

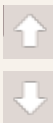
MON AT 2PM, ANDY WEIR AUTHOR OF ARTEMIS

Check out the WEEKLY RECOMMENDATION THREAD

Join in the WEEKLY "WHAT ARE YOU READING?" THREAD!



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24

### We are Dr. Kerry Forrestal (MD/MBA) and John Fracchia (MBA/LMNOP), authors of Cataclysm: the Myst Clipper Shicaine, Ask Us Anything!

AMA 6PM

self.books

1 year ago by \* (last edited 1 year ago) [Kforrestal](#) AMA Author

T'Amorach was a thriving world until the Cataclysm rendered it almost uninhabitable. Centuries later it finds itself on the eve of a war it can ill afford. The surviving cultures maintain a fragile peace, protected within large domed "zones," separated by badlands.

It is upon the caustic low-lying mysts of T'Amorach's badlands that the great myst-clipper ships sail. Most engage in trade or travel, but one legendary ship, The Shicaine, once worked to bring sentient machines to freedom in Rossums' Zone. Then her crew were betrayed and scattered.

Now, five years later, they're starting to turn up dead. Shicaine captain Nathaniel Gedrick races to save his crew and avert all-out war between the zones before a new cataclysm arises.

Authors Dr. Kerry Forrestal MD and John Fracchia (LMNOP) are hosting a Reddit AMA on October 19, 2016 at 6:00 PM to discuss the book which will be available for free on Amazon on that day. A sample is currently available on their website at:

welcome to r/books

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- 2 PERSONAL CONDUCT**  
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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 7 points 1 year ago

 Hello everybody and WELCOME!

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 [-] [Chtorr](#)  **28** 3 points 1 year ago

 What books really made you love reading as a kid?

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 3 points 1 year ago\*

 So many books. The classics, Dr. Seuss, PD Eastman. When I was a little older, Scott Corbett's "Trick" series, Alfred Hitchcock and the 3 Investigators. I liked anything that stretched the bounds of imagination. As I got older it was anything by Piers Anthony, Tolkien, Arthur C. Clarke. I also enjoyed pulp series like The Destroyer.

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 [-] [Chtorr](#)  **28** 3 points 1 year ago

 What advice would you give to aspiring writers?

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 4 points 1 year ago

 It's probably advice you've already gotten, but here goes!

- 1) Write as much as you can as often as you can
- 2) Accept that as you begin, it's not going to be great, but it will get steadily better

3) Don't ever take criticism personally. I'm a doctor and spent med school and residency basically spending 24/7 having my failings pointed out and my successes ignored. I learned that the criticism is of the thing, not of the person.

#### FIND PEOPLE TO GIVE YOU HONEST CRITICISM

It doesn't help you if you show someone the work and they say "It's good" You've gained nothing. MAKE THEM give you 3 points to improve it.

4- It doesn't have to be perfect the first go around, just get the nugget on the page and you can mold it later

5- Pen and paper by the bedside and always with you- you never know when an idea will hit. I've lost at least three Pulitzers by breaking that rule. :(

6- Write what you know. We all have to step outside our sphere of experience for example when i write Derring, Seyschell or Lyrie- I'm not a female so I have to be mindful of that. I did however have a friend who is an academic and really hasn't worked in "rough" worlds and he was trying to emulate the course language of dock workers and it just didn't play very well.

7- ENJOY IT. write for yourself first and foremost. Write what you'd like to read. I love the adventures of the Shicaine CRew and I can't wait to see where they take me next.

more than that T'Amorach is a full realized world so there are scores of stories waiting to be told!

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 2 points 1 year ago

Write. First and foremost, it's about the vision, but the vision only is realized when you put pen to paper, fingers to keyboard, etc. Second, don't do it for the money -- that's wonderful if it happens, but the odds are astronomical. Do it because you can't help but tell your story.

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 [-] [Chtorrr](#)  **28** 3 points 1 year ago

What good books have you read recently?

