



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?

I decided it was time to take a break so I've given myself a couple of months off. Yes, I know, it's shocking, but for the first time in a long time, I am not working on a new manuscript.

Okay, that's not exactly true. I am working on ... something. I'm not sure what it is, but characters are starting to take shape in my mind. I'm writing small scenes, bits of dialog, and ideas for what might become a new series. It's starting to take up space in my brain. I think it will be a combination of some of my previous works, the guardian angels and my reincarnation series with a bit of the paranormal thrown in.

Right now I'm just dashing off ideas as they come to me. I don't have the plot yet, but I think this will be set sometime before my big series, immediately preceding it. I am considering using this new work to set up some of the events that will happen in the series.

In between jotting and plotting I'm doing some other publishing work. I reviewed, edited, and re-published the three books in my History Patrol series. It's nice to have control of my work like this. When I republished them several years ago (after the rights reverted to me) I had a slightly different writing style.

Now I went back and looked at those books and made a few edits. I want them to fit in with the timeline for my series, so I ended up changing some dates here and there. I also made some allusions to events that happened in the future (or the future as I designed it in my series). I reviewed everything, made a few edits, and uploaded new version.

Then I designed new print editions for all three books. I hope to have the print books ready for release later this summer. Even though I'm using an easy-to-use system (Draft2Digital), it still takes a lot of time to choose a layout, upload the book, review the layout, upload the cover, check the colors and fonts and so on.

I have those three books designed and now I'm waiting for my author copies to arrive so I can review them and make sure they appear the same in my hand as they do on the screen. I am also reviewing some of the work that didn't get into my final edit of my main series. I've alluded to events that happened "off camera" in that series. I thought it might be fun to write

up some of those scenes. They won't be short stories or novelettes, but just little vignettes that I may or may not publish someday. Several authors have done this and it's kind of a peek behind the scenes at an author's process.

I also have an idea for another book featuring a Goldilocks character. I'm (again) just jotting down ideas, but I think my Goldilocks will be a villain and the Bears will be the victims. I have some really good ideas for that story that I want to explore later this fall with my writing group. They're always great at helping me flesh out my work.

In Other News

In between all of that I finished final edits for *Crowned*, (my MacBeth book). When I do initial edits with my editor we're working in a Word document. She sends me a document with changes noted, I make the changes and send it back.

Then we get to a copyedit phase where she does a rough formatting of how the book will look when it goes to press. This is my first chance to get an idea of the page count, chapter breaks, and line breaks. This is one page of the 200+ page book that I review. 📄

I review it line-by-line, page-by-page, to make sure the edits I made are correct, the formatting is correct, etc. If changes are needed, I send my editor a table that indicates page number, line number, and the edit needed. There are *always* edits needed. There's a bad page break, a bad line break, or a repeated word will jump out at me, or ... whatever.

After that, the manuscript goes through another copyedit process. And it comes back to me for review. And maybe more changes. Then it goes to final proofing. And it comes back to me, maybe with questions for me to answer. This is a new person who is reading the book for the first time and so a fresh set of eyes may see things I or my editor missed.

Then I get a final-final version that I have to inspect. I have a week to review it and sign off (otherwise it goes out, no matter what). Once I've done that, I get a final PDF and an .epub version with the cover attached. And then ::boom:: my publisher gives me a release date. For *Crowned*, it will be August 17 (my sister's birthday 😊)

What's Next?

I'll keep jotting down ideas and hopefully by the next time I write a newsletter, I'll have a purchase link for *Crowned* and an idea of the plot for this next book. Or not. Either way, I'm enjoying the process. I hope you all have a fun and relaxing summer doing whatever you enjoy doing. Take time to enjoy *your* process, whatever it is!

1
2
3
4
5
6 Chapter One
7 I waited patiently in line to order my coffee at the
8 shop inside the bookstore. One man was ahead of me. He
9 was studying the overhead menu with such intentness I
10 studied it, too, wondering if it changed recently.
11 Nope. It was still the same offerings usually
12 available in late May when most of the students at the
13 local college returned home. All that remained in our
14 small community were the townspeople and professors
15 like me, at least until summer session began.
16 I know that the town breathed a collective sigh of
17 relief when mid-May arrived. While Malcolm College
18 was a boon to the small Iowa town for which it was
19 named, it was also the cause of traffic jams, raucous
20 celebrations, and sometimes campus unrest. It was
21 pleasant to have a respite for these summer months when
22 only a few students remained. I remembered that feeling
23 from my growing-up here.
24 The gentleman eventually made up his mind,
25 ordering one of those drinks with multiple instructions
26 like frappe, macchiato, and whip. The clerk (*Hi! My
27 name is Tiffany!* said her badge in bright red capital
28 cursive script) noted the man's name and everything in
29 the drink using that shorthand unique to baristas.
30 She moved the paper cup to the side then greeted me
31 with a cheery smile. "What can I do for you?"
32 I handed her my well-worn coffee thermos with the
33 Fighting Scotsman logo on it. "Large coffee with