



As The Author Learns

Bits & bites about publishing & writing from

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that defy categorizing*

What's Happening?

We are having a nice, soggy spring here in the Midwest, which is a relief since we had a drought last year. It's still chilly and occasionally snowy, but we have enough spring-like days that I am convinced spring truly is just around the corner.

I've been on a de-cluttering kick around my house, going through files, bookcases, and closets. When we moved (almost 2 years ago now), I got rid of a lot of Stuff. You know the kind of Stuff I mean -- the Stuff you hold in your hand, and think, *Should I pack this? I'm not sure I can get rid of this now.* So you pack it and you get to your new house, and you think, *Where am I going to put this?* And you stick it someplace and forget about it.

Well, now I'm looking at the things I set down and never moved again and I'm wondering if I really need to keep it. I got rid of one entire box of old work files that I have lugged around to about 10 different houses in the last twenty years.

I am also getting rid of my books. I used to have boxes and boxes and boxes of books. I'm not kidding. I once had 5 or 10 bookcases full. Over the years, I've weeded them out and donated most of them to a library here and there. Once I got my Kindle that really motivated me to toss them out. Why keep them in paper when I have them digitally? So I didn't move nearly as many books this time as I have in the past, and now I want to winnow it out even further.

I'll keep a few, but what I'm doing is re-reading the ones I moved and I'm taking them down to Half-Price Books when I'm done. I'm keeping a notebook with jottings about what I read and got rid of. I'm revisiting a lot of old friends that I haven't read for years and years.

I've found that now that I'm an author, I'm reading differently. I don't just get immersed in a story anymore. I'm a bit more critical as a reader. I picked up one book by a very well-known romance author. It was a book that I thought was just marvelous years ago. But on this reading, I noticed that the narration flips back and forth between point of view, almost every other paragraph being either the male or the female POV.



I was taught (in various writing classes) that "head-hopping" is a big NO-NO. Some authors get away with it (she does, obviously), but most authors don't handle it well. As I was reading the book, I thought *This is annoying. Why is she doing this?* Head-hopping like that is (I think) a sign of a sloppy writer, one who hasn't really thought out a scene but is instead just throwing the story at the reader in a way that makes it easy for the writer.

I don't have to worry about point of view in most of my books because I write in first-person and there is no other POV in those books. But my paranormal series isn't first-person, and a couple of my time travel books aren't, either, and I worked hard on those books to make sure I stuck with the "one POV at a time" rule.

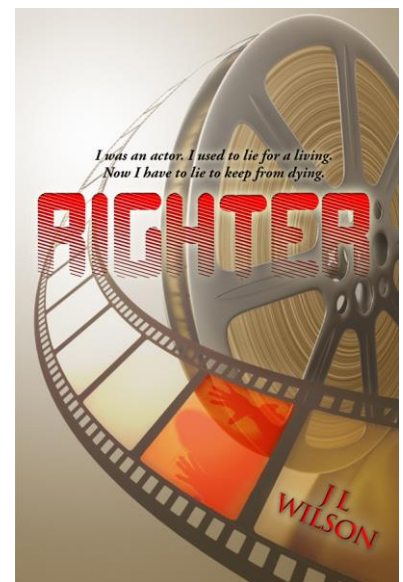
Now I see that rule being broken -- and broken often. Hmm. I wonder what other rules could I break? It makes me think.

In Other News

Righter is now available on Amazon for downloading and the print copy is ready, too. Like most of my other books, I'll leave it at Amazon exclusively for a month or two then I'll publish it via other venues after that.

And if you really want to save some money, I've scheduled it to be set to Free on May 1 until May 5. So you can snatch up a copy then if you'd like. All I ask is that you give me a review of some kind after you read it. Reviews are essential to authors like me, who are often lost in the crowd of new books coming out.

This is the first non-romance book I've written. I've been getting closer and closer to no romance in my novels, and this is the first with only a hint of a romance. I found it very freeing to just worry about the mystery plot and not worry about the romance plot. So you may see this in more books of mine in the future.



What's Next?

May is a month of travel for me. First up is the Romantic Times Convention in Kansas City during the first week of May. That's always a hectic conference, but it's a great chance to reconnect with a lot of my author friends, because many of them go to this conference. I still have a lot of prep to do, mainly in promo items. It's a BIG conference (a thousand readers usually attend), so I want to get my promo booklets all ready to go so I can set them out at the conference.

I'll be home for a week or two then it's off to California for a family visit. Then I'm home for a few weeks in June and I'm off to another conference, combined with a family visit. And of course, I need to get some writing done, too...

It's good to keep busy (or so I keep reminding myself!)