

### The Ten Things You and Your Book Need After Writing “The End”

#### You: Courage

- Let people read your work
- Not your mom
- Pay professionals
- Barter with professionals
- Editors
- Beta readers
- Sensitivity readers
- Query

#### You: A Thick Skin

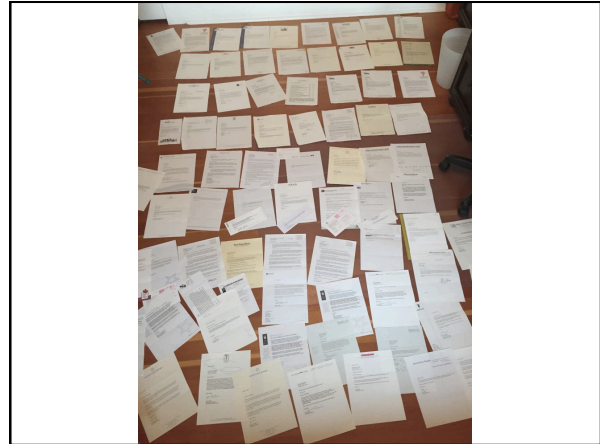
- Seek out criticism
- Listen to criticism and feedback
- Be prepared for LOTS of rejections
- Be prepared for bad reviews
- Be prepared to FAIL
- Know when to give up

#### You: Patience

- Set manuscript aside for 2 weeks to a month after “the end”
- Give readers time to read
- Reflect on feedback for a few days before responding or reacting
- Agents will respond within hours or up to a year later
- At least two years from contract to publish

## You: Perseverance

- Chances are you won't sell your first book
- "Debut" doesn't mean first book
- You will be rejected A LOT
- Never assume reasons for rejection
  - "the book is bad. I'm bad"
  - No one wants books about X
- Try multiple avenues
  - Querying agents
  - Querying direct to publishers
  - Entering contests
  - Taking part in pitch events online or at conferences
  - Indie publishing



## You: At least two good manuscripts, the more the better

- Make them different genres but the same category
  - i.e. adult SF and adult mystery
  - i.e. middle grade fantasy and middle grade contemporary
- Only pitch one at a time.
  - Agent may say "this is not for me but I like your writing. What else do you have?"
- Always start a new manuscript when you start querying the last one.

## Your Book: A polished manuscript

- Use an editor
  - Substantive editing
  - Line editing
  - Copy-editing
- Use beta readers/critique partners
- Use a proofreader
- Adapt during the query process
  - Personalized feedback from agents is GOLD
  - i.e. "Good premise but the writing didn't grab me" means punch up your writing

### Your Book: A one or two page synopsis

- One or two sentences per chapter
- Include the conclusion
- Present tense
- 3<sup>rd</sup> person
- Writing style should match manuscript
- Not often called for but you should have it on hand
- Writing it will help your editing process

### Your Book: A one or two paragraph synopsis/pitch

- Akin to “flap copy”
- Answer WHO does WHAT, WHERE, WHY, with WHOM and WHO tries to stop them?
- Forms part of your query
- 3<sup>rd</sup> person POV
- Present tense
- Don’t reveal the ending
- Designed to entice readers
- Focus on protagonist(s)
- Avoid “character soup”

### Your Book: a one line “pitch”

- 3<sup>rd</sup> person, present tense
- Elevator pitch
- “TV Guide synopsis”
- Twitter pitch
- Can be \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ (comparables/comps)
- Use specifics
  - i.e. Not “Creatures fight a lord”

### A query letter

- Answer WHO does WHAT, WHERE, WHY, with WHOM and WHO tries to stop them?
- 3<sup>rd</sup> person, present tense
- Match the tone of the book
- Use the one paragraph synopsis
- Personalize for each agent/editor
- Include comps
- Include your bio

### What Happens When You Get an Agent?

- One or more agents will offer to represent you
- Research them. Choose wisely
- Ask a lot of questions
- Talk to them about your future
- 15% is standard commission
- Agents NEVER ask for money up front.
- They may request extensive revisions
- You should sign a very simple contract
- What do do with an "R & R"
- Auction vs pre-empt
- Advance vs royalties

### What Happens When You Sell a Book

- Your agent or editor tells you the offer
  - Advance can be anything from nothing to seven figures.
  - May sell world rights or just USA rights
  - May be a multi book deal
- You wait a LONG time for your contract
  - Decide about "first look" clause
  - Decide about ancillary rights
  - Be aware of timelines and terms
- You wait even longer for your money
- Even longer for edit notes
  - 2 or 3 rounds of edits are normal
- You are expected to do some of your own marketing

Any questions?