOUT WHAT YOU LOVE - IF YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR WRITING/CHARACTERS, NO-ONE ELSE WILL EITHER**

PLOT - HOW TO EXPAND IT - ONE THIRD OF ALLOCATED TIME

*** START STRONG**

*** ESTABLISH SETTING**

- * BREAK IT DOWN
- * BUILD IT UP
- * PLOT MAP - GET IDEAS DOWN AS FAST AS POSSIBLE BEFORE YOU FORGET THEM
- DON'T TRY TO THINK/PLOT STORY AND WRITE STORY AT SAME TIME

** HELPS TO KEEP A NOTEBOOK HANDY AT ALL TIMES.
DICTAPHONE ALSO USEFUL

2) FIND YOUR VOICE

***WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY? ENJOY YOURSELF. LET RIP. GET INSIDE YOUR OWN MIND AND YOU'LL BE SURPRISED WHAT YOU FIND.**
WRITING IS THE FREEST OF ALL THE SCHOOL DISCIPLINES. CREATIVE WRITING MEANS YOU CAN WRITE ABOUT WHATEVER YOU WANT. APART FROM GRAMMAR AND SPELLING, THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWER.

*** HOW DO YOU WANT TO SAY IT? DIFFERENT GENRES** WRITE THE KIND OF BOOK YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ. FOLLOW YOUR INSTINCT. DO YOU LIKE FUNNY BOOKS, LIKE EION COLFER'S OR MAGICAL, LIKE JK ROWLING'S, OR DRAMATIC LIKE PHILLIP PULLMAN, MICHAEL MORPURGO, OR THRILLER -

ANTHONY HOROVITZ, DARREN SHAN OR ROBERT
MUCHAMORE –

**3) GETTING STARTED - ONE THIRD OF
ALLOCATED TIME**

*** JUST DO IT!**

*** START. DON'T WORRY ABOUT MAKING IT
PERFECT. IT NEVER WILL BE. YOU CAN IMPROVE
IT IN SUBSEQUENT DRAFTS. I NORMALLY WRITE
ABOUT 8-10 DRAFTS. 3-4 FOR PLOT, TWO FOR
BEAUTY IF WRITING, ONE FOR DIALOGUE WORK,
ONE OR TWO FOR COPY EDITING.**

*** MAKE YOUR OPENING LINE COUNT. MAKE YOUR
READERS WANT TO READ ON.**

*** IF IT'S GOING WELL, DON'T STOP. DON'T STOP
BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW THE PERFECT WORD
OR RELEVANT FACT. FILL THAT IN LATER. AND**

**DON'T STOP BECAUSE YOUR MOBILE RINGS.
IGNORE IT!**

4) CHARACTERS

*** CHARACTERISATION - PICTURE THEM AS CLEARLY AS YOU CAN. BE THEIR PORTRAIT PAINTER. BE THEIR PSYCHIATRISTS -GET INSIDE THEIR HEADS.**

MOTIVATION -WHY DO CHARACTERS ACT AS THEY DO?

*** CONFLICT:**

GOOD/EVIL/HERO/ANTIHERO/PROTAGONIST/ FOIL

*** GROWTH/DISCOVERY - HOW DO THE CHARACTER EVOLVE DURING THE STORY? What do they discover about themselves? WHAT DOES THE READER DISCOVER ABOUT THEM?**

5) CONVINCING DIALOGUE

*** KNOW YOUR CHARACTERS**

*** DIFFERENT SPEECH PATTERNS/RHYTHMS
AND IDIOSYNCRATIC WORD USE**

*** READ YOUR WORK ALOUD OR GET SOMEONE
ELSE TO READ IT ALOUD TO YOU SO YOU CAN
HEAR HOW IT SOUNDS. PARTICULARLY USEFUL
FOR DIALOGUE TO CHECK IT SOUNDS NATURAL.**

6) VIVID, DYNAMIC WRITING

*** VERBS**

*** SIMPLICITY**

*** NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS - USE ALL YOUR
SENSES - SYNAESTHESIA P1,5, *STENCH, ACRID,
HISSING, TWISTED, FLICKERED, SLITHERED***

