Encouragement

When I was in collage, my Inter-Varsity friends called me Barnabas, which means son of encouragement. I was the one who always had a good word and could help others find the strength to keep going. The problem, of course, is if you're the one who is encouraging everyone, no one ever thinks to encourage you.

I have to admit that right now I'm discouraged. I've received the edits back for both of my books and there is a lot of work to do. I went into it knowing there was going to be work. I went into it with the idea that I wanted to make them both shine.

I've been trying to work on them, really I have, but I'm not making any progress. The kick in the pants that I thought getting a professional editor would be hasn't panned out. For the Rise and Fall of Man, I've written four new stories. I think they're pretty good - have a lot more feeling than the originals - but its only 1400 words between the four of them.

Part of the problem is that I'm working on too many different things at once. There is my day job, which often leaves me mentally exhausted at the end of the day and not wanting to do anything.

Second is the side engineering job. It is quiet right now, but in two or three weeks I'll be receiving hardware from China and I'll need to spend all my free time getting the software done.

The good news is that the first of three collections of short stories that I'm editing and publishing is almost ready. I've got to get one more afterword and four license agreements, then everything will be in my hands. I'm still struggling over the cover and getting the e-book formats right. The fun thing is that Emma has started doing the audio version of the book. It brings me a lot of joy being able to work with her.

I have 46 puzzles waiting to be assembled and sold. Of all the projects, this is probably the most discouraging. I spent a lot of time planing and doing things right. I got through all the parts that were suppose to be the hard parts, only to find that the easy "turn the crank" part is the hardest. I've got to find the motivation to just spend a day and get it done.

The Steampunk project I'm working on is going well and is a lot of fun. The first stories are being written. The first one I've read is good. I started this project as a way to "recover" from my failure with the zombie audio play.

The two programming projects I'm working on are also frustrating. The game is basically done, but I'm stuck on getting the iAds in, handling some failure cases when the network goes away, and getting the language support in. The second project is also basically done, from a programming point of view - again a couple things to work out when the network fails. The big problem is that I need a lot of content, which I thought I had a partner for, but it has been on hold for almost a year now.

There are the two hardware projects I want to work on for myself. I've got them planed out and just need to find someone to do the circuit board layout. I think I found someone, but I'm holding off until the other engineering project is done.

And then there's my own writing. I've taken two months off from writing short stories for the monthly contest. I'm trying to edit my books. I'm writing the 57th issue of my newsletter.

Looking at all the things I'm doing, the ones I feel the best about are the ones where I'm working with other people–where I get to encourage them–like editing the anthology, the Steampunk project, and working with Emma on recording stories.

I find encouragement when I'm encouraging others–when I'm working with a team. I need to figure out how to build teams around my other projects. I need to finish some projects and celebrate their completion.

You can help encourage me by getting one or two of your friends to sign up for this newsletter, its been sitting at 57 subscribers for way too long, which in a way is funny since this is issue 57. Help me get to 100 subscribers, and let me know how I can make this newsletter more valuable to you.

Doug