

Not a lot of authors seem to do that.

In this business, you have to do something to try to stand out. I had been looking back over some of the first stories that I wrote and felt that something was missing. I don't want to make it seem like ideas just happen, because there was a lot of work, a lot of nights spent thinking 'Am I doing the right thing? Why in the world did I ever try to write?' Then I remembered one of the exercises I did in a college writing course that focused on setting. Once I gave my characters a strong, vibrant place to interact in, I knew I had something good.

What did make you want to be a writer in the first place?

Now, that is a much stranger story. Honestly, I never thought I would end up becoming a writer. When I was a kid I wanted to be an astronaut. So, I started reading stories about Buzz Aldrin and other famous astronauts, then that moved me into sci-fi novels, and then I forgot about trying to do something and opted for writing about other people.

There isn't really one thing that I can point to that made me say, "This is why I want to be a writer." I have just always loved the stories that people tell and I wanted to be able to tell mine.

So how did you get started then?

All my life I had been interested in stories. Short stories in high school because they were short and classical mythology in college—everyone has to try something strange in college, don't they?