

# A CONVERSATION with SHAWN CORRIDAN about *GOLIATH*

## TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF, HOW AND WHEN YOU STARTED WRITING.

I started writing bits and pieces in elementary school and continued through junior high school and high school. Nothing serious. Compositions from Creative Writing assignments. But I always enjoyed those classes as much as I did the Literature classes. I started seriously considering writing during my years at Jefferson Junior High. They had a strong Literature curriculum there. That's when I fell in love with Twain, Melville, Dickens, Hemingway, Steinbeck etc.

## WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE YOUR NOVEL?

I was brought in to a producer's office at Sony around 2005. He knew I was a Florida Boy and had been raised around boats and water and asked me if I had any stories that involved tankers and the Arctic. I didn't. But being the type that is always willing to please (as in: desperate for a paycheck) I told him I could come up with one. So I mapped out the story for *Goliath*. Then I thought about Gary Waid, who knows as much about boats as Bligh, Ahab or Noah. So I contacted him and asked him to write the screenplay with me. It was the beginning of a long and beautiful relationship.

## HOW DID YOU USE YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE OR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND TO ENRICH YOUR STORY?

I am an English Literature major so I am familiar with some of the finest stories ever written

## ANYTHING AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL IN YOUR NOVEL?

Oh God yes! A protagonist with a chip on his shoulder? A man who has failed miserably and waiting forever for an opportunity? A hero with a checkered past? That's Gary and me. And the group of ruffians around Sonny Wade? Those are amalgams of our own friends, past and present.

## ARE ANY CHARACTERS BASED ON PEOPLE YOU KNOW?

Nearly all of them. Maybe to a fault.

## WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE OR MOST SYMPATHETIC CHARACTER? AND WHY?

Sonny Wade. The poor sonofabitch has suffered years for a crime he did not commit. The easy out would be to tell the truth. But he's a martyr. And pays dearly for his code of ethics. Ya gotta love the guy. Redemption? Love it. Who doesn't?

## WHO IS YOUR LEAST SYMPATHIC CHARACTER? AND WHY?

Dan Sharpe for his lack of morals and ethics. And too-tight pants.

### WHAT PART OF WRITING YOUR BOOK DID YOU FIND THE MOST CHALLENGING?

With so many characters “in the same room” it was difficult to maintain a single “Point-of-view”.

### WHAT DO YOU HOPE THAT READERS WILL TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR BOOK?

That whoever wrote the novel understood good writing: setting, plot, structure, dialogue and theme and just gave them a glimpse into a world they’d never seen before. That they had just read a smart thriller and couldn’t wait to read the next Sonny Wade adventure.

### WHAT WRITERS HAVE INSPIRED YOU?

Hemingway, Twain, Melville, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Dickens, Steinbeck, Poe, Cormac McCarthy, Paul Bowles, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Shakespeare, Thomas McGuane, Bukowski, Sherwood Anderson, Faulkner, JD Salinger, David Foster Wallace, Pynchon to name a few.

### WHAT IS THE WRITING PROCESS LIKE FOR YOU?

Coffee. A few hours at a time on a couch with my MacBook Air, mostly from 8 am to noon. Long walks working out plot twists.

### WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE ABOUT WRITING THAT YOU’VE EVER RECEIVED?

Leave the writing while there’s still something left in the well and pick it back up the next day where you left off. That’s paraphrasing something I read in a Hemingway biography. I do not write standing up, though.

### WHAT IS THE WORST PIECE OF ADVICE ABOUT WRITING THAT YOU’VE EVER RECEIVED?

Write what is popular.

### WHAT’S NEXT FOR YOU? ANY NEW BOOKS IN THE PIPELINE?

Loads of stories. At least 10 novels running the gamut genre-wise.