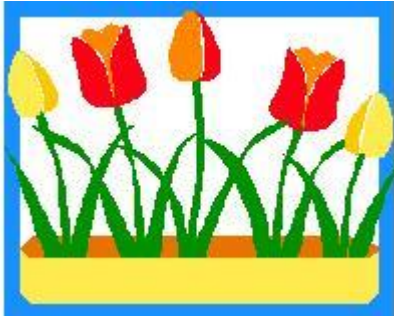




As the Author Learns

Bits & bites about publishing & writing from

J L Wilson

*Author of mysteries, time travel, romances, & other
books that defy categorizing*

What's Happening?

My second book for this year will be released in just a day or two and it is available wherever fine books are sold (in fact, it's sold where even not so fine books are sold).

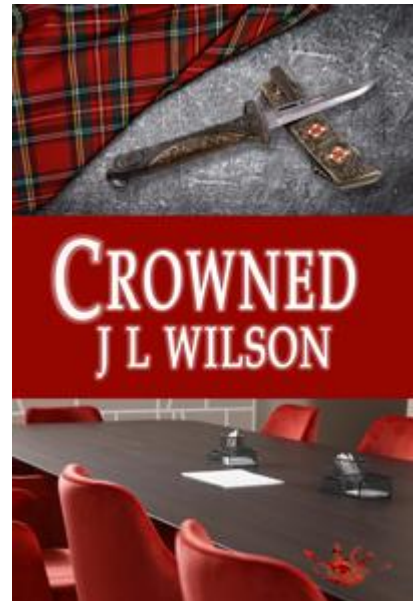
My publisher lists all the places where you can buy the e-book or the print book, so hopefully you can find your preferred vendor: <https://bit.ly/4wMIodz>. I'll add it to my Books2Read page once all the links are available.

You know, I had no idea I was going to write a MacBeth book. I mean, I had no plans to do so. But one day I was in a bookstore and I saw a bunch of Cliff Note-kind of booklets. I started looking through them thinking "these are classic kinds of books, maybe there's something here I could use for another mystery in the future."

Lo and behold, I saw MacBeth in among the booklets. I'm a big Shakespeare fan and I know the plot of most of the plays. MacBeth is one of my favorites, so I thought, "Hmm. I wonder..."

Even if you don't know the play, most people have a glimmer of an idea of what it's about: pushy wife urges husband to murder in order to get ahead. Then pushy wife gets a fit of guilt and has the whole "out, out damn spot" moment. There is a big ghost scene when an honorable man gets murdered and that's when I thought "I can use this!"

I set my book in a corporate world and chose as my location places where I used to work, combining the landscape from one company and the buildings from another. The town is a college town where I used to live and the heroine's apartment is one modeled on an apartment that a colleague rented one summer. Memories fit in when I least expect it. I had fun researching different businesses and how to structure my fictional corporation according to Scottish legal systems because my fictional company has a charter based in Scotland.



And of course I had to research how to correctly pleat a kilt, what kind of contests are held during Highland games, and songs and foods that might feature there. Now my nod to Shakespeare and Scotland is getting ready to see the light of day.

In Other News

I'm working with my cover artist to design covers for my series. There are fifteen books in all, and I want a similar feel and theme to tie them all together. So we've been going back and forth with different samples, playing with layouts, images, and colors. I made copies of covers I've seen that I like, so we're using that as a starting point. It's time-consuming and requires a different kind of creativity from me so it's been tough. But I know it'll be worth it. I want to start publishing the series next year, so it's time to get serious about covers.

I've been jotting ideas for a new book and then I had a brain flash--why not use this as a sort of prequel to the events in my series? Once I had that idea, I really got underway. I went back and checked my timeline for the series and that's when I decided on four books.

I want to have the books be the year leading up to the initiating event in my series. That series begins in October and the first novel covers October-December. So I decided to start this prequel series, what I'm calling "The Chaos Quartet," in spring of that year. The first book will be in March, the next in June, then October, then finally December.

I'm going to tie in my Celestial Service books and use some of the characters from that series here. That series featured seven archangels and they'll show up here. I'm going to have one character, the archangel Michael, be a major player.

I'm letting ideas percolate for now. I've been jotting down scenes and bits of dialog as I envision how plot points will work out. This might be the first time I've actually tried to plot out a series of books before I write them, so we'll see how that goes! I'm sure that no matter how seriously I try to map out events, someplace along the way the books will take a sharp turn and I'll end up winging it. But for now it's fun to be jotting and drafting ideas and seeing where they might take me.

What's Next?

Yes, it's getting closer to that time of year -- time to gamble and plot new books. I know that this fall I want to plot my Goldilocks book in which a psychotic real estate agent plays a major role. Perfect, right? Goldilocks will help clients find "just the right house, not too big, not too small." Those ideas are percolating in my brain, too, so it should be a busy fall season.

I'd like to write one more mystery this year and get a good start on the Chaos series. I also want to nail down those book covers then spend the last part of the year getting my series ready for publication. Oh, and I also need to review some books and decide on one to submit to my editor for next year's publishing schedule. Looks like a few busy months ahead!

Have a great rest of the summer and I'll be back in the fall!

