



### **Have the Right Attitude**

Simple: If you don't write, you'll die. Never forget this. If you don't write, you'll die. And you won't go to heaven because you didn't use your gift. You will be forgotten and likely your grave will go unmarked except for the pile of pigeon, squirrel and dog shit that will rise into the night sky every full moon. Drunks will piss on your pile. Children will throw candy bar wrappers and used gum on your pile. But you'll be dead when this happens. You'll be burning in Hell. So remember: If you don't write, you'll die and your grave will be a garbage dump that will be a black eye for your entire family who will disown you even though you're dead.

Welcome to the real world of writing.

## **Do Things**

Do as many things as you can. The more you do things, the more you'll have to write about and the more realistic and expansive your writing will be. And if you want to write things that no one has written about before, then do things that no one has done before. For instance, learn how to fly without an airplane, balloon, jet, cannon fired projectile, catapult, insult to 300 pound Amazon woman with arms bigger than your imagination and, of course, massive injection of helium. If you don't want to fly, try walking on a cloud. You'll wish you had learned how to fly so you could live another day to write about it.

BTW, make notes of everything you do. If you sneeze, write about it...how you felt before and after, the volume and quality of sound, its effect on those around you and a detailed description of the setting and circumstances surrounding the sneeze. Do this for every action and activity in your life.

## **Have Interests**

Be interested in everything. You don't even have to do anything active...you just have to want to be doing it. That tropical paradise in your lead character's mind may be galaxies away but it's close in the character's mind and that makes it close in the reader's mind which of course makes the character that much more real in the reader's mind. So, you have to be interested in enough in that tropical paradise to pass the interest on to your character.

Or you could just go to Veradero for the hell of it.

## **Question Things**

Anything that exists is questionable. Like, why is it here, what does it do, how can it be monetized? If you see someone shoot another person on a subway, don't just think: Jeez, what a murderer. No. Don't do that. Ask yourself: Why did he shoot that man? What, in his tortured past caused him to do this?

It might help to do this while you're running away from the shooter or playing dead. Just don't be too quick to judge others. Can you imagine writing about a subway

shooter and all you can say about him is, "He had a gun. He knew how to shoot it. He knew how to aim. He was a bad man with a gun."

But...did his mommy love him?

### **Read**

Read as much as you can, but especially read the authors who inspire you and who you want to be if you could only steal their lives through literary magic or murder.

I knew a man who wanted to write novels but hated reading them. He read technical books and wrote a book about racing. The technical details were accurate but the novel had no real story and was like opening a can of beer only to find that there's no beer in the can. But it had a nice label with no spelling mistakes.

### **Learn**

You don't need a PhD to write a novel, but you do need to know things. That means research...in depth study of topics that are relevant to your books. If you have a character who works in a meat packing factory and most of the story takes place in the meat packing factory then you'd better do some research into meat packing factories and the people who work in them or your story won't pack enough meat to make the character or setting believable.

Which could lead to death threats from readers who work in meat packing factories.

### **Live in a Cave**

The best writers live in caves far away from the maddening world they're writing about. Looking at the current quality of most of the writing in his world, I'd say that more writers should live in caves.

You need to be lonely, miserable, insecure, sexless, funless, broke, tortured, psychotic, shunned, stunned, paranoid, vindictive, hateful, loving and a few other things that you'll need to have something to write about.

A good bear free cave will offer you all these things.

### **Define Your "Really" Job**

Your real work is writing. Your survival work is whatever boring job you have that pays the bills. This is your *not really* job but everyone thinks it's your real work and that this is what you've wanted all your life and that you're somehow happy wasting five days a week making money for someone else. But you don't get paid for your writing until long after it's finished, not before. So everybody slaps you on the back and says, "Nice hobby."

Throw these people out of your cave, or out of your car while you're breaking the speed limit on the freeway.

### **Write What You Write**

Don't be afraid to write what you write. Some people won't like what you write and others will want to kill you. Still others will like what you write and come to your cave to pat you on the back and say, "Golly gee, you sure write swell. And I have an idea for a bestselling novel that will be made into a movie sure thing. If you write it for me, I'll give you a credit. No, I mean it. Here's my idea...a man and woman on a boat that's sinking and there's only one life jacket and neither of them can swim and there's a killer great white shark circling the boat and making supernatural sounds. Whatcha think?"

