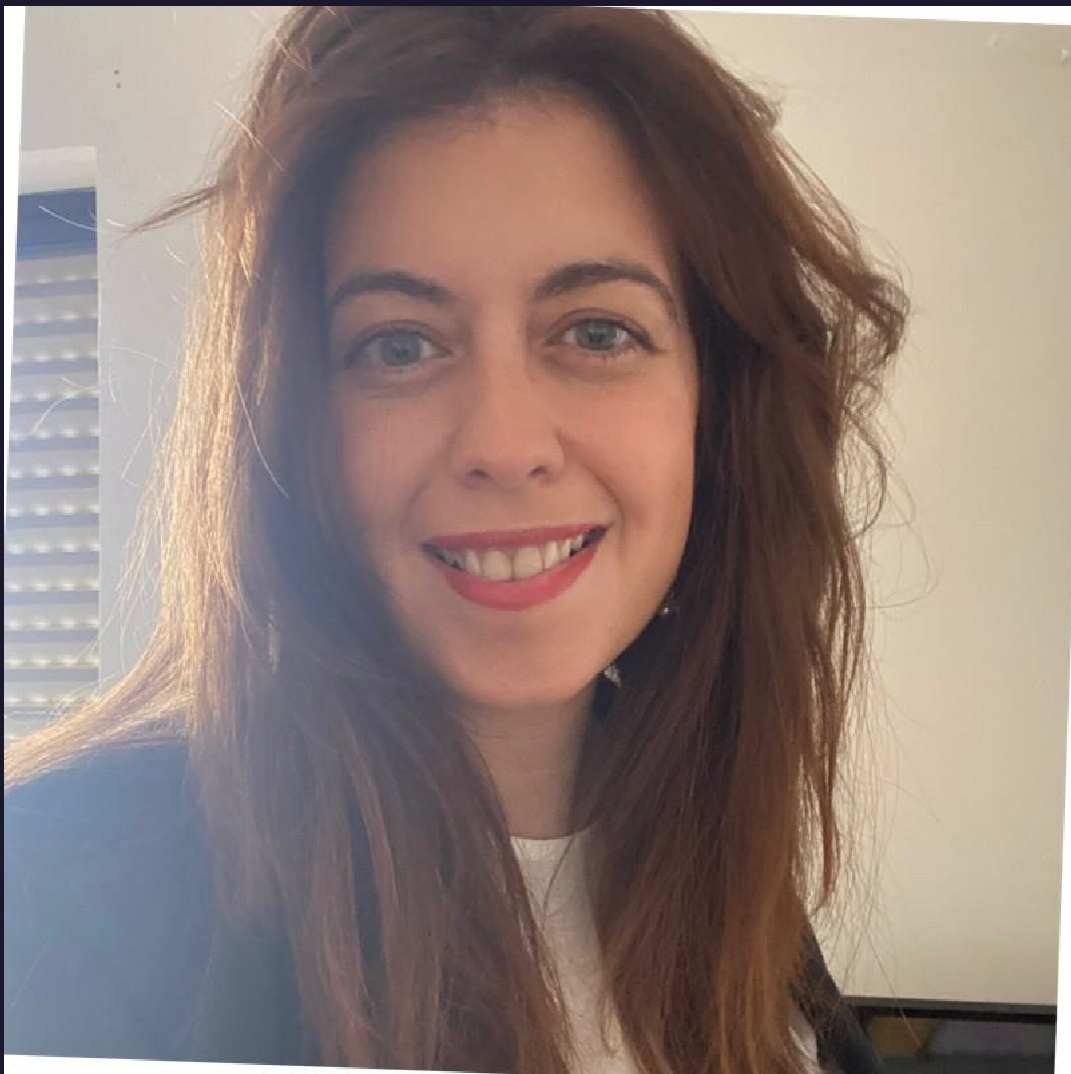


Worlds Beyond: Crafting Science Fiction

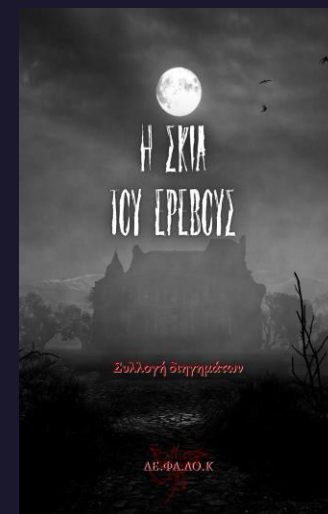
-Tina Barbatsalou



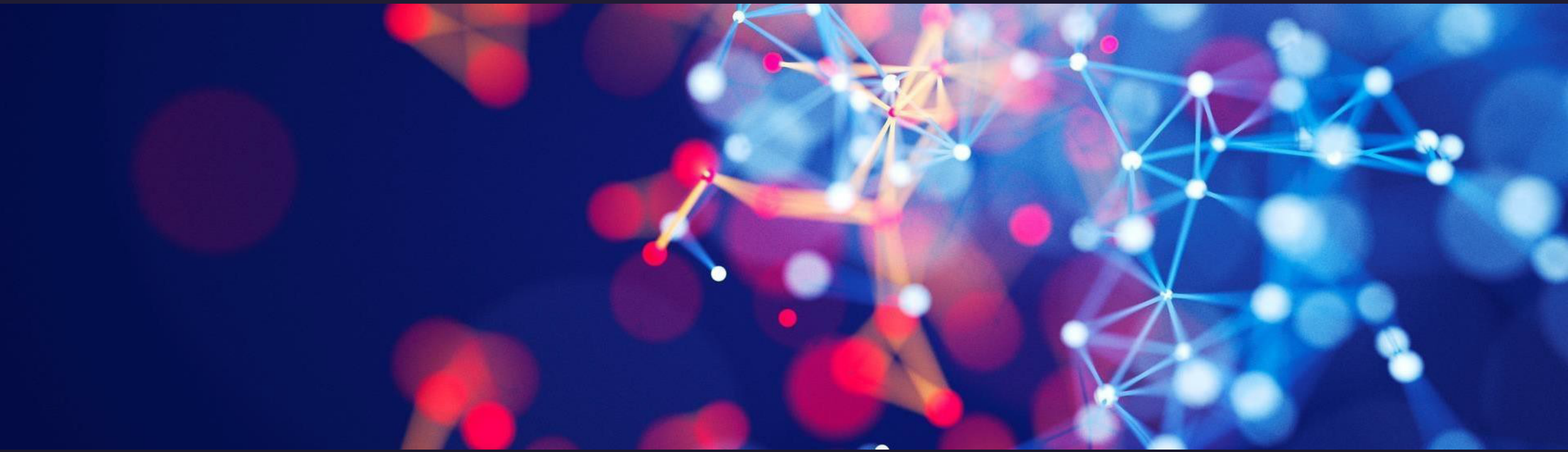


A few words

- PhD in Digital Forensics
- Detection Engineering and Threat Intelligence Manager
- Self-taught writer



Sci-Fi 101



What is Sci-Fi?

- A genre exploring speculative futures, alternate realities, and science-driven concepts.
- Types:
 - Hard sci-fi: grounded in science
 - Soft sci-fi: explores society and emotion
 - Subgenres: cyberpunk, dystopia, time travel, biopunk, space opera
- What kind of sci-fi excites you most?



The 'What If?' Engine



Sci-fi starts with a speculative question:



- What if Als gained civil rights?



- What if time was a tradable commodity?