*** IMAGERY - STRONG IMAGES - *OXTOPUS
BEATING DRUMS***

*** PACE SKIP UNECESSARY DETAIL**

*** SCENE SHIFTING**

*** INSPIRE - *I WON'T GIVE UP***

*** POINT OF VIEW**

*** CLIFFHANGERS**

*** CONFLICT**

*** SURPRISE**

*** REVELATION**

*** CONCLUSION *READ ON FACTOR***

6) PERSERVERENCE

*** FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED. WRITING'S LIKE CLIMBING A MOUNTAIN. ONE STEP AT A TIME.**

7) EDITING - ONE THIRD OF ALLOCATED TIME

*** CONSTRUCTION - ADDING**

*** DESTRUCTION -CUTTING**

*** DYNAMISM?**

*** TECHNICAL - SPELLING, GRAMMAR ETC**

*** READ ALOUD**

8) HAVE FUN!

One great source of inspiration is all around you.

THE INSPIRATION OF PLACE

Where you live can inspire your creativity, whether it be in writing, painting, drawing, or in business and charitable opportunities too.

BRIEF BACKGROUND

I wasn't always a writer. I started my career as an Investment Banker. Some of you might say that a place of numbers is not an inspiring place, but believe me it was.

A place where huge sums of money can be made and lost in seconds makes for a very interesting study of human nature. Just how far will people go to make a lot of money, and then how much further to make a truly stupendous amount of money. The answer to that and the desire to lift the lid on some of the practices that went on there, inspired me to write my first book, *Nest of Vipers*. I went on to write five financial thrillers which were published around the world and translated into over thirty languages, so I think it's fair to say I found a lot of inspiration in the City of Money.

Then I moved with my family to Dubai.

Now, I'd always wanted to write children's books and I'd always been interested in Djinn. Then one day, the two things came together.

I was walking on the public beach in Um Suqeim when I found a shell with a very intricate pattern (see intro.) SEA DJINN was directly inspired by that moment on the beach.

For FIRE DJINN, I was walking in the Suffolk countryside when I came across a huge rubbish incineration facility. It was surrounded by massive fences topped with barred wire. Why, I wondered, should rubbish warrant such robust protection? What if it were merely a cover, literally and metaphorically for a hidden underground bunker of some sort??

I transported that underground bunker to the deserts of Dubai, and gave it to my Dark Fire Djinn, Jehennem, for his own evil purposes.

For Storm Djinn, I found inspiration in the Rub al Khali, the magical Empty Quarter, the largest sand desert in the world.

So, all around us we have inspiration. But only if we LOOK!

LET'S LOOK AT THE VERB 'TO LOOK' FOR A MOMENT.
CAN ANYONE GIVE ME SOME SYNONYMS FOR IT?

See, perceive, discern, look, witness, glimpse, notice,
distinguish, regard,

NOW ANTONYMS? IGNORE, DENY, OVERLOOK,
DISREGARD, OVERLOOK, LOOK RIGHT THROUGH,
DISCOUNT

Do we *see*, or do we *disregard*???

Familiarity breeds contempt, or perhaps, more gently, comfortable acceptance. TO BE INSPIRED BY WHERE WE ARE, We need to look with a QUESTING EYE.

There is a great quote from the poet William Blake:

‘IF YOU CAN SEE A WORLD IN A GRAIN OF SAND,
AND HEAVEN IN A FLOWER,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand
And eternity in an hour.....’

THE NEXT STEP ON FROM SEEING, IS IMAGINING.

I have another great quote for you:

YOU THINK OF THINGS THAT ARE AND ASK WHY,
WHEREAS I, I DREAM OF THINGS THAT NEVER WERE
AND ASK WHY NOT?

So see what is before you, then really look, imagine what is hidden, what happens next, what buildings could be built, what stories could be written, what paintings could be painted.

So look around you, see what is there, be inspired by the beauty of the desert and the seas, the high mountains, the rolling green fields, the skyscrapers and street canyons of the city, the vision behind the buildings. See how you can be inspired by it in your own life. Maybe it is to write, or to set up a business, or to help a friend who you hadn't noticed before needed help.