So, You Think You Can Write?

Since the dawn of time man has told stories … yea, that sounds about right. It was probably mostly with their hands and a whole lot of grunting, but storytelling nevertheless. As humans, we naturally tell stories, whether you're ranting to a friend about that one chick at Walmart or typing up a blog post about that one chick that is being used as an example. We each have this gift, but how we use it differs. For me, and those like me, we choose to hide our faces behind computer screens and notebooks. We're probably going to end up with arthritis by thirty, but hey, we're doing what we love.

Here's six personal tips from my own writing experience. These are general things too, not just something only creative writers or fantasy writers would vibe too.

Number 1: Write for yourself

I'm human … what, shocker right? But indeed. And like any other human I want the feeling of making something and having others look at it and either say, or think, 'wow that's amazing' or 'that's really nice'. If you don't, you're either an alien or just really confident – either way you're my hero.

In the beginning, I wrote and always became depressed at the lack of audience I was bringing in. I would see other writers getting hundreds of comments, and I'd ask myself, why can't I have that. After that, I kinda withdrew and stopped writing, thinking it's not my niche.

So, what happened? Someone told me to never write for others, write for yourself. And now I'm telling you that after more than a decade of writing, do exactly that. If you love writing, then do it for you. Every day post your things and whether you get zero views or a million, don't let that bother you. Don't compare yourself to another writer, in the writing world comparing writers is foolish, we all have our own styles and voices. Don't compromise your own love because it's not gathering attention. If you're writing for the views and the attention then, and I'm not knocking you, but you're not writing because you love it.

Number 2: Write. Stop editing. Write.

avoids all eye contact Yep, I still have a problem with this. This is that part where you guys say, 'how can you not take your own advice'. I'm a work in progress. But this is serious. From personal experience

and talking to other writers, editing keeps us from finishing. Do any of you have hundreds of great ideas and stories that you abandoned, and every time you go back you try to re-edit? I know I do. There's a difference between rereading, so you know what's going on, but don't you dare try to edit it. Editing it, I have noticed, is one of the reasons we're not as excited. It's the more technical side, and it slows us down. I'm pretty sure that's why it takes years to get a book done. There's also a difference between doing a rewrite and editing. I'm more lenient on the rewrite because new information could change what you write, but keep moving forward.

So write, keep writing, make notes, but don't edit. Stop it.

Number 3: Minimize Your Projects

Guilty, yet again. At this moment I have five projects that are ongoing. I'm highly ashamed. I can't help that I randomly get an idea and that idea just grows. This is especially bad for worldbuilding writers because we want to add as much to that world we created as possible, which means writing other branch off stories. When I say minimize your projects, I don't mean to kill all of your other projects because some of us work best when we have multiple. What I do mean though is don't have ten of them just sitting there and you're currently exploring your eleventh. If you're like me then narrow it down to three main projects and everything else is side. These three projects you focus on and that's it, the side ones are for the moments where you really can't stand those three main ones at all.

Again, don't be like Tierra, don't have hundreds of ongoing projects.

Number 4: Don't Delete Anything!

This is a lesson I learned from my mother. She yelled at me every time I said I deleted something. I told her that I deleted my writing folder, and I mean deleted. I'm the type to go straight to the recycling bin and wave it farewell. But seriously, deleting is crazy and I'm happy I stopped. First off, those dead projects can become something in the future. My WiP, For the Crown, is an example of this and so is Superstition. I have gone back through my stuff and used segments and ideas from dead stories, and it works. Secondly, it's kinda fun and interesting to see what Past You did and came up with. Your writing does get better, whether character development or description details. It's cool to look at the things you wrote and then poke fun at it like 'what a dweeb, they actually wrote this.' And reflecting on your own personal growth is such a mood.

Number 5: Use that Inspiration

There is no such thing as an original idea. That's the sad truth. If you want an original idea, then you're about a century too late. Now, just because that's true doesn't mean you can't put a fresh take on a new idea. Toys talking, okay well that's Toy Story, but what if people found out? What if a group of kids saw this and the kids' main mission was to expose them? Or what if these toys were really aliens or possessed?

Take inspiration from stuff around you. Don't feel bad that you read a book and you got a familiar idea about something you really want to write. Use that and make it yours at the end of the day. Don't take Tomb Raider, write a duplicate and call it original, but do take Tomb Raider, put a fresh spin on it and retire happy. Watch movies, read books, and play games that stroke your inspiration. I say this only because I've met a surprising number of people who thinks it's blasphemous to get inspiration from sources and then act on it.

Number 6: Have a Circle

What kind of tip … I'm serious though. Whether they're your friends, family, or a writing group you joined. Get a circle of people who don't mind hearing and helping you with your ideas. Why? Because your story has plot holes. What makes sense to you won't make sense to others. Come on now, we've seen tons of movies that have plot holes and confusing gray areas that are never explored, it happens to even the professionals. A circle helps you get rid of the more blaring ones. Not only that, but it also helps expand your thinking. They give you outside tips and ideas. Now, whether you use them is your own business. But make sure your circle is diverse and filled with people for different things. So, don't have four guys who all tell you about plot, in the end, that's not going to help you.

Well, that's my top six, and though there are other tips, I won't bore you with more. I actually enjoy writing things like this so whether anyone cares, I might just continue, because of tip 1.