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A brave new world: Graduate student creates fictional realm in fantasy novel

December 01, 2009 ¦ Carmen P. Fleischauer

When Liberty University graduate student Paul Watson recently published his first novel, “Protect,” he did not stick to typical fantasy characters like wizards, elves and dwarfs, but created his own races.

“More malevolent races and characters have a gothic font when they talk, and more elegant characters have a cursive font,” Watson says.

Even at a young age, Watson began creating elaborate characters and plot lines. As a teenager he worked with video game making software to invent entire new worlds and species of characters. He lost his work due to a computer crash, but the world and characters stayed in his mind until he brought them to life again in 2004 as a freshman at Liberty University.

Having always been interested in books like “The Lord of the Rings” and “Star Wars,” Watson decided to try his hand at developing his own alternate world. When “five pages became 91,” he knew he needed to finish the story.

“All in all it took about two and a half years for the first draft. During that time I took about a six-month hiatus and worked on another project. I finished [the novel] in April 2007,” Watson recalls.

After completing the first draft, Watson sought help from Dr. Elmer Towns, Liberty co-founder and dean of the School of Religion. Towns introduced Watson to Les Stobbe of the Christian Writers Guild, and together they taught Watson how to write a proposal and present it to publishers. Their efforts turned into a contract from Tate Publishing in July 2008.

Curtis Wrinkle, executive editor at Tate Publishing, said “Protect” is one of the best fantasy projects he’s worked on.

“Paul’s story was well structured and his setting and characters were unique and well defined … the story was incredibly easy to jump into and become a part of — full of plot twists, fascinating characters and intriguing subplots,” Wrinkle says.

“Protect” is currently being sold in local Barnes & Noble bookstore locations; those who purchase the book will receive a free audio version. To check out more about “Protect,” visit www.protectnovel.com or go to the Protect Novel by Paul J. Watson Facebook page.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Originally from Raleigh, N.C., Paul Watson met and was impacted by the late Dr. Jerry Falwell at his high school, North Raleigh Christian Academy. After attending Liberty University events — College For A Weekend and Friendly Fridays — Watson felt that God was calling him here.

He completed an undergraduate degree in communication studies with a specialization in mass media and is now in the final year of his master’s of communication studies degree. Choosing to stay at Liberty for his master’s seemed like an obvious choice. His acceptance into the program as a graduate student assistant (GSA) also helped to solidify that decision.

“This university has had a huge impact on my life … I know that this is one of the best decisions I’ve ever made.” After graduation in May 2010, Watson plans to utilize his creativity in the workplace. He is also currently working on a prequel to “Protect.”