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 3 points 1 year ago

Sadly, there isn't a lot of reading time in my life right now. So much of my time is spent in the developing phase, which is actually a lot of fun. The most recent book that stuck with me is The Good Lord Bird by James McBride.

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#### 4 ENCOURAGED

We love *original* content and self-posts! Thoughts, discussion questions, epiphanies and interesting links about authors and their work. We also encourage discussion about developments in the book world and we have a flair system.

#### 5 IMPORTANT

We don't allow personal recommendation posts. You can ask in our Weekly Recommendation Thread, consult our [Suggested Reading](#) or [What to Read](#) page, or post in </r/suggestmeabook>.

#### 6 CLICK HERE FOR THE EXTENDED RULES

Please report any comment that does not follow the rules and remember that mods have the final say.

## Weekly Thread Calendar

Monday Weekly

[What Books Are You Reading This Week?](#)  
[December 04, 2017](#)

Tuesday 1st of the month

[New Releases: November 2017](#)

Wednesday Every other week

[Genre Discussion: AMA Requests Thread: November 2017](#)

Wednesday Every other week

[Literature of the World: Literature of New Zealand: November 2017](#)

Friday Weekly

[Weekly Recommendation Thread for the week of December 01, 2017](#)

Sunday Weekly

[Weekly FAQ Thread December 03 2017: What book made you fall in love with reading?](#)



[-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 2 points 1 year ago\*

I've actually drifted into political science reading so a lot of political biographies like "The Bully Pulpit" and "Team of Rivals" by Doris Kearns Godwin, "the President is a Very Sick Man" by Matthew Algeo about President Cleavland's secret cancer surgery, "Grant's Final Victory" which is an AMAZING Book.

A lot of Middle East stuff including "Looming Tower" "13 Hours in Benghazi", "Ghost Wars" "America's Battle got the Greater Middle East", Paul Bremers "My Year in Iraq" Salmon Rushdie's "joseph Anton"

Some financial stuff like Ron Paul's "End the Fed", 13 Bankers and Meltdown.

I'm working on a cancer book so I've been reading in that world as well with Gilda Radner's "It's Always Something", Mukerjee's "Emperor of all Maladies", TRIED to get through Solzhenitsyn's "Cancer Ward"- (haven't)

Finally in Sci Fi a gift from a friend (Angie) Ready Player One which i really enjoyed

Thats been over the last year to 18 months and is an incomplete list.

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[-] [dyani318](#) 3 points 1 year ago

Where did you draw inspiration from while writing this book?

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[-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 5 points 1 year ago\*

Bathroom Walls

A world this complex draws from numerous different places, small details like Chapter 17

"It's strange how a person becomes acclimated to the atmosphere of a house. The sound of the front doorknob turning, the creak of floorboards when someone walks on them, the smell of morning coffee and bacon and eggs on the weekend. It is almost a subconscious understanding. "

Thats from my own growing up. When my father would come int throught he Garage, it would make the Sun Catchers all rattle in a certain way.

On broader themes, both John and I grew up on an Island- Seafaring was in the blood. I always found the stories of the Sea Witch and the Cutty Sark fascinating

One thing that we both value VERY highly is the strength that comes form diversity- hence the crew and characters.

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## Upcoming AMAs (ET)

Dec 04 - 2pm [Andy Weir](#)

Author of *Artemis*

Dec 05 - 2pm [Authors of ReMade](#)

Author of *ReMade: The Complete Season 1*

Dec 11 - 11am [Sarah Glenn Marsh](#)

Author of *Reign of the Fallen*

[The Complete AMA Schedule](#)

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- Any user with an extensive history of spoiling books will be banned.
- Spoiler tags are: #s for example:

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## Filter by Flair

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 4 points 1 year ago

All sorts of places. Being children of the late 60's and 70's, we grew up in the space age, the computer revolution and all sorts of social upheaval (Vietnam, Civil Rights, Equality). For me, these things shaped my world view and elements of them, I think, come out in our writing. Now those are some pretty heavy topics, but we were also the Star Wars generation and films like that probably shaped our view of how to tell a good story. When I was a kid, it felt like the written word was highly valued and it reflected in television (particularly sitcoms like, MASH, All In The Family). All of this stuff wormed into my brain and likely impact a lot of areas in my world.

