



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?

Is it springtime or winter? Every week (actually, every few days) the weather changes and it's hard to tell what to expect. I chose a spring-ish picture in hopes that we will really be heading for spring, finally. Fingers crossed.

I decided this year that I'd only use two services for promotion, so I could get a sense if anything is really working. I booked a service for *Thorned*, which came out in March and I also used it for a paranormal promotion they're doing for *Save Her*, my Celestial Service book that came out a few years ago.

The people running the promotion post information about my book on their site, their various social media outlets, and in their newsletter. I've used this group in the past and I did see some added sales so I thought I'd try it again.

I won't be able to see any results for *Thorned* for a few months, because my royalty reports are always at least three months after the actual sales. I'll be curious to see what they reflect. As for *Save Her*, that's self-published so I'll get monthly reports on that one. The promotion runs in April, so in May I might see if it was effective.

I'm not doing much of anything else to promote any of my books, other than discuss them on the two social media platforms I use (Facebook and BlueSky). I only spend about a half-hour a day on social media, just dipping in during the morning or afternoon. With Facebook it's become too hard to actually see posts from people I know. It seems like everything I see is from strangers or ads for products. I have lists of people I 'follow' on BlueSky (mainly authors) and it's easy to check in with them.

I have found new authors and books via social media so I'm wondering if people will 'discover' me via these promotions. I have checked out books from the library that have been recommended or discussed on various sites. Some of them I finish, some of them, well, no, I didn't. But it's been fun to try out new-to-me authors and, in some cases, new genres.

And it's especially interesting to match the social media persona of the authors with the books they write, to see what's reflected there. I have to admit, I don't know why some of the

books are best-sellers, but I feel that way about a lot of books that I see in the bookstore, so I guess that shouldn't surprise me. I swear, I've tried to read various Pulitzer Prize winners and I usually only get one or two chapters done then I quit.

Now that AI has entered the picture, there is a big glut on the publishing front with AI-generated books. One 'author' claimed to have 'written' 200 books last year, none of which were actually written by her. Prior to AI entering the marketplace, there were over four million books published last year, so my odds of being noticed aren't very good. But that's okay. I'm doing what I enjoy doing.

In Other News

I'm pleased to announce that my book, *Crowned*, (my MacBeth book) is on the road to getting published. Edits went very quickly. I am *so* glad I have an editor who pays attention to the details because she noticed right away that I had a lot of repetitive words sprinkled throughout the manuscript (for some reason, my characters were sipping their coffee and murmuring a lot...go figure).

I ironed out that little glitch and I've reviewed the initial galley for the book. It is now in the hands of the proofreader (then back to me), then it will go to the copyeditor (then back to me), and after all of that I'll find out the release date. It will be late this year or maybe early next year.

And I have a cover. ☺

I like the way it turned out. I was a bit worried because my publisher has changed how they solicit ideas for the cover. I wasn't sure I'd get something that matched my previous books but I'm happy with what I got.

This book is set in a corporate environment with a company with Scottish roots. The murder weapon is like a dirk, so I definitely wanted that in there. I tried to find a different tartan pattern to use, but the ones I saw didn't match what I was thinking of, so I went with the usual red plaid.

What's Next?

I'm narrowing down my ideas for the cover designs. I plan to publish it starting next year. I've decided on nine books next year and six the year after. A couple of those books still need a bit of work, so I'll do that later this fall. And of course there's gardening to do, and a few travel outings ahead. I'm also considering what I might write next. It may be a mystery or I may go back to my time travel series. I came across some notes I made for a book in that 'world' which intrigue me. I might tackle that project next...

