



# As the Author Learns

Bits & bites about publishing & writing  
from

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## What's Happening?

As I told you earlier in the month, I had to fuss around a bit with the GDPR privacy brouhaha. This mainly affects people who live in Europe and I don't mean to minimize the need for privacy in our online communications, but it's a bit onerous for someone like me to handle.

I'll post information about it twice a year in my newsletters (January and June), and I have information in the footer that pretty much sums it up: if you don't want to be bothered by me, just tell me.

As to cookie tracking and other privacy information re: my website or my email, that's handled by those providers (Google in the case of the website and Yahoo in the case of my email). I honestly doubt that they're tracking visitors to my website or recipients of my email, but who knows? I sure don't. If you're worried, you'll have to check with them.



Now, on to other news. I finished edits for *Woulds* and I have hopes that it will be releasing later this year. I haven't seen the cover yet, and that's always a bit of a nail-biter. I have very little say over the cover, although I do have a lot of input into what I want. Whether or not the cover artist can convey that is another story, and once I get it, I can't request changes unless there's a big fat error (like a typo or my name spelled wrong or something like that). Therefore, waiting for the cover is always a bit nerve-wracking. I've had some memorably bad covers in my publishing career and while I'm not sure they hurt sales, I'm pretty sure a bad cover doesn't help.

Keep your fingers crossed that my cover comes out to be what I want, okay?

I also finished Book 8 of the Endless American Dream Series. This one was a challenge (but I think I say that about all of them, don't I?) Anyway, I was kind of floundering while writing this. I knew I wanted to have one or two Big Incidents occur, because they will have ramifications in the future (like, the far future). I was going to just insert those incidents and move on to other, more important topics, when I realized that those were Incidents with a capital "I".

In short: those events *were* the book, they weren't just scenes.

Well, once I figured that out, the book started to make sense. I was kind of feeling my way, not quite sure where it was going, and then--BAM--in Chapter 12, I had direction and purpose for the book.

That gave me impetus to get moving on the rest of it, and I finished the manuscript in record time (for me). Eighteen weeks and 110,000 words. I took about 3 weeks off for surgery, so figure 14 or 15 weeks. It's a slightly shorter book than some of the others, but I think that's okay.



As is my habit, I'm letting it sit for a time while I move on to other projects. I'll revisit it in a week or two and do a read-through, then I'll let it sit again for a few months and won't revisit it again until I'm ready to work on Book 9--the final book in the series. Well, sort of the final one. It's the final book in the initial series, but I want to write one more book to tie the entire series of 15 books together.

Fingers don't fail me now.

## In Other News

I got my wiki transferred-- I was *so* worried about this! A wiki is like a website where you can store all kinds of information. A lot of companies use them for in-house collaboration between teams. I use mine to keep track of all the characters in my Dream series, as well as other details, like floor plans for houses, maps of locations, and other assorted facts (what kind of ring did he give her for her birthday? What dress did she wear to the wedding? When did that character die--was it summer or winter?)

I had to find a new hosting site to hold the wiki, then I had them download the software I needed. Next, I exported my old wiki and got it imported into the new one. Then I had to go through it all, make sure all the links worked between the different bits of info, and I reviewed all the info there. I had more than 500 pages of data, so it was a chore.

It took about two weeks of work, but it's done! This is such a load off my mind. The old wiki service will be shutting down in October and all my data would be deleted, so I *had* to get it transferred. The new one isn't as customized as the old one -- it's a bit trickier to do that. But I did get most of the features I wanted, so I'm okay with that. I'll continue to play with it as time permits, and I'm sure I'll get it exactly the way I want.

## What's Next?

I'm off to Minnesota for the weekend, this time to a Master Gardener conference. This is a good example of serendipity at work. One of the workshops I want to attend is about therapeutic gardening (i.e., gardening for those who are elderly or handicapped). And guess what? The heroine in my current Work In Progress is a consultant in therapeutic gardening because she's handicapped herself. Talk about the intersection of art and life--this should be fun 😊