



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?

I had a nice, relaxing month of May to get some books whipped into shape. As I mentioned before, I had three books I submitted to Wild Rose that were accepted for 2011's publishing season. They're a series of books about one set of characters, so I decided to edit all three at one time, one right after the other. It really helped me focus on the characters, the changes they go through (their "arc" as it's called in write-speak), and to focus on some of the plot elements I wanted to get straight.

One of the big problems I had was that there wasn't much conflict between the hero and heroine in the second book ("conflict = action" in the book world). My editor wanted me to beef up the problems they had. So I had to throw out a few scenes, add an argument, up the ante on their relationship, and change things around. That took me a few weeks of serious, nose-to-grindstone work. I haven't heard back from my editor yet, so there may be more edits in my future.



After I finished those three books, I tackled another book for 2011. This is a follow-on to the book releasing at the end of June (more about that later). *Lie To Me* is one of the first books I ever wrote, and I had some serious rewriting to do before I submitted it. But amazingly enough, it was bought on proposal, so I didn't really have to do a lot of editing...until now. I worked on that for a week or two and just submitted it to my editor. I'm hoping to get a release date for next year, perhaps at mid-year. That will give me 5 books next year (the three I just submitted, *Lie To Me*, and the final book in my New Human series, *Leap of Faith*, which is already edited and ready to go).

All that editing is finally behind me so I thought I might tackle a new book. It's going slowly, but I'm enjoying the process. This is my ghost story: a man dies and comes back to haunt his wife, who is trying to find out who killed him. It's a mystery story with an odd little twist to it. I'm working in some characters from the Oz Book (which I have not yet submitted to an agent or editor), so I have to be careful to add just the right amount of detail and allude to their 'past' story. And after that... yes, I have another one I want to tackle this summer. Then I'll return to my science fiction series in the fall, all rested and ready to go.

That's the plan, at least!

In Other News

I did a presentation at my local writers' group about my "Journey of a Novel", or "How I wrote *PhDs, Pornography, and Premeditated Murder*." I enjoy talking to the group about my mysteries. Most of the writers there are romance writers, so they're always intrigued about how I come up with my murders. And *PhDs* is a bit unusual since I kill off the victim at the Minnesota State Fair in the grandstand at a concert. Trust me - it's dark enough for all kinds of deeds to go unnoticed! That's what gave me the idea ☺

What else is happening this month? Yep - a book release! How could a month go by without a book releasing? This one has a special place in my heart. They all do, really, but this is one that I plotted with a group of friends on one of our annual retreats at the casino - those marvelous weekends where we get away and throw out ideas and brainstorm books. We were in the casino, eating dinner at the buffet, and I said, "I wonder if I could kill off somebody in the middle of a crowded casino?"

That set off a chain reaction of possibilities, one of which I used for this story. Of course, the manner of death is only part of it - I had to come up with the story around the murder, why it happened, and so on. What evolved was my "Murder at the Casino" book where the hero and heroine are thrown into the middle of an inheritance battle on an Indian reservation (casino=reservation in my part of the country).

The main characters were secondary characters in *Brilliant Disguise*, which is one of my favorite books. I thought they were such great personalities that I wanted them to have their own story. In *Shadow of Doubt*, Margaret and Nathan travel to western Minnesota in order to settle the estate of Margaret's dead uncle. But when they get there they find the lawyer they were supposed to meet dead - frozen to the ground (yes, this can happen in Minnesota in the wintertime. Trust me. It gets *that* cold). What happens after that is a mix of betrayal and murder and (of course) love.

Check my web site at the end of the month for information about purchasing, etc. I think this book will be released digitally first then probably in print during the summer. So I'll update you on its availability as the months pass.

What's Next?

The last travel of the year is coming up, to Denver. This is the first time this conference has ever been done, so I'll be curious to get in on it on the ground floor, so to speak.

After that I plan to wrap up my ghost story and tackle another book I wrote long ago but have never edited. It's my "Murder at the Resort" book, about a summer romance (sort of like "Dirty Dancing" with a murder thrown in). That should take me to fall and by then I suspect I'll have some new ideas to keep me going!

More on that later...

