



Matthew Cushing

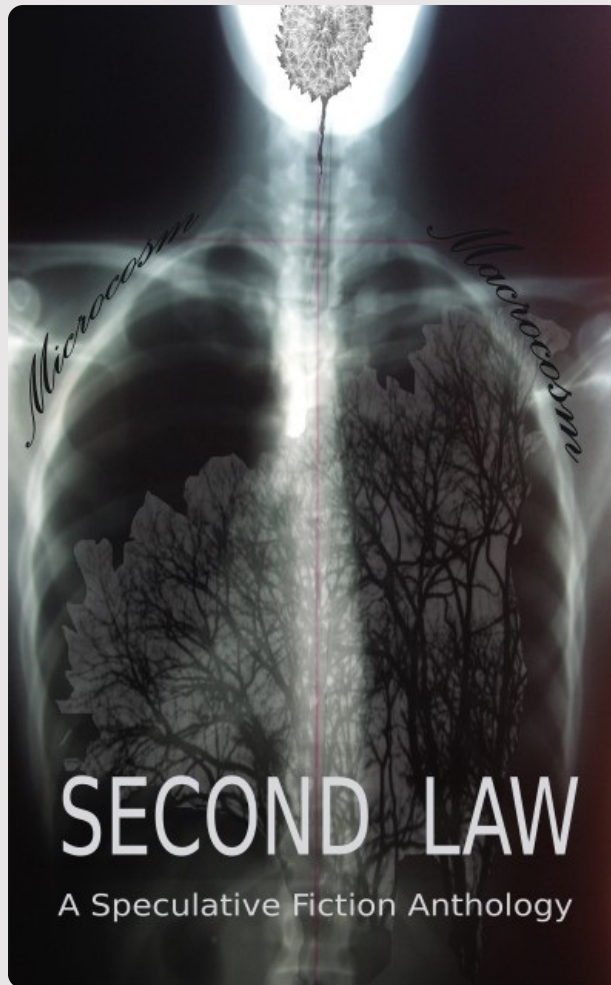
Author, Editor, Reviewer, Blogger

Newsletter 002, 2021Q3

Site: www.matthewcushing.com Twitter: [@mhcushing](https://twitter.com/mhcushing)

Hi everyone! It's that time again. Here's the second ever installment of my quarterly newsletter which includes the latest news on works-in-progress, publications, and blog posts. I've also included an excerpt from one of my stories. Feel free to forward this email to anyone who enjoys speculative fiction. Thanks!

News & Notes



- **Second Law**, the second anthology from Speculative Fiction Writers, is days away from publication. This collection contains my short story "The Beacon" about an enigmatic guardian protecting the just from nefarious space pirates. Check back on [my website](#) for the final publication date.



- I am honored to have been asked to participate in the first ever **Self-Published Science Fiction Competition** (SPSFC) as a judge. Joining a group of ~70 judges organized into ten teams, we will review 300 books throughout the upcoming nine months, eventually identifying a single winner.
- I'm excited to read so many great self-published science fiction novels. There is an entire sea of books outside of traditional publishing.
- Follow me or @SPSFC on Twitter to keep tabs on the competition.



- During the virtual ceremony for the 2021 Roswell Awards, my short story "The Rite to Vote" was performed by noted science fiction actor David Blue of Stargate: Universe and Henry Danger fame. He brought the characters to life in an engaging performance.
- I am still actively working to get this short story published.

Recent Blog Posts

- How much editing is needed to be ready to publish? Find out [my opinion](#) on the subject.
- What actors seem perfectly typecast as the Dark One? Read my [Top Ten Portrayals of the Devil](#) in movies.
- [Book Review: The Keep](#). When is a vampire not a vampire? When it's Molasar in F. Paul Wilson's WWII-set tale.
- Peruse my ruminations on the whole [Roswell Awards](#) experience.
- First Encounters, containing my short story "Blue Note G", is currently available as an e-book or in print [on Amazon](#).

Writing Excerpt - *Blue Note G*

Gaspard closed his eyes and cut in on his clarinet with a long blue note that pierced over the rhythm section and called for all to pay attention. His fingers flew over the keys as he frolicked and toyed through the melody of the song, taking it to places he didn't realize it could go until it was there. He thought his heart would explode from the pure joy of playing. The clarinet was there for him, and he was unstoppable. In music. In life. In everything. He felt invincible, and his solo bounced down triads and flipped up octaves in conquering response.

His mind raced through images of joy: his family, his music, and... Julianne. He thought about the inviting warmth of her smile, the almond shape of her eyes and the sultry looks they gave, the softness of her hair as it fell over her shoulder when she wore it down and every blossoming curve of her body. He could smell her coconut shampoo. Her face lingered in his thoughts, and his music expressed his attraction, his wanting, his lust.

As he played, Gaspard somehow knew she was there with him. He opened his eyes and found Julianne watching and listening next to the open lobby door. She waved when Gaspard saw her, and his ears burned and heartbeat raced to the tempo of the song. He played for her from his heart, and she smiled and bounced on her feet to the music of his solo. He burst with joy and reveled in ecstasy, and his music erupted and soared with him.

Then Billy Ray sidled up next to Julianne and slipped his arm around her waist. He whispered something in Julianne's ear, which made her laugh.

Gaspard's breath caught and his solo slipped into a minor key, drawing on the darker tones of the song. When Julianne followed Billy Ray into the lobby, Gaspard's solo turned pained and haunted, the joy of the moment draining away.

Bad Writing Joke

A priest, a minister, and a rabbit walk into a blood bank. The rabbit says, "I think I'm a type-o." Get it?

Please check out my website at www.matthewcushing.com for the latest and greatest information on my stories and novels, in-person events, my reading list, and blog posts on any and all topics concerning science fiction, fantasy, horror, or the supernatural. Follow me on Twitter at [@mhcushing](https://twitter.com/mhcushing). Comments and retweets are always welcome!

Klaatu Barada Nikto, Live Long and Prosper, and Nanoo Nanoo!

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