Write so that people will hate you and want to kill you.

### **Don't Eat**

Food will distract you from your writing unless you order out. However, most catering and food delivery services don't deliver to caves.

Every time you feel hungry...have a cup coffee.

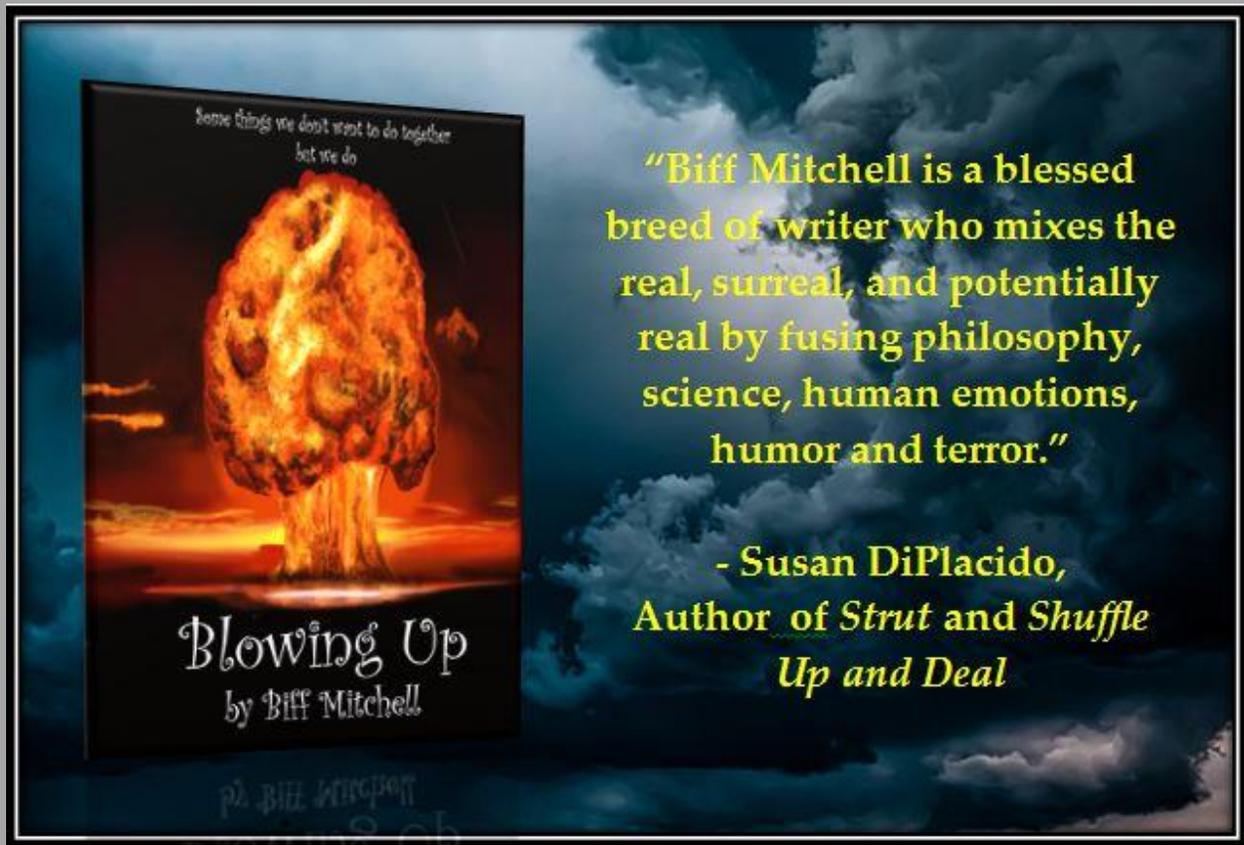
Coffee is your only friend.

Coffee will never betray you.

Forget food, drink coffee.

## HEY LOOK! JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS!

At a loss about what to give those people difficult to buy for because that already have everything they need or they need a Porsche and you're a bit short on the price for a new one and you don't want to give them a used Porsche? Well, look no further. You can give them the gift of apocalyptic laughter.



Now available through Double Dragon Publishing (an imprint of Fiction4All)

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About the picture at the top of this article: the Westmoreland Street bridge in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. (Has absolutely nothing to do with this article.)

## HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO WIN A DOOMSDAY COFFEE MUG?



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