

Biff Mitchell Receives \$20 Royalty Check from Lulu.com

Summary: Author and humorist Biff Mitchell announced today that he received a royalty check for \$20 USD from online publisher/creator Lulu.com for his two novels, *Heavy Load (a laundromance)* and *Team Player*, and a book of short stories, *Surfing in Catal Hyuk*.

“Now I can buy that six pack of beer I always wanted,” said author Biff Mitchell after receiving a royalty check for \$20 USD from Lulu.com. “Or I could buy a new typewriter ribbon and some correction fluid, but I think I’ll go with the beer.”

Mitchell, who lives in a hovel in Eastern Canada, was shocked when he opened the envelope earlier today and found, not a bill, but a check for a whopping \$20 USD.

“This is proof that self-publishing works,” said Mitchell, who admitted that he hadn’t even begun to market the books other than creating a few links on his web site at <http://www.biffmitchell.com>. “I thought these books would be as obscure as everything else I’ve ever written,” he said.

Mitchell, who has had publishers in Canada, England, Australia and the United States since his first novel, *Heavy Load (a laundromance)* (ISBN 0-9732799-4-X) was published by a California-based ebook publisher in 2000, said, “None of them ever gave me my own store. Lulu.com gave me my own storefront at <http://www.lulu.com/biffmitchell>.”

Mitchell’s two novels at Lulu.com are also available in ebook format at Fictionwise.com and Double Dragon Publishing. Both books have received rave reviews from critics.

Heavy Load (a laundromance), a novel about three people meeting at a laundromat on a Saturday morning where they resolve each others’ life crises with saying a word to each other, was called “a creative masterpiece” by Cynthia Penn in Wordweaving and “a page-turner” by Deborah Fisher in Tregolwyn Reviews.

“Off-beat, darkly humorous and all too realistic, *Team Player* (ISBN 0-9732799-6-6) is a truly great read” wrote Ann Leveille in The Best Reviews. In Blue Iris Journal, Susan DiPlacido called it “a fresh, vibrant, and engrossing read that’ll keep you laughing even while you’re on the edge of your seat.”

Mitchell’s book of short stories, *Surfing in Catal Hyuk* (ISBN 0-9732799-3-1) contains previously published stories from magazines, collections and ezines, most of which are currently available as individual downloads at Fictionwise.com (<http://www.fictionwise.com/eBooks/BiffMitchelleBooks.htm>). “Some people would rather read a print book than an ebook,” said Mitchell. “And now they can order it from Lulu for under 20 bucks.”

Commenting on the reason for his stunning success at Lulu.com, Mitchell said, “It’s probably the covers.”

According to Mitchell, an engaging cover is just as crucial online as it is on bookstores shelves and in airports and supermarkets. “If it doesn’t catch their attention, they’ll never buy it,” said Mitchell. “Especially when you’re as obscure as I am.”

The covers for *Heavy Load (a laundromance)* and *Team Player* (2nd edition, published by Double Dragon Publishing) were created by Chattoons illustrator Brock Parks. “I promised him fame and fortune in return,” said Mitchell. “But I think I’m going to spend this check on beer.”

Mitchell designed the cover for his short story collection. “I scanned an old picture of the rooftop of my blue Pontiac Phoenix and enlarged a section of it,” said Mitchell. “I tinted it brown to create the sense of a wet desert because Catal Hyuk, the world’s first city, was in desert land that bordered on the Mediterranean Sea,” he said. “The story is about a man who is so obscure that Death forgets about him.”

According to Mitchell, publishing companies are beginning to use Lulu.com. “Double Dragon used Lulu to publish the paperback version of *Twisted Tail: An Anthology to Surprise and Delight*, which contains four of Mitchell’s stories. “Using Lulu allowed Double Dragon to follow up on the ebook release of the anthology with a paperback in just a few weeks. That has to be some kind of record in the industry,” said Mitchell. “The Lulu model is going to have a huge impact on the publishing industry.”

Commenting on the one piece of advice he would offer to authors thinking about using Lulu.com, Mitchell said, “Get somebody to proofread anything you want to publish. And make it somebody who’s going to be critical for your own good. Otherwise, forget it.”

About Biff Mitchell

Biff Mitchell is the author *Heavy Load (a laundromance)*, *The War Bug*, a cyberpunk satire set on the Internet 200 years in the future (available through most bookstores in the United States and Chapters/Indigo in Canada), *Team Player*, a satire on the IT industry, *Surfing in Catal Hyuk*, a collection of short stories, and *eMarketing Tools for Writers, 2nd Edition*. He has two novellas, *Smoke Break* and *The Baton* available through Echelon Press and short fiction published in various literary publications such as *The Rose & Thorn* and *Projected Letters*. Mitchell will be teaching a course on writing mystery and suspense at the Maritime Writers Workshop at the University of New Brunswick in July, 2007. For more information about Biff Mitchell and his writing, visit <http://www.biffmitchell.com>.