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 [-] [Tacticlevil](#) 3 points 1 year ago

What was your process for worldbuilding? and how long did it take you? At what point did you say "Ok, I've got enough"? Did you ever get discouraged?

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 4 points 1 year ago

I'll let John Comment on Kwyne, but this actually started as a computer game. the technology of the day required things be broken into loadable sections hence the original idea of Zones. Then you have to address why(In the story) you need zones- hence the badlands and the Cataclysm.

As you come across each element you need to move the story or make a point, if you take the time to flesh out each part so that you have motive and motivation for all the bits and pieces- the world really starts to write itself.

I don't think we're remotely done building this world ever though we figured out one time that will all the various factions, zones and so on that there's something like 133 different sets of interactions.

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 [-] [Tacticlevil](#) 2 points 1 year ago

 That's really helpful, thank you!

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 5 points 1 year ago

Our process was one that no rational human being should ever probably follow. In the beginning we both were working on some ideas and as we were talking them through we realized that they might fit well together. The book focuses a lot on the interrelation between very different cultures and how they navigate their world when they need each other, but don't necessarily all share the

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[I am Andy Weir, author of The Martian, and my new book Artemis, out now. AMA!](#)

same worldview. It took us a long time to build it, but whether we were aware of it or not at the time, it was an investment. I don't think we got discouraged about the world building part of things, at least I didn't, and it isn't something that I necessarily think is ever finished. If I were to describe the process about writing a new world, it often felt as though things, particularly characters, revealed themselves more than we wrote them.


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 [\[-\]](#) [Willhuff058](#) 3 points 1 year ago

 What do you consider to be your greatest strength and weakness when writing?

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 [\[-\]](#) [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 3 points 1 year ago

 I think our strength is that we have fairly big imaginations and we indulge them freely in the writing process. There are ideas that aren't good ideas, but if one of us feels strongly about it, we give the other person permission to run with it even if we're not sure we agree. It may or may not end up in the book, but we honor the process.

As for weaknesses, I think it was learning the process of writing in the context of a novel. We're still learning it, but there are times you realize that you don't have nearly as strong a command of your native language as you thought you did.

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 [\[-\]](#) [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [\[S\]](#) 3 points 1 year ago

 Strength I would say the creative partnership with John- the amount of stuff we HAVEN'T used yet is amazing

Weakness- We have the collective attention span of a spastic ADHD chihuahua on a meth overdose.

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 [\[-\]](#) [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 2 points 1 year ago

 Well maybe not on a meth overdose . . .

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 [\[-\]](#) [pzTeeks](#) 3 points 1 year ago

 Greetings gentlemen, congratulations on completing your work!

As authors, can you detail a little bit about your writing process? It seems like such a monumental task and I am just curious how it affected you as the chapters progressed. Also, how did it feel when you finally hit the moment where you could confidently say you were finished?

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 [\[-\]](#) [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 4 points 1 year ago

 Thank you, I appreciate your kind words.

In the beginning it was a bit like the wild west. We had few rules, wrote whatever we wanted and then figured out how it came together (sometimes it didn't, mostly it did). The more we wrote, the more our characters started to reveal themselves to us and that made things a bit easier. It became clearer what a character would do when faced with a particular set of circumstances. The

moment when we declared it done was amazing, thought we probably stewed for a week asking ourselves, "Is it really done?"

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 3 points 1 year ago

Thank you!

Our process is a little haphazard- we discuss a lot of ideas, mixed in with that are the things that we WANT to say- our commentary on the world if you will.

