



# As the Author Learns

Bits & bites about publishing & writing from

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## What's Happening?

I managed to soldier through November (elections and NaNoWriMo) and succeeded in doing 45000 words written that month in *Beaked*, my Ugly Duckling story. Within the first seven or eight pages my characters completely took over the story.

I know that authors often talk about this and you're thinking, 'wait a minute, how could that be?' but it's true. For example, my main female protagonist, Lani, was in conversation with her business partner and she pulls out a contract that has a blue logo.

Why?

Because she has trouble reading and by color coding things, it makes it easier for her to immediately grasp what it means. They use different color logos to indicate which type of contract it is.

I did NOT plan that she would have a learning disability but I guess she does. And where did that come from? Well, she had a fraught childhood because of illness and abuse. I had no idea it caused learning disabilities, but hey – I guess it did.

I am now within a chapter or two of finishing it. My goal is to have it done by December 20 (a totally arbitrary deadline). I'd like to wrap it up before the holidays and let it sit for a few months then I'll go back and re-read it and see if it all hangs together.

As a break from writing, I've also been reviewing my series, all 15 books of it. This is, I think, the last time I'll need to edit it. I've gone through it and made sure I have the details all annotated and saved, which means I'll be able to finally put my old system away. That was my goal for this review. I had one database system in use that I transferred to a new system. Well, I've checked and double-checked the new system, so I think I can delete the old one.

I've done different kinds of reviews of all my books, but the system I'm using now is the best. I create a PDF of the book then I transfer it to my tablet, where I can read it online and make annotations. It's like printing it but I don't have to use hundreds of pages of paper to do it. And these are BIG books, so I would use a LOT of paper.

This story is satisfying because (1) I kill off a lot of the human race with a pandemic, including almost all of the government and the jerks in it; (2) I rebuild society the way I think it should be done and (3) I kill off a lot of the world religions (big win).

Sometimes it's fun to be a writer.

When I see the mess the world is in today, it's so nice to envision something different. As I plan my books I always aim to be not necessarily factual, but believable, in my writing. This means that some of the things I envision probably could never happen.

But you know what? It's my story and I can write it the way I want to write it. As long as it seems even remotely possible and it's been entertaining, I figure I did my job.

## In Other News

My Red Riding Hood book was accepted for publication and I'll be starting edits on that next year.

I set this book in one of my favorite spots, the Boundary Waters wilderness in Northern Minnesota. The main character, Rebecca Evelyn Danforth (Reddy) runs a wilderness outfitter store, planning trips for people who want a camping experience.

The canoe and the camping gear in the cover is spot-on. I'm not sure I like the color of the middle banner but <shrug> it's fine, I guess.

I brainstormed this book at one of my casino getaways. I confess, I was a little concerned that my villain might have seemed just the tiniest bit \*too\* psychotic. But my editor thought I had the right amount of crazy, so yay!

Another book to be added to my library.

## What's Next?

I'm trying to simplify my life and get more efficient, so I've decided that I will no longer be sending out a paper copy of my newsletter. If you've received a paper copy and would still like to get a newsletter, you can send me your email address and I'll send you a PDF copy. Just drop me a line at [jayellwilson@yahoo.com](mailto:jayellwilson@yahoo.com), and I'll add you to my list.

Or you can always check my website where I upload my newsletter. Past copies are here: <https://jayellwilson.blogspot.com/p/news.html>.

Now it's time to consider goals for 2025. I've done a lot of research on creating audiobooks, so I may tackle that for some of my self-published books. I think it's time I started publishing my series. I have a couple of new ideas for new mysteries. And I need to review the ones I've written and haven't submitted yet.

Sound familiar? Yep. Wish me luck! And good luck to us all in 2025.

I think we'll need it ... 😊

