



As The Author Learns

Bits and Tidbits about the Publishing Process

from J L Wilson

*author of mysteries, paranormal romances &
books that defy categorizing*

What's Happening?

Do you remember these prophetic words? "It looks like I'll have a few more books out next year! Yay! I submitted my three "Deadly Landscaping" novels to my editor at Wild Rose, and she has tentatively accepted them. She's read the first one, loved it, and is reading the next two."

That should teach me to speak before the contract is signed! My editor loved the books and sent me an email telling me she was forwarding them to the Senior Editor for contract approval. Then on Easter Sunday I heard back from my editor saying that she was very sorry, but the contracts had not been approved.

What?

It turns out there was a rule in place that the publisher didn't want to handle a series -- several books with the same characters. Apparently my previous series (the "Fatal Writers' Conference" series) was a bit of a fluke and was released before this firm rule was in place.

This put me into a quandary. If I had to take the books to another publisher, did that mean I should keep future mysteries with that publisher? I've tried to keep my mysteries with Wild Rose, my romantic-suspense with Resplendence, and my paranormal books with Cerridwen. I could submit the 3-book mysteries to Resplendence (Cerridwen is closed to submissions right now), but what about future books?



The publisher and I discussed it in a phone call (she's VERY accessible that way, which is unheard of with a New York publisher. That's one reason I love Wild Rose -- they really think about the authors and what's best for both of us). We had a long talk and discussed her reservations: in short, she felt there just wasn't enough romance to sustain a series.

I pointed to several reviews where the reviewers felt the exact opposite: that the balance of romance and mystery was perfect. I also noted that having a balance like that meant I could promote at mystery conferences and at romance conferences. Being a 'cross-genre' author means I have more of an audience. She wanted to think about it, discuss it with the editors, etc., so we left it at that.



It took a week but in the end they decided to buy the series. I'll tell you, what a relief! I was dreading the thought of finding a new home for my books. It's so much easier when you have (1) an editor you know, (2) a publishing process you know and (3) a built-in audience that has followed you with that publisher.

So those books will release next year. I think they'll release back-to-back, like May/June/July or maybe every other month (May, July, September). The publisher is still hesitant about it, but since I've got a good track record with them, they are willing to take the chance. This is my heads-up to you: *put those books on your calendar to buy*. Let's show the publisher she was right to take a chance. ☺

In Other News

A new book is out! Woo-woo! This is one of my very favorite books and the heroine -- well, she's so unique, even for me! Jane Renard is a college professor who has a 'secret life' as an erotic romance writer (she wrote a book on a bet and it succeeded wildly). She was at the Minnesota State Fair, watching Z.Z. Top perform in the Grandstand when her ex-husband was murdered in the crowd. Jane is briefly under suspicion but she has an alibi. Marcus Sloan, a security guard at the fairgrounds, was watching her and knows she didn't do it. (You may remember Marcus from *Homicide*, *Hostages*, and *Hot Rod Restoration*. I decided he was such a good guy I wanted him to have his own book. The next thing I knew, I was writing Jane's story with Marcus as the hero.)

Now Jane has to keep her secret life hidden (because she's up for promotion at work), help her best friend dodge a crazy ex-husband, figure out who murdered Jane's ex, and maybe fall in love at the same time with Marcus. Oh, and keep her family from meddling in everything, too. I'll tell you -- if anyone can do it, Jane can!

The book is available on April 23 in print and for download. I think I can guarantee you that you've never read about a heroine quite like Jane or a hero like Marcus -- or a story that's so much fun!

What's Next?

In two weeks, I'm off to Washington D.C./Virginia for the Malice Domestic conference. I'm *really* excited about that conference because I'm on *two* panels there -- yes, that's an update from the last newsletter. One isn't a panel, really. It's a "Round Robin" or "Speed Dating with an Author." Forty authors get to meet readers and chat about their books for 2 minutes with each group of readers then we move on to the next group of readers and keep chatting. Wish me luck! I'll give an update in the next newsletter about how it went. Until then...

Enjoy spring!

