



As The Author Learns

Bits and Tidbits about the Publishing Process

from J L Wilson

a 'still-learning-about-it' author

What's Happening?

I had an excellent month in October. I finished writing *Lie To Me*, the next book after *Shadow of Doubt*, which will be releasing next year. LTM was a total rewrite of an old story and when I say total, I mean TOTAL.

But it felt like a really productive use of my time because I had a lot of fun revisiting the characters from *Shadow of Doubt*, plus I worked in some of the plot elements from that book into this one. The draft is now in the hands of my beta readers and I'm hoping to send it to my editor by the end of this year.

And speaking of *Shadow of Doubt*, I finished my edits for it, so it is in line for a release date. This was one of the easiest edits I've ever had to do. I credit my beta readers for helping me whip it into shape before I sent it to my editor. It was a breeze to get edited and done!

The agent I pitched to in Nashville asked for more information from me, so I sent that along to them. They wanted marketing plans, publishing statistics, biographical information -- not the kind of information tuff I'm usually asked to provide, so I had to scramble to get it all together. I think this was just part of their Standard Operating Procedure, because I got a nice rejection letter from them a week or two later. So it was interesting experience, this "Accidental Pitch", but ultimately, turned out to be a dead end. I'm not too disappointed. The publishing industry is changing on a daily basis and I suspect agents might not be that useful in the future. Only time will tell, I guess.



I'm now knee-deep in my ghost story, the one where a woman is haunted by her late husband who wants her to find out who murdered him. It's taken an unexpected turn because I'm using it as a second book after the Oz book (the one where Dorothy has to choose between the Tin Man and the Scarecrow).

The unexpected turn is that a character from the Oz book will have a major role in the Ghost Story and I didn't plan on that! It seems like these things happen all the time. What is that old expression: "Life is what happens to you when you make other plans?" Well, I think "plots are what happen when characters decide to intrude."

I'm also revisiting what I call my Big Books. This will be a ten-book series (yes, I said 'ten') about an alternate America. The first five books take place in current day. Then one book is set forty years in the future, and one is set eighty years in the future. Then, finally, *Human Touch*, *Living Proof* and *Leap of Faith* are the final books in that series – but they take place 300 years in the future.

It's challenging to incorporate plot points from those three books (one of which is already out and the other two have finished final edits and are just waiting for release). I have to make sure to add elements from those 'future' books into the 'current-day' books.

Confused? It's all just a day in the life of a working author ☺



In Other News

I'm doing a book signing in my home town on November 22 and I am looking forward to that. It's a whole-town Open House to kick off the holidays, so I think we'll have a good crowd. It's on a Sunday and all the businesses in town have a big sale and an Open House.

Also in other news, I was totally surprised to find some good reviews for my books on Amazon, reviews from total strangers. It still pleases me and stuns me when people buy my books and think they're great. If you're one of them, please feel free to drop a review for me on Amazon and other spots. Every little bit helps.

I'm making my "Conferences To Attend" list for next year. 2010 will be an interesting year because I'll be going to several conferences I've never attended before. The first one will be in March in New Orleans and that promises to be a lot of fun. Beignets, here I come!

I did a retrospective of my 'career' (such as it is) for a web site that asked for some information (I'll post a link when it's ready). I was surprised to look back and realize that I signed my first contract three years ago in August. I have all of my book covers framed and hanging on my wall in rows by year. There are four from 2007; four from 2008; and five from 2009. Next year there will be at least five, and in 2011 there will be at least three.



Isn't it amazing? Three years ago I was just starting out on this crazy adventure. I am *still* a 'learning about it all' author, but I've gotten far more comfortable with the whole process, from contracts to editing to publicity. I'm sort of glad I'm not adding an agent into the mix. That would have added a new twist to what has already been a very curvy path to publication. I wonder what lies around that next bend in the road?

What's Next?

Now it's time to get ready for the holidays! And I may be doing a bit of travel at the first of the year. I'd like to take a break and go somewhere warm and sunny, so I'm going to be planning that. Relaxation, a bit of writing, and maybe a few long naps ...

Sounds like a vacation to me!