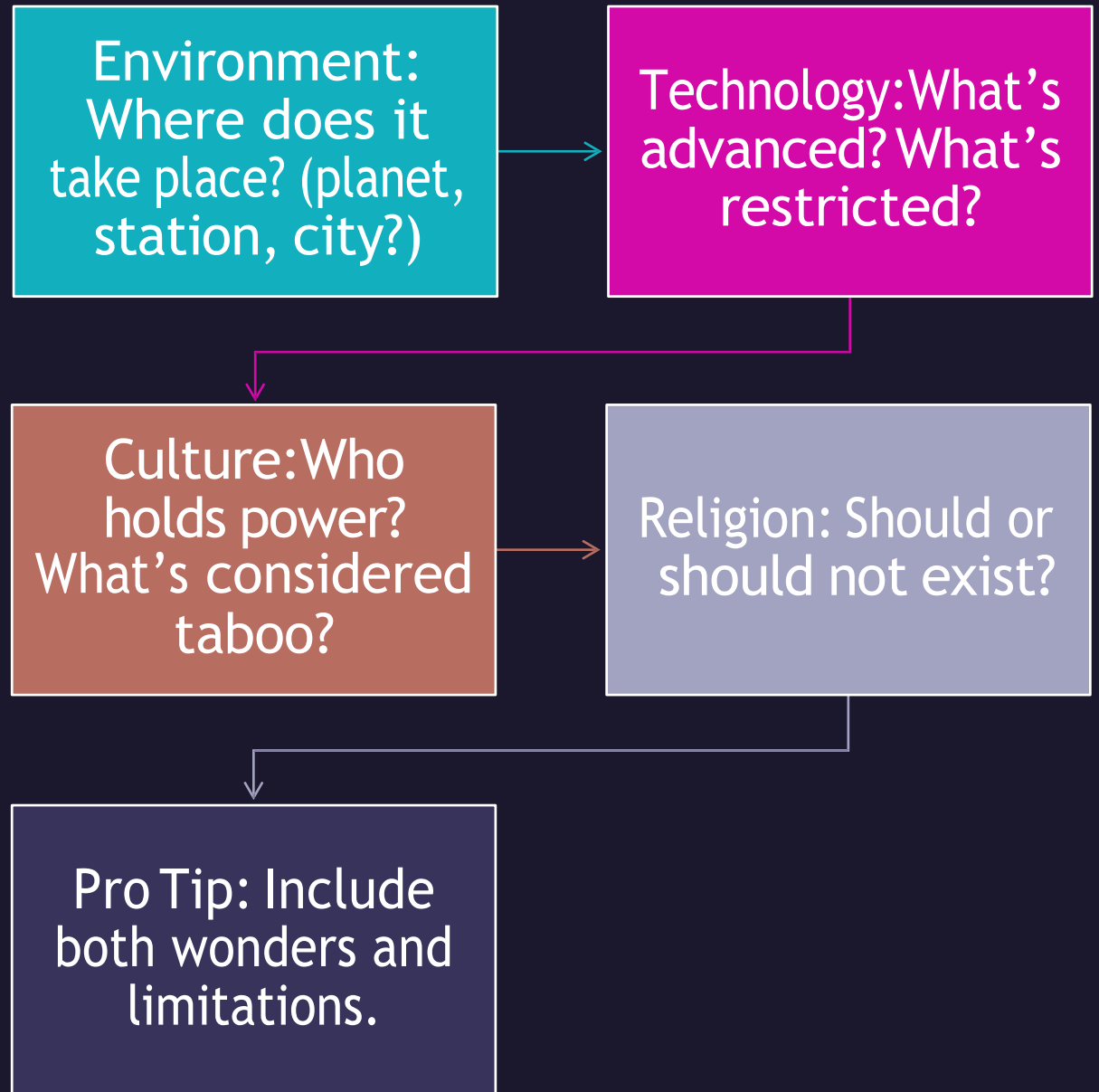


- What if humans evolved to speak through light?



• Let this question shape your plot and world. →
Let's note down some possible ideas

Worldbuilding Basics



Sci-Fi characters are still humans!



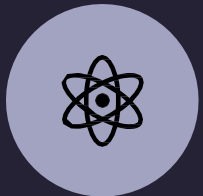
Core elements:



- Desires, fears, goals



- Conflict: world, tech, society, self



Use futuristic elements to amplify inner struggles



Robots, clones, and the rest of the AI folk can still feel real if they feel - try to be careful about cognitive functions depending on context

The Writing Toolkit



Start with a strong 'what if' question



Set high stakes and clear goals



Show through action - not exposition - and definitely not dialogues



Link technology to human consequences

Sharing and Feedback



LISTEN SUPPORTIVELY



HIGHLIGHT WHAT'S WORKING:
WORLD, TENSION,
ORIGINALITY



ASK YOURSELF: WHAT
QUESTION DOES THIS STORY
RAISE?

Some outside-the-box advice



Proceed as you write. You don't need to have every detail straight in your mind.



Fall in love or hate your characters. Stronger bonds create stronger reactions.



Try to picture the moment as if you were living the scene.



Write slowly - edit fast. Feels more ready and in place.



Case Study: “The Broken Worlds” series quiz

Which concepts from the previous slides can you distinguish?









Let's write!

Interactive writing session

Part 1: Your World

Is your story set in the future, an **alternate reality**, or a far-off planet?

What is **one defining feature** of this world's society, technology, or environment?

Is the world **utopian, dystopian, or chaotic** — and why?

What **resource, rule, or belief** dominates life here?

Part 2: Your Protagonist(s)

Who is your main character — a rebel, scientist, explorer, AI, smuggler, etc.?

What do they **want most** — and what's stopping them from getting it?

Do they have a **special skill, burden, or secret**?

What makes them **question the world they live in**?

Part 3: The Catalyst

What **unexpected event** shakes the protagonist's life at the beginning?

Who or what is the **main opposition force** (a regime, an AI, an inner conflict?)

What are the **stakes** if they fail?

Do you want them to fail or succeed?

Part 4: Twists and Tension

What's the biggest lie or illusion in their world that gets **exposed**?

Who is an unexpected **ally** or **enemy**, and why?

What impossible choice does the protagonist face?

How do they feel about it? Get in their shoes!

Part 5: Resolution and Theme

Do the main characters **succeed, fail, or change**?

What does the ending say about **humanity, technology, or freedom**?

If your story had a title and a one-sentence pitch, what would they be?

Happy or sad ending?