

## **THE AUTHORS SHOW – Mystery/Suspense/Thriller**

**Author: Guy R. Phillips**

50 Best Authors Essay by Guy Phillips

I have always retained a penchant for writing. Back in grade school I won 2 essays in 5th and 6th grade which I realize doesn't qualify me as a writer but it makes me feel like I have something special to bring to the table. I didn't pursue writing as a career because back then there were more pressing issues, like food, clothing and shelter! My parents were hard working individuals but we struggled as a family to make ends meet so after doing odd jobs and a paper route (remember that?) at age 15 I went to work. I'm not complaining. Life has been hard but I managed my own business for 30 years, and have pursued writing as a hobby during that time. My first book "Road Games" was published back in 2008. It is a satire of the way we drive and driving etiquette, written mostly to vent my frustrations at bad drivers! Still, I feel it is a good book for new drivers to learn what to expect when they get out on the road with the rest of us.

After that book, I wanted to write a more serious story, maybe one that would lend some credibility to my writing since I wasn't able to procure a Harvard Literary degree.

This was in the 2008-2010 period when there was a lot of political unrest after the housing bubble burst. I became involved in a local tea party and learned a lot about the political process. From there I went on to become a city councilman for Scottsdale. Those times made me think of what the country could be like if we had another civil war, not North against South, but Republicans against Socialists. I began to formulate a story around this thought which led me to write "Of Courage & Character."

I wanted to show how a person, born into the socialist world could, by circumstance, be thrust into life altering situations and realize the eventual conclusion that we are all individuals and have a right to exist. At the same time, I knew the story had to be exciting so not to bore the reader, so I wrote in a lot of action sequences to keep the reader entertained as well.

The cast of characters starts with the main character, Richard. Richard is a well do to son of a General from the Union Army. He is strong, handsome and smart, yet humble.

Sonja, Richards love interest, is a young Russian girl with a mind of her own. Sonja's free spirit and love of life enchants Richard to go beyond what he would normally think to do.

Ryan, the Bruce Willis character who pushes Richard to the man within him. A spy for the other side, Ryan has a bag of tricks that leaves the reader wondering who and what he is really up to.

Greg, Richards childhood friend. Conceited, self centered, without remorse. Greg is the devil's advocate in this story that helps Richard decide what course to take.

Then there's the secondary characters: Richards parents, Maria the maid who is like a second mother to him, Yackovic the storekeeper who mentors Richard unconsciously and has a surprise in store, Mr. Thurman, Richards boss who has made it his life's work to torment Richard, and a few others to compliment the storyline.

The following excerpt is from the prologue to this book.

For a young, entitled son of a retired four-star General in the New Union Army, I thought my life would be quite normal, void of any real consequence. Confident and secure in the knowledge of socialism and equality, there would have to be some monumental life-changing circumstances to persuade me to think otherwise. As in the excerpt below, no one can really know their inner being and strength until forces beyond their control dictate otherwise.

“Richard! We're trapped!” yelled Sonja, her adrenalin pumping.

“Actually, I've been here before! Hold on and stay down!” I yelled as I floored the truck. Bullets were flying all around us as the garbage truck got up to speed and hit the military vehicle with full force, knocking it over to the side and clearing our way. The other trucks started chasing us, one of them shooting with a .50 caliber machine gun bolted to the top of the cab. The large bullets were ripping through the steel truck bed as we continued down the road away from the Capital. Then with a roar of gunfire they blew out the front tire.

“Hold on Sonja!” I yelled as the truck swerved from left to right. I tried holding it steady, but the weight of the truck was too much. The truck tipped and rolled on its side, pinning us down in the cab. A cloud of dust obscured our vision as we slid down the embankment and came to rest against an abutment. Dazed, I unbuckled my seat belt and climbed over to where Sonja was still buckled in.

“Sonja! Are you okay?” I gasped, looking over at her.

“Yes,” she slowly answered. “You?”

“Yes,” I replied. “Let’s get out of here!” I removed her seat belt and reached for the driver door to escape the smoldering truck.

Then we both heard a click. As the dust cleared I looked up to see a security agent standing over us, his 9mm drawn and pointing right at me.

“End of the line!” he said as he cocked his gun. I shielded Sonja's body and braced for what could only be the end. If this was it for us at least we were together. I held her tight for what seemed an eternity.

This is my story.....

So there you have it. I hope this entices you to read the book.

I like to say that it is adaptable to a screenplay. The characters remind me of a Die Hard action film, while at the same time I try to get the reader to think about their own convictions. Would you do the same thing our Richard would do?"