



FLAT MOUNTAIN  
**PUBLISHING**

# My Writing Process

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Sohrab Rezvan

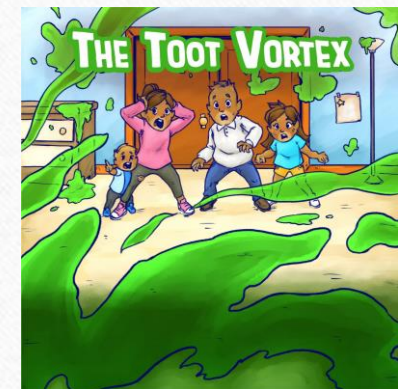
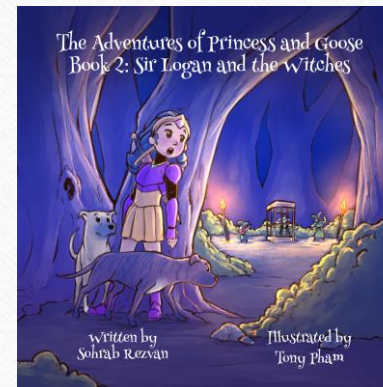
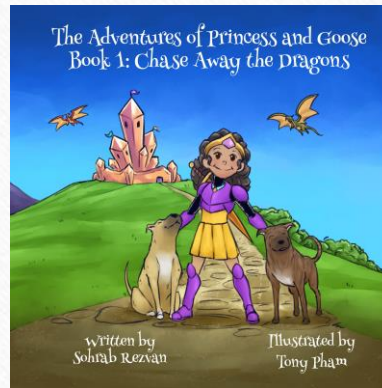
Children's Book Author

and

Founder of Flat Mountain  
Publishing

# Agenda

- About Me
- My Perspective
- My Writing Process
- Questions



# About Me

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- 12+ years in the field of data analytics
- 4 years in the field of emergency management
- BS, Computer Science
- MS, Information Systems
- Graduate Certificate, Web-based Software Engineering
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Founded Flat Mountain Publishing in 2021



# My Perspective

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- How does a career in emergency management, programming, artificial intelligence, and the prevention of tax fraud prepare me in any way for writing children's books?
- How is any of this information helpful in writing children's books?

# My Perspective

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- What are my skills?
- How do I apply my skills to children's books?
- Strong organizational skills
- Problem solving
- Technical writing
- Proposal writing
- Project and team management
- Communicating technical concepts to non-technical audiences

# My Perspective

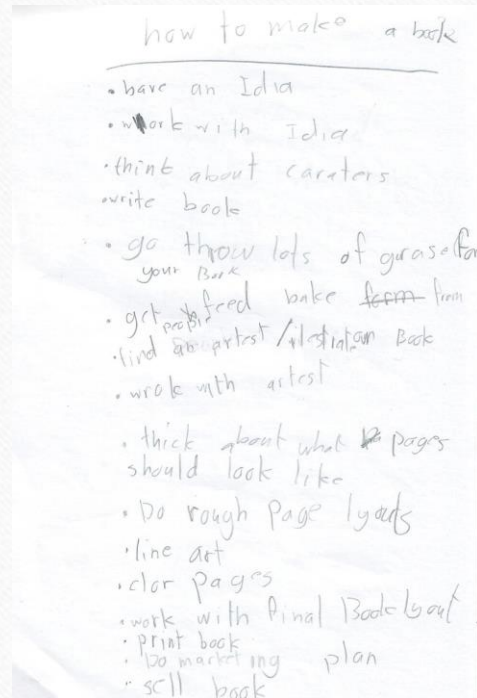
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- What are my personal interests?
- How do I apply my personal interests to children's books?
- Science Fiction
- Fantasy
- Comic Books and Graphic Novels
- Traveling
- Being silly with my kids
- My dogs...when they're not barking for no reason

# My Writing Process

(for self-publishing)

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1. Get an Idea / Brainstorm
2. Expand on the Idea
3. Character Development
4. Write
5. Revise
6. Initial Book Layout
7. Revise Again
8. Artwork
9. Other Book Material
10. Publication
11. Marketing

# My Writing Process: Get an Idea / Brainstorm

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- Influenced by my skills and personal interests
- Reading, conducting research, browsing social media
- Ideas can come from anywhere, but usually my kids say something ridiculous
- “I mean, that's a tad aggressive, you know. But hey, I shouldn't bring an umbrella to a brainstorm, so I appreciate you getting the ball rolling, Nate.”  
– Ted Lasso



# My Writing Process: Expand on the Idea

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- More brainstorming – write down everything!
  - Powerful lines
  - Partial ideas
  - Cool scenes
  - Plot twists
  - Options
- Iterate on these ideas until the characters and plot are more well defined
- “I kept always two books in my pocket: one to read, one to write in.” – Robert Louis Stevenson

# My Writing Process: Character Development

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- Think about the characters and their personalities
- Write down these traits
- Think through how the characters may change throughout the story
- Consider how you are going to communicate character personalities (e.g., through a subtle action, through an overt statement, through an illustration)

# My Writing Process: Write

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- You need to write...should be obvious, but this isn't necessarily easy
- If you hit a wall, take a break
  - If you get particularly critical feedback, print it out and think about it over time
- Don't delete anything (if I completely rewrite something, I keep an "archive" copy)
- "Start writing, no matter what. The water does not flow until the faucet is turned on." – Louis L'Amour

# My Writing Process: Revise

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- I go through lots of revisions
- Read the text aloud
- Examine word choice
- I read early drafts to my kids and other family members
- “You can always edit a bad page. You can’t edit a blank page.” – Jodi Picoult

