



EPISODE 23

*Why You're Not Writing Your Next Book
(And What You Can Do About It)*

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Hey there, everybody! This is another episode of the Author Revolution Podcast and I'm your host, international bestselling indie author, Carissa Andrews.

Well, here we are, the official first week of distance learning for kids and already I'm about to lose my ever-loving mind. And that's coming from the parent who was NOT in charge of helping the kids with school. Oh no, I was the "at work" parent and my husband Colin was managing the two kids who were home and in school. But I'll tell you, it was enough to make my brain hurt. Literally. HA! By the end of the day, I had to lie down with a massive tension headache. It felt like a migraine to me, but Colin, who actually does get migraines said that unless it's so bad I was willing to inject myself with sumatriptan, it wasn't a migraine. So... fair enough. Tension headache it was.

I'm not typically prone to tension headaches just from having kids home, but there was a lot of noise coming out of the 5yo today and it was just really hard to tune him out. Plus, it was a day full of back and forth with about twelve different people, so I was multitasking like a lunatic. Needless to say, my own writing didn't make it. I got 174 words down on the page and that's all. That also makes me kinda grumpy. So, here's hoping today is better.



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So, today, we're here to talk about when to cut one book loose and start on the next one when you're in a rapid release scenario. I know for some of you who maybe only have a couple of books under your belt, the idea of starting a second book, let alone ANOTHER book seems a bit out there. But if you've been doing this for a while, maybe the idea isn't as far-fetched, but you just want a better idea of when to start the next one rolling.

First things first, it really does come down to the rapid release style you choose to go with. If you're not sure about that, I encourage you to do one of two things. First, head over to podcast episode #6. In it, I go into detail on the different types of rapid releasing styles. You can find it by going to authorrevolution.org/6. Next, check out the ribbon at the top of that same page and click on the Take Quick. It will give you more details about which Rapid Release style is jiving with you right now, based on the way you answer the questions.

For the sake of this podcast, I'm going to assume you want to either do one of two things: release a book a month in continuum or rapid release a finite number in a series of books (like I'm doing for the Windhaven Witches this year). All of the other styles will fit around the two types, but it's really up to you on how you go about doing it.

Okay, so let's actually start with the finite number of books in a series, since that's what I'm doing right now and literally just swapped from working on Secret Legacy, which was book 1 in the Windhaven Witches series, to Soul Legacy—which is book 2. For me, because I believe in manifesting stories in a combination of planning and pantsing, I have already worked hard at developing the storyline for this series in advance. I did both a skeletal outline and more detailed chapter outlines before I ever sat down to write. Because of this, it's very easy for me to know when one book is done because I've planned the whole thing out. I write sequentially, so I go from Chapter 1 to Chapter 30, typically without much bouncing around. So, when I get finished with Chapter 30, I typically won't go back and look at it again unless there's something I know I want to fix.



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Then, I run the files so I can send them to my ARC team and I move on to the next book right then and there. No, I don't typically take a big long break between books - because these ones are part of an overarching theme and I don't want to lose track mid-stream. Because believe me, you can. I do keep my eye on the calendar, so I know when I need to send off the books to the editor, though. So for example, when I sent *Secret Legacy* to the ARC teams, I also sent it to the editor at the same time. But with the next three, they will be with advance readers (both beta and alpha readers) months in advance of going to the editor. What matters is that they do get looked over, because we're all human and having more sets of eyes on a book will help tremendously.

Sometimes, when we're new to writing, we hold on to the first draft, not wanting others to look at it until it meets our idea of perfection. But I'm here to tell you, that doesn't exist. And waiting for that will either do one of two things: make you freeze and do nothing, or give you permission to sit and work on it forever. Neither of which are beneficial to you or your book.

As authors, we have to realize that our creations will live outside ourselves at some point. We have to be willing to let them go and allow other people to embrace their worlds and fill us in on things we may have missed. I've gotten some of the best story ideas when I've had brainstorm sessions with my beta readers. And you know what? My books end up better for it. (Eh-hem, thanks Colin, Sherry, and Jenny!)

The moral of this part of the story is to really make sure you put together a solid ARC (or advance reader team) who can read your books as you're writing and before you hit publish. Ideally, anyway. Then, when the books are in their hands, you move on to the next one. Make sense?

Now, if you plan to work your way up to rapid releasing a book a month, not only do I commend you for this endeavor, but I also highly encourage you to think about how far in advance of yourself you want to get to feel comfortable. Ideally, you want to have written 6 books to 12 in advance of you publishing the first one. That way, you're always months ahead of your current release.



I mean, come on, life happens. Look at the whole quarantine situation we're finding ourselves in right now. In February, I doubt many of us could have foreseen ourselves here. Yet, here is where we've landed. But even so, other life events can come between you and your writing. Just like my kids and bazillion work-related tasks today. I got 176 words on the page, not 1700. Will it set me back? Sure will. Will it derail me? No it won't. And that's because I've built in time head of myself. Secret Legacy isn't launching until September and it's already back from the editor - in March. Soul Legacy will be done by the end of April and it launches in October. See what I'm saying? So, in case you're curious, when you have a finite series number, this tip will work fine for you, as well. For those who are trying to do a neverending series that launches monthly, giving yourself that six to twelve month launch runway, while it might suck as you're writing them and waiting to release them, it will be a lifesaver when you finally get that train moving.

I will also mention that for some of you who struggle getting your writing speed up, now is also the time when you want to be considering co-authors. I know we haven't talked about it much, but I'll probably do a podcast episode on this down the line. So, let's say you're only a couple of months ahead of yourself and you want to grow that space out a bit. Maybe find another author who you can write together with and increase your speed.

The biggest thing I really want you to take away from this episode is that when you're rapid releasing, you'll always know when it's time to work on the next book because you'll be planning for it. So as soon as you're sending the one you're on to your advance reader teams, it's time to start working on book 2 or 3, etc. The game changes when you're no longer striving for perfection, but instead, taking imperfect action.

All too often, when we're just starting out, we have this idea that our books have to be perfect or they can't go out into the world. I felt that way, for sure. It's why I hired two different editors to do Pendomus. And you know what? It still went out with mistakes. But you know what? That didn't detract from the story. Did I get some reviews mentioning the mistakes. Sure. Did some of them doc stars because of it? Again, sure.



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But when you write a good book and they can overlook those few mistakes, most still give you a three or four star. Pendomus has a 4.3 star rating on Amazon, my lowest rating, I might add, but it was my first book baby. It was also my first audiobook baby. So the poor thing can't catch a break in being done to the same level as my newer books. But you know what? It existed to blaze the trail for the ones that came next. That's the goal you're striving for, too.

Next week, I want to talk about making bold moves—and in specific, how to take imperfect action. One of my amazing clients right now just launched her first book and did this beautifully, so I want to share some of her story with you.

If you haven't subscribed to this podcast, I would love it if you'd do so today. Every week I strive to bring you valuable, actionable tips you can take in your indie author career and I don't want you to miss a single one. After all, when we all do better, we all do better. And I certainly want that for both of us.

Well, that's a wrap on this week's podcast episode. I hope you have a terrific week ahead. Stay safe, stay home, but get outside and enjoy some fresh spring air. Yes, even authors need some, too.

So, go forth and be awesome.



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