

## The Sins of Maggie Black: Latest News

Excerpt, Chapter One:

*“Billy, Billy,” she whispers, inches from his face. “Sweetie, wake up.” The little boy lies on his back, fast asleep. She brushes her hand over his spikey blond hair and he moans, turning his head to the side. She places her palm on his chest and gently pushes down a few times. “Billy, it’s Momma—come on, we have to get up.” He starts to whimper and she puts her fingers over his mouth. “Sh, sh, sh—come on baby, let’s wake up for Momma.”*

*She stares at his sleeping bag and the small, musty suitcase she packed with some of his clothes, a few of his toys. Illuminated in the glow of a nightlight, they lie in the center of the floor—all ready to go—and she thought he could at least take the bag. But he won’t wake up without a fuss. She’ll have to carry him, and now there’ll be two trips, or maybe she should leave his suitcase and bag? No, he’ll need them.*

*Side stepping around the kitchen table, her heart jumps when the suitcase clicks into a chair. Clearing the living room, she slips out the front doorway. Insects drone hypnotically as she hurries to the van, calling more softly now in the dead of night, but filling her heart with wonder. She is leaving.*

So begins a fateful journey for Maggie Black, a young mother desperate to escape her past and discover a better life. Her story, and the story of the characters she becomes entangled with, animate the pages of my novel, *The Sins of Maggie Black*. Soon to be published, this novel has been a journey of my own—an attempt to reveal the deep mystery of the human heart in a style that pulls no punches, that shows rather than tells, and is, I hope, entertaining. Just as Maggie often finds herself at the edge—the border between things known and unknown—so do I, about to embark on the next part of my journey—the publication and marketing of a novel.

The journey of a writer, or anyone who endeavors to create something artistic out of nothing, is never an easy one. There is little pay, low odds of success, and no clear path forward. You face the blank page, work alone, and then endure veiled and not-so-veiled insults regarding your career choice: “But what’s your real job?” When the economy dips, your products and services are the first to take a hit. But the urgent need to create in those predisposed is a strong one, and must fulfill some basic need of the psyche. And so, after writing this novel, I waded through the nerve-racking world of self-publishing and self-marketing, hopeful of some kind of future payoff.

As mentioned in my last blog post (four months ago—and I do apologize) I had attempted to publish the traditional way using literary agents, but with no luck. Not one of the 40 agents I contacted was

interested. This surprised me, as I've seen the quality of many traditionally published novels. Whatever the reasons, I had to move on. After much research (and sore eyes) on the internet, I found a way forward to self-publish using Createspace for the printed paperback version, and Kindle Direct Publishing for the ebook version. Both are associated with Amazon, the behemoth company both praised and reviled—yet no other entity came close in providing the tools needed for a crack at success in a very tough market.

I'm not yet sure when I will publish on Amazon, as I'm attempting to procure some advance reviews, which should be complete and ready to post (preferably on Amazon) by the publication date or shortly thereafter—and that takes time. It should be no later than February of next year, if not earlier. If my novel seems like it would be a good read, please consider doing a review. You can see the new cover and a pitch or blurb on my Novel Page. Right now I have the PDF file to offer, but soon I'll have the paperback and ebook versions done. Let me know if you can help me on my journey—I would appreciate it.