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Dishonored, Star Wars, Comics, and everything in-between: The Michael Moreci Interview

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Michael Moreci is the anti-Galactus. He doesn't devour worlds, he creates them. He fashioned his own original comics such as *Roche Limit*, *Curse* and *Burning Fields*. As well, he has worked on such established books as *Suicide Squad*, *Green Lantern*, *Wonder Woman*, *Flash* and *Superman* for DC Comics.

A die-hard gamer, Moreci is currently working on the *Dishonored* series for Titan Comics (<https://titan-comics.com/c/1061-dishonored/>) while also on a book tour promoting his first novel: *Black Star Renegades* (<https://www.amazon.com/Black-Star-Renegades-Michael-Moreci/dp/1250117844>).

Culture of Gaming caught up with a busy Moreci to chat with him about his approach to the *Dishonored* series and the success of *Black Star Renegades*.



The Interview

John Powell: As a gamer, what are some of your favourite titles?

Michael Moreci: Huge gamer. I've played both *Dishonored* games. My favorites are *Battlefront*, *Mario*, *Metroid*, *Horizon Zero Dawn*, *Destiny*, *Zelda*, and *Mass Effect*. ME 2 is probably my favorite game of all time.

John Powell: Since *Dishonored* is based on the video game series by Bethesda Softworks, how much freedom do you have as far as the characters and the scripting goes?

Michael Moreci: I think it's a fair balanced in terms of our exchange of ideas. With this kind of thing, you're not in the driver's seat, and that's okay. This isn't my sandbox, it's Bethesda's. Still, they were very open to hearing my ideas and making sure we had a true collaboration. It was great to work with them, to learn a lot from Harvey Smith, and get to tell this story in one of the greatest video game universes there is.

John Powell: Can you also tell us about the process, such as, do you have to get things approved beforehand?

Michael Moreci: Oh yes, absolutely. My editor, Martin, facilitated all that. But there's no loose cannons when you're work on a licensed property. This is Bethesda's baby, and they're careful with it (as they should be). That said, they had a close eye on everything, which was great. No one knows this world better than they do, so it was handy to have their expertise to draw from.

John Powell: Did you feel any kind of pressure taking the title on since it is a well-known property and has a passionate fanbase?

Michael Moreci: A little, for sure. I've written quite a few big name properties—from Superman to Planet of the Apes—and it's always a bit nerve-wracking because you want to get it right. As a fan myself, and I'm a huge Dishonored fan, I knew how important it was to get it right. So there's some pressure in that. But I came at it from a place of love—love for this world and the characters—and that helped guide me through the process.

John Powell: What is it like to work with Andrea Olimpieri and Mattia Iacono? Their art seems to really compliment your storytelling. It must be fascinating to see your ideas brought to life.

Michael Moreci: It always is, I never tire of seeing my words turned into such wonderful artwork, and Andrea and Mattia were extraordinary on this project. It was a true pleasure to collaborate with them.

John Powell: Without giving anything too important away, what do you have planned for Emily and Corvo?

Michael Moreci: I can say that it's more Emily's story, about getting her to come into her own and out of the long shadow Corvo casts. She's such a great characters, and I wanted to put her in a position where she has to figure out things in a way that's a little different than she's had to before and, with that, have her learn something new. She changes a bit in this story, grows a bit, and I think it leaves her in a really cool place.



John Powell: There is a lot of political intrigue in *Dishonored*. How do you balance that, those relationships, with all of the action and adventure?

Michael Moreci: Well, it's all part of the fabric of that world, so once you're in the *Dishonored* frame of mind, all those things come into focus under one lens. The relationships are often informed by the politics, and vice versa; and the action is just fun, being able to play with all the amazing magic and powers that exists in this world. Ultimately, though, it's all about making the tapestry work together so everything that happens—with the characters, the story, the world—are creating a unified whole, and to do that requires clarity of vision. You have to know what your story is trying to get at from the onset and then bring everything together from there.

John Powell: What do you hope fans of *Dishonored* take away from the series? What contribution are you most proud of?

Michael Moreci: I just hope they find a story that stays true to the *Dishonored* mythos while moving it forward in its own cool, interesting way. I think we did that, and I'm proud of how we maintained the past while also moved into the future a bit.

John Powell: Your first book is unabashedly inspired by *Star Wars*. How much of an effect did the franchise have on your childhood? Was it difficult to walk that homage line?

Michael Moreci: *Star Wars* taught me everything I know about storytelling. The galaxy far, far away means more to me than I can possibly ever explain, so it's pretty fair to say that everything I write, on some level, is touched by *Star Wars*. When it came down to write my first novel, *Black Star Renegades*, it wasn't too hard to craft a compelling but unique homage around the *Star Wars* world. I'd been doing it my whole life in one way or another; now I was just doing it overtly, conscious of what I was nodding to and conscious of what I had to say that differs from Lucas's grand vision.

John Powell: You are now a novelist. How does the process of writing comics differ from writing a novel or is there any difference?

Michael Moreci: Well, this is a bit of a long answer, but it is very, very different. I love them both, but they're completely different mediums. The fundamentals of storytelling stay the same, so there's that. But it requires completely different head spaces to approach novels and comics.

John Powell: As a writer, who or what do you draw inspiration from? Past. Present.

Michael Moreci: *Star Wars*, of course. But there's numerous other things. Spielberg, Bradbury, King, video games, comics, sci-fi novels—I'm a child of the 80s who grew up either in front of a TV or my nose in the book. My list of things that inspire me is pretty vast, like so many other people my age.



Check out Moreci's Book, *Black Star Renegades*, Here! (https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1250117844/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=1250117844&linkCode=as2&tag=cultureofgami-20&linkId=a4e26f9b900c31235d1302e1065a4e07)

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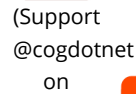
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