

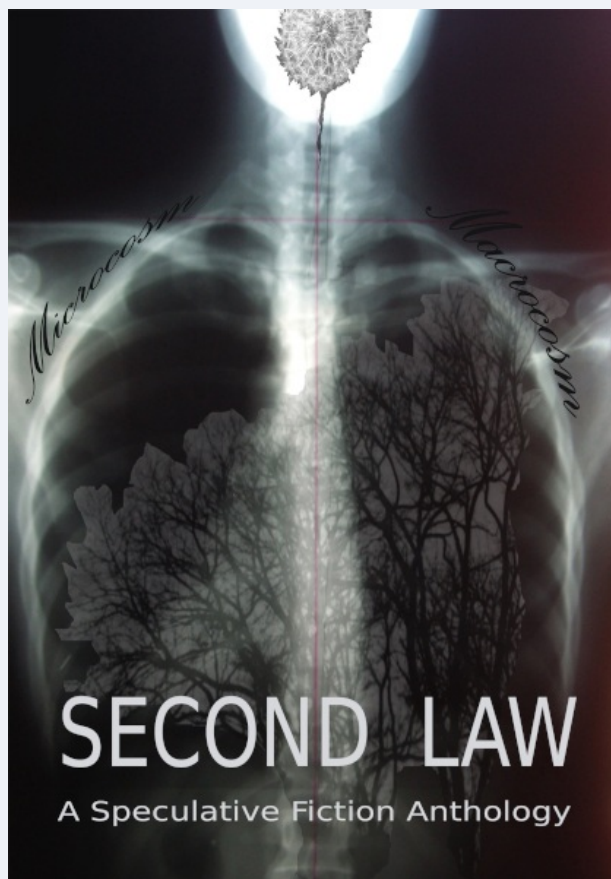


Newsletter 004, 2022Q1

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

Though it's already February, let me give a belated welcome to 2022! So many exciting writing opportunities for the year, including a couple of literary contests, the targeted completion of my debut novel, and the Colorado Gold Rush Writers Conference in September. All along the way, I'll keep the latest news, book reviews, and blog posts coming. Here's to us all having a successful 2022!

News & Notes



Second Law Paperback Now Available

The second anthology from [Speculative Fiction Writers](#), an online critique group associated with [Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers](#), *Second Law* focuses on the lesser known edicts that affect society every bit as much as the main ones.

From robot labor laws and corporate espionage, to gods and immortals asking "What is just?," to aliens and faeries trying to understand the motivations of humans. The book includes my story *The Beacon* about space pirates who forget a basic tenet of frontier justice.

[Purchase *Second Law*](#)

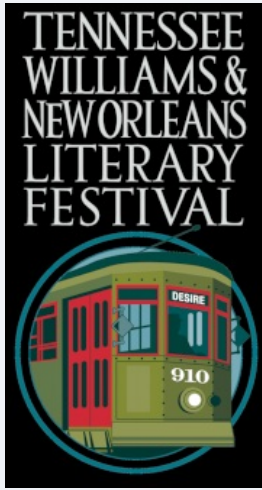


SPSFC Semi-Finalists Announced

After much reading and several difficult decisions, the ten judging teams of the inaugural Self-Published Science Fiction Competition have announced the thirty semi-finalists. Team Meteor, of which I'm a judge, selected *All the Whys of Delilah's Demise* by Neve Maslakovic, *Resistance* by Mikhaeyla Kopievsky, and *Shadows of Mars* by I.O. Adler.

Judging will continue through June when the

Finalists and Winners will be announced.



Tennessee Williams Literary Awards

With a story steeped in jazz music and the supernatural, I submitted my short story *Intersection* to this year's Tennessee Williams Literary Awards for short fiction. (Read an excerpt below.) I thought the tone and theme of my piece would make a compelling entry.

Results should be announced in the next several weeks. I'm keeping my fingers crossed!



Roswell Award - Take Two!

Still enjoying my success as a Finalist in last year's competition, I again submitted a very short story (fewer than 1500 words) to this year's contest. *Legacy*, set in the future, follows an alien expedition sent to make contact with Earth. In finding humanity's idyllic society, they make a stunning discovery of what it took to achieve utopia.

Check future newsletters for an excerpt from the story.

Recent Blog Posts

- Looking for a good horror story? Think things can go wrong when four horror writers spend a weekend in a haunted house as a publicity stunt? What if the house is looking for publicity, too? Read my review of [Kill Creek](#) by [Scott Thomas](#). Just remember to leave the lights on.
- Do you hate dealing with people, instead preferring to stay in and watch TV? So does Murderbot. Check out my review of [Martha Wells' All Systems Red](#) to learn more about this introverted automaton.
- If you love science in your science fiction, read what I thought of [Project Hail Mary](#) by [Andy Weir](#), a disaster story turned survival tale turned buddy adventure.

Writing Excerpt - *Intersection*

Robbie was staring at the dust bunnies under his dresser when the doorbell rang, startling him. The 'ding-dong' reverberated inside his skull like clanging church bells. He clasped his head and stifled the urge to vomit.

"Hold on! Hold on!" Robbie hurried to the door. "I'm coming." In an undershirt, boxers, and socks, he cracked open the door.

An older, portly man wearing glasses and dressed like a professor tilted his head and peered back. A stuffed satchel and a trumpet case hung from his hands.

He looked familiar, but Robbie couldn't place where he'd seen him.

"You Robbie Johns?" the man asked, a slight Cajun twang to his voice.

"Can I help you?"

"Might be." The man nodded, considering the question. "Might be I can help you, too."

What? Robbie stepped back, inadvertently opening the door further. The man ambled inside, removing his tweed cap.

"I'm Al Rayure." He set his bags on the floor. "I got your name and address from, uh, Mr., uh..."

Olskratt? Robbie's heart raced.

The man's hands patted each of his shirt and pants pockets. "I've got the card here, somewhere..." he muttered as he continued to search. "Ah! Here it is." He pulled the scrap of paper from his breast pocket and read it. "Mr. Mancetti. He said you needed a teacher."

Mr. Mancetti? From the symphony? That cheeky bastard.

"There must be some mistake." Robbie opened the door all the way and gestured Mr. Rayure back out. "I don't want a teacher."

Inspirational Quotes

"In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you."

- Mortimer J. Adler

“Books are good company, in sad times and happy times, for books are people-- people who have managed to stay alive by hiding between the covers of a book.”

- *E.B. White*

“Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read.”

- *Groucho Marx*

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! And if you know someone who loves speculative fiction, please forward them a copy of this newsletter and encourage them to sign up!

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

Matthew Cushing

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