# My Writing Process: Initial Book Layout

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Page #	Orientation	Text	Art Direction
Cover	Front	Super cool cover design	based on ad page from <i>Princess and Goose Book 2</i>
1	R	Title Page	title on top, art on bottom
2	L	Copyright Page	N/A
3	R	The Smith family loves to toot. Daddy loves to toot, Sally loves to toot, and Freddy loves to toot.  Well, most of the Smith family loves to toot.	3 family members standing in a circle tooting and laughing; some stylized toot noises of "PFFFTTT"; Mommy standing with her hands on her hips giving them a stern look
4	L	Sometimes more than one of them will toot at the same time. This makes everyone laugh hysterically.  Everyone but Mommy.	3 family members still tooting, Mommy scolding the family, wagging a finger  2 page spread
5	R	"Stop all the tooting or you'll make a toot vortex," Mommy warns.  "What's a toot vortex?" Freddy asks between giggles.	2 page spread

- “A reminder to watch how much telling you are doing. Practice showing what you're trying to convey.”  
– A Reviewer of My Draft

# My Writing Process: Revise Again

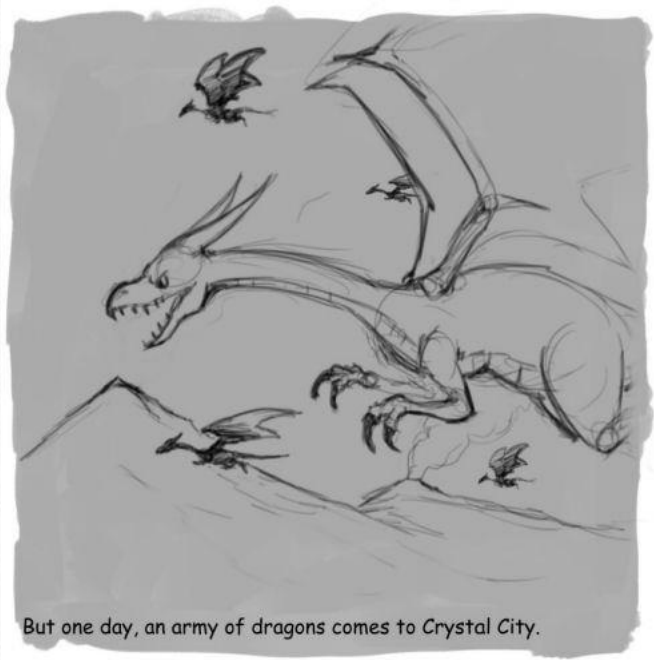
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- I go through lots of revisions
- Conduct peer reviews of the manuscript (paid and free options available)
- Have friends and family read early drafts to their kids

# My Writing Process: Artwork

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- Every illustrator will work differently and has a different style
- Think about the look you're going for with your book
- Find a partner you trust and works well with your personality and approach
  - Flexibility is still important (i.e., the author is not always right)
- For *The Adventures of Princess and Goose* series, Tony Pham of TKMV Studio is my illustrator – I follow his process on artwork
- We started with a “try out page,” then signed a contract and worked on character designs



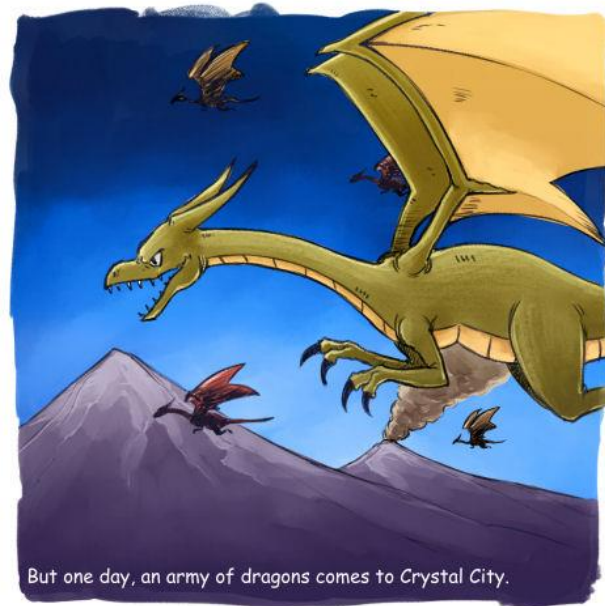
But one day, an army of dragons comes to Crystal City.

Rough Page Layout



But one day, an army of dragons comes to Crystal City.

Line Art



But one day, an army of dragons comes to Crystal City.

Colored Page



But one day, an army of dragons comes to Crystal City.

Final Details



# My Writing Process: Other Book Material

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- Copyright Page
- About Page(s) for Author and Illustrator
- Review Request from Readers
- Description Information (i.e., back of book)
- Book Metadata (e.g., reading age, book categories)
- Book Previews for More Books

# My Writing Process: Publication

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- Purchase an ISBN
  - Some distributors provide free ISBNs, but it may be worthwhile to purchase your own ISBN
- Create the cover and manuscript files suitable for publication
- Order a printed proof (optional, but recommended)
- Submit your book to one or more distributors (e.g., KDP, IngramSpark, Smashwords)

# My Writing Process: Marketing

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- Personal website
- Social media
- Local bookstores
- Libraries
- Book shows
- ...Maybe the focus of another presentation in the future

# Questions

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- Facebook and Instagram: @FlatMountainPublishing
  - info@flatmountainpublishing.com
  - [www.flatmountainpublishing.com](http://www.flatmountainpublishing.com)
  - [Amazon Author Page](#)
  - [Goodreads Author Page](#)
- Please consider leaving a review for my books on Amazon and Goodreads. Thank you!