We discuss and write and eventually hammer the ideas into shape.

It is NOT the most efficient process, but we write for the enjoyment of it, the opportunity to discuss ideas with one of the most creative people I know (Don't tell him I said that, it will go straight to his head)

So efficiency is not our primary focus- ideas are.

that said we are trying to be a little better about getting the sequel out a lot sooner!

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 [-] [xolthamus](#) 2 points 1 year ago

How was your process for co-authoring. Where did you find it difficult to agree? Where was it easy?

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 5 points 1 year ago

I write the even words, John writes the "Odd" ones

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 3 points 1 year ago

Kerry writes the even words, I write the odd ones. Actually, it was easier than you might imagine. We've known each other for a long time so have learned how to give each other space to develop an idea. We've also learned how to disagree and when to just put the disagreement away for a little while and let things percolate. The thing that has always sustained us is humor. We both have an appreciation for the absurd and it plays out in our writing process. It also probably wastes a tremendous amount of time, but without it I don't think the book would have happened.

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 3 points 1 year ago

Agree!

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 2 points 1 year ago

Oh sure, go for the short pithy, easy answer and make me do all the work.

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 1 point 1 year ago

As always

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 [-] [jfracchia](#) **AMA Author** 1 point 1 year ago

Right.

[-] **Chtorrr** 28 2 points 1 year ago

Is a hotdog a sandwich?

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[-] **jfracchia** **AMA Author** 3 points 1 year ago

Well there are many things that one has to consider. Is it an all beef frank, or your standard parts is parts special? Is it infused with cheesy goodness? Is it typical size or foot long? Is it a hot dog at all or does it tread into trendier areas such as brauts? One cannot just simply go around waving their hand and declaring things sandwiches or not sandwiches without first considering the deeper implications.

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[-] **Kforrestal** **AMA Author** [S] 3 points 1 year ago

Well this is an existential question that i would turn to Aristotle for. I think, if Hot Dogs were available in his time, he would deconstruct the issue to see that meat surrounded on two sides would constitute a sandwich.

There remains the issue that the meat is surrounded on THREE sides by bread so perhaps a sandwich is a subset of carbohydrate encased meat products Starting with the Hot pocket-Six sides, Pita Pocket- Five sides, Pig in a blanket- 4 sides, Hot Dog roll- 3 Sides, Sandwich - 2 sides, Open face sandwich- one side and today's Blue Plate Special

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[-] **jfracchia** **AMA Author** 2 points 1 year ago

So what you're saying, Kerry, is the amount of carbohydrate based wrapping is significant?

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[-] **Kforrestal** **AMA Author** [S] 1 point 1 year ago

Critical I'd say John- gram for gram the decisive factor

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[-] **Kforrestal** **AMA Author** [S] 1 point 1 year ago

Small Correction folks- the book title is "The Myst Clipper Shicaine"

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[-] **jfracchia** **AMA Author** 1 point 1 year ago

I still think we should have called it, "Bob."

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[-] **Kforrestal** **AMA Author** [S] 1 point 1 year ago

Hey all- John has run off to do some Improv, but I'll man the fort for another bit before calling it a day.



(I'm feeling a bit like Robert Stack in Airplane)

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 1 point 1 year ago

OK- it's been about 60 minutes since the last question so we'll call that a wrap!

Thanks for the great questions. Remember that for ONE DAY- the book is a free Kindle Download! Lotsa scifi goodness.

Read- REVIEW and thanks always

Fair wind and sweet air to you all

Kerry and John Signing off from the bridge of the Shicaine!

(and Gedrick, Derring, Hemmingway, Chapman, The Chief, Tarro, Hennix, Damien Cairo. . . . . )

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 [-] [Kforrestal](#) **AMA Author** [S] 1 point 1 year ago

Thanks to all- the Free Kindle Download got nearly 300 responses!

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