



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?

Before I get into news, here's my yearly "opt out" info:

I send my newsletter to people who requested it, either by giving me their email address or by signing up via Yahoo in my Yahoo group. Well, Yahoo has discontinued the Groups functionality, so now if you were a member of that group, you'll get a notice that my newsletter is posted on my web site. You won't get a copy of the newsletter. If my personal email is hacked, I'll do what I can to prevent anyone getting your email address. My website is part of my blog on Google and as such it uses Google's privacy policies. If you don't want to hear from me, send me an email and I'll remove your name either from my email list or my group.

Okay, now the news. We did end up moving and what chaos it was. Our closing was scheduled for December 14 and our movers were coming on December 15. But Covid and other glitches hit us and we did not close on the 14th. Instead, we got a temporary "you can move in some stuff" agreement with the builder. We picked up keys on the 14th and had just enough time to measure for curtains and showers, etc.

The movers showed up at the old house on Tuesday the 15th and packed us. They got to the new house just as we had to go to the bank to sign the closing papers. So my sister filled in for us to meet the movers. Late in the day I drove back to the old house to get the cats, who had been locked in an empty room all day. They were Not Happy. But by that evening we were all moved in. Exhausted, but moved in.

We spent Wednesday with House Stuff. The cable TV person came so we got Internet and television. We put the cats into one room for the day while that was going on. Then we spent most of the day unpacking. That evening we just sitting down to a take-out dinner when one of the cats came upstairs, staggering and gasping for breath. Pandora and her brother Opie both loved to chew on tape and plastic and I thought she had some tape in her throat.

I dug out my Pre-Move notes and found the Emergency Vet info so at 6:00 that night I drove across town with her. She was barely conscious by the time we got there. Pandemic protocol meant I had to wait in the car while the vet examined her. They put her into an oxygen cage and decided they would need to do some test and x-rays. I left her there and drove home.

The vet called a few hours later and said the tests were inconclusive, so they had a specialist look at the x-rays. A few hours later (10 that night) the vet called and said they weren't sure what was going on. Something was blocking Pandora's breathing. The only way to know was to do surgery. But the doctor to do the surgery was out of town until Monday and the vet didn't think she'd survive that long.

So at 10:30 that night we drove to the vet's office and held Pandora while she was euthanized. It was such a shock--she young, our most active cat, the feistiest and the most adventurous. Of all our animals, I never thought she'd go first. That was a tough start to a new home.

We had a few other bumps along the way--the security system went off and we didn't have the code to stop it so we had BLARING ALARMS going for almost an hour. My husband finally got out the ladder and climbed up and disconnected the whole thing. And we had a spot of car trouble that was a nuisance.

But all in all: we're moved in and getting accustomed to a new town and a new schedule since I am now completely retired from my job as Master Gardener Coordinator.

In Other News

I managed to finish my "storm" book (*Thorned*) amid all the bustle. I don't think it's one of my best books; it just didn't seem to hang together as good as my others. I will need to do some editing in a few months to whip it into shape. I've moved on to the Rapunzel book (*Heir*) and hope to finish that in February.

Then I'm moving over to my Dream series for the rest of the year, working on covers and edits there. I have 17 covers to consider: 9 for the actual series, 2 for the "follow-up books", 3 for the Celestial Service, and 3 for the final books in the series that were returned to me from my publisher. I want to re-edit and self-publish those books along with the original series.

I think that will take me most of the year to figure out, right?

What's Next?

My Little Mermaid book (*Beached*) is through edits and into the final galley approval stage. I don't have a cover or a release date yet, so you'll get details in the next newsletter. That means that I need to review some of my manuscripts and decide what to submit next. I could submit Cinderella (*Shoed*) or Jane Eyre (*Aired*), or Snow White (*Mirrored*). I'll do a review of those three and decide which one comes next.

I'm also working on plans for an all-Zoom "stay-in-place" brainstorming day for the early spring so my critique alumni can all get together safely and talk about writing and get caught up. I'm aiming for March for that.

My Adventures in Retirement books are doing well, sales-wise, but I want to kick up the promo for those. I also want to do some more promo for my backlist and for *Beached* when it releases. And let's not forget gardening -- I have a whole new landscape to consider. I think that will keep me busy through the spring!