

Author Q&A

Q) Explain why there are two titles and two different covers?

A) Three years before writing this novella, I had an idea to write an adult fairy tale inspired by the fable *The Ant and the Grasshopper*. At that time, I managed to write only the first chapter, which closely resembles what is now the final text. I also had a working title: *Doberman's Angel*. The front cover illustration is from a pen and ink watercolor I created in 1980 with the title: *Portrait of a Rainbow as a Young Man* written along the bottom. I penned and watercolored about fifteen of these designs which I framed and gave to family and friends at Christmas. Each was individually drawn and painted. A year ago I found two of these surviving art pieces in a file cabinet. I scanned one and shared it with an online Facebook group. One person posted a comment saying it looked like it should be the cover of a novel. Her comment stirred my imagination. I recalled the Christmas story I had begun and abandoned. As I re-read and made a couple edits to this opening chapter, I was gifted with inspiration – envisioning how the story should be told. There would be two seemingly diverse stories that alternate per chapter, then mysteriously intertwine and, as if magically, transform into the same story.

Q) How do these titles relate to the story?

A) As a symbolic metaphor for a portrait of a transformation and a mercurial vision of hope.

Q) Does the novel have an underlying theme?

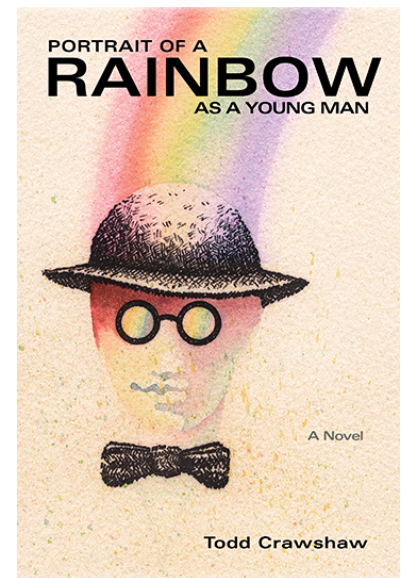
A) Yes. How a simple gift of kindness can save a person's life.

Q) You said you were gifted with inspiration. What inspired you?

A) I was inspired by three sources: Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Voltaire's *Candide*, and, as mentioned, *The Ant and the Grasshopper*. These two aforementioned novellas are favorites of mine. I love how they are succinct, memorable and inspiring. I wanted to emulate these iconic books by also creating a unique experience that would be both timely and timeless, and could be read in one sitting, in the time it takes to watch a movie. My intent was to write one of the sweetest, saddest stories ever told and, yet, ultimately transcends into an antidepressant, uplifting tale.

Q) Do you feel you accomplished your goal?

A) Yes. And it still amazes me. *Portrait of a Rainbow*, in my humble opinion, is a perfect novel. Fractal patterns branch throughout the narrative and intricately link a multitude of sub themes, such as changing preconceptions; facing a crisis in faith; being present when it matters; establishing special bonds of love; redefining family; becoming human again (to name a few). This novel was written in six weeks. It began on Thanksgiving Day and I finished the first draft on New Years Day. In truth, it took me fifty years to write this book, for that's how long I've been writing novels. And it remains a mystery to me how this book happened. The story(s) came to me in a spellbinding storm of dreamlike visions – as if I was in the presence of several muses. It reaffirmed for me what John Fowles once said: "To write the text you have to live in the myth of it." The story feels REAL because I was temporarily living in this myth. Quoting from one of the protagonists in *Portrait of a Rainbow*: "I only know the moment was magical. The same way notes of music, arranged in a special sequence, can come to you, as if magically. It's the mystery of all creation. It arrives unexpectedly. Fleetingly."



For more information, excerpts, videos visit: www.CrownsnestPublishing.com/portrait-of-a-rainbow

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