



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?

Well, I wrapped another NaNoWriMo (National Novel Writing Month) on November 30 by typing THE END of my manuscript.

Yep, I finished "Scarlet" (tentative title), my *Scarlet Letter* book. As always, my characters went off in a totally unknown-to-me direction, moving my plot sideways. I struggled a bit to figure out the ending, but I got it done. I still need to go back through and do a thorough editing, but I figure that can wait until next year.

The draft came in initially at around 60,000 words, which I feel is a bit short. So I took a few days after NaNo wrapped up to beef up the ending, add some more details throughout and generally look at what I had. When I was finished, I had 65,000 words and I expect I'll add some more when I go back and do a review next year.

Next year ... it's hard to believe that I've been in this business so long. It seems like just the other day I was so excited to have my first book release. Now here I am with 39 books out (<https://bit.ly/JLWbooks>):

Heir; Aired; Mirrored; Beached; Mazed; Whole; Pried; Dogged; Laked; Flyer; Woulds; Resorts, Regrets & Returning to Love; Lilacs, Litigation, & Lethal Love Affairs; Foxgloves, Fancy Fungus, & Fatal Family Feuds; Daisies, Deadly Force, & Disastrous Divorce Disputes; Brownies, Bodies & Breaking the Code; Candy, Corpses, & Classified Ads (the Pig Book!); Autographs, Abductions & A-List Authors; Sun, Surf, & Sandy Strangulation; Marriage, Mayhem, & Murderous Mystery Manuscripts; Homicide, Hostages, & Hot Rod Restorations; PhDs, Pornography, & Premeditated Murder; Ex-Wives, Extortion & Erotic First Editions; Gilt; Righter; Twistered; Mist; Penance; Vengeance; Compassion; Tried; Save Her; Help Her; Protect Her; If Not For You; Brilliant Disguise; Nowhere to Run; Shadow of Doubt; Lie to Me.

Whew.

And I can add *Shoed* next year to this list – yep, I just signed a contract for my Cinderella story. I expect to start edits on it sometime in January and I hope to have it release in the autumn next year.

And I already have a cover! The cover artist I normally work with is no longer producing covers, so I was a bit nervous, but I think it came out just fine – there's a farm involved and a construction site, so it works!

In Other News

Many of my books are with a publisher (The Wild Rose Press) and so I don't control the distribution or pricing. But I have quite a few that I've self-published. Because I control the distribution and pricing of the self-published ones, I thought I'd try a few promotional opportunities that have come my way.

My reincarnation series (The History Patrol) will be on sale at Smashwords starting December 15. Check out <https://smashwords.com/shelves/promos> and share the link with others who might want to find a BUNCH of books on sale for the holidays.

Many of my other independent books are on sale as well: *Save Her*, *Help Her*, *Twistered*, *Mist*, *Lie to Me* – all of them are on sale. I've marked them down through the first of the year.

So if you want to sample some of my books, now is a good time to do it!

What's Next?



I've decided that 2024 will be the year of investigation for me. I plan to look at some new options for my books. Audiobooks are top of the list along with some promotional experiments I want to try.

I am going to make a real effort to find an agent for my big series and see if I can shop that out to a larger publisher. I'm also going to work on covers for those books so if the agent thing falls through, I can go ahead and self-publish them.

Every year I choose a "word of the year" that I use as my watchword for my writing. Next year's word will be "Learn" – I want to branch out and learn about search engine optimization, keyword placement, and how I can expand my writing career. It's a whole different kind of energy and I finally have the time to focus on that. I have several manuscripts written and ready to publish, so I have no pressure to be creative. I can focus on business, at least for a time (or until I get the itch to start writing again).

And of course I plan to do some writing, do some reviewing, continue studying languages (I'm working on French, Esperanto, and Spanish), do some editing, and continue to enjoy myself in retirement. Yep, 2024 looks like it might be a fun year. I hope you all have a great holiday and I'll see you next year for new adventures in publishing.

