



As the Author Learns

Bits & bites about publishing & writing from

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What's Happening?

Well, it's been six months since I retired and six months since we moved to our new house. I think I'm finally getting the hang of this whole retirement thing.

It's taken me awhile to figure out a new "schedule" for my day. For decades my mornings and afternoons (and the occasional evening) were taken up with Real Work. I did all my fun writing from six at night until ten or so. All of the other publishing stuff -- promotion, editing, marketing, research -- I wedged in here and there wherever I could find time.

Now I can actually take some time to *think* about what I want to do. I've attended a couple of virtual publishing conferences. The workshops are recorded so I can view them whenever I want. That's been useful and I've gleaned some information here and there. When it comes to promotion, it all sort of boils down to *how much do I want to do?*

I think we know the answer to that: the bare minimum. I'm not comfortable going to big conferences and book signing events anymore -- too many people, too many germs (yeah, I'm getting sort of germaphobic, I guess). I don't mind interacting online with readers -- give me your questions or invite me to your 'event' and I'm glad to join in.

But I don't want to spend a lot of time and energy on that. I want to enjoy what I love doing: writing books. I think now that I've had ample time to really consider this, I know that's what I'll do. I'll write the books and reach out occasionally to libraries and groups, and just let sales happen or not. I don't want this to become a job. I'm retired! I want to enjoy it.

That's all led me to my new 'schedule', which can be rescinded at any moment depending on my mood. I spend morning on Business. I'm transferring older self-published books to a new distribution platform, so I need to review and edit those (I can keep the old covers. I like them). I'm also editing the Dream series and getting that whipped into shape. I'm roughing out ideas for several novellas which will take place within the timeframe of the multi-generational series.

Yes, novellas. I think that's a good way to fill in some of the details. The initial series is nine books spanning four years. The next book takes place sixty years later. So I'll use novellas to

fill in some of the gaps about what happened and what got us to where we are now. The next book (which I want to write) will take place twenty-five years after that (eighty years after the initial series). Then the final book takes place about a hundred years after the initial series.

Ambitious planning, right? I'm making notes for all kinds of short stories and novellas. I've never written those before (it's hard for me to write "short"), so that will be a challenge. But I'm excited about the opportunities this presents.

In Other News

Yes, you guessed it -- another book coming soon.

Well, maybe not soon. Probably early next year. This is the cover for *Snow White and the Seven Jocks*, which I sent off to my editor a couple of months ago.

The edits have gone very quickly. Next I need to do my galley review, then we can get it in the pipeline for release. A galley review normally takes me a day or two to get done, so hopefully it'll be on my editor's desk soon (galley reviews are also really tedious to do because I need to look at every single line in the book and how it looks on the page and make sure all the other edits I wanted are in place. Boring).

The cover has the two main parts of the story: the theater (the hero is an amateur musical theater actor) and the sports icons (yeah, basketball and soccer don't figure in the story but it was hard to find an image with just golf, baseball and tennis in the shot).

This means I need to consider which book to submit next. I'm leaning toward *Shoed*, which is my Cinderella book. But I might submit *Aired*, which is my Jane Eyre book. Decisions, decisions.

What's Next?

I want to start writing a new mystery. It's nice to do a mystery in between edits to my Dream series. It's two completely different kinds of writing, so it keeps me on my toes. I think I'm going to tackle drumroll ... *Dracula* next. I know -- vampires are so last year, right?

Well, my *Dracula* won't be a vampire. I'm not sure who she'll be (yes, I believe my *Dracula* will be a she) or what the story will be. I may just do some reading and then when I go on my brainstorming weekend in October, we'll flesh out (heh heh) the ideas so I can start writing. Until then, I'll keep editing, writing, and enjoying where I am! ☺

