

## Welcome, Writers!

I have a huge passion for reading books, and I'm a big believer in the more authors there are the better, so I'm excited for you that you're pursuing writing! Unfortunately, I am **not** skilled or equipped to mentor and/or teach budding writers—it's just not my passion and I sadly do not have the time. So I'm not going to release a writing book or ever start a podcast about that sort of thing.

However, there are a lot of commonly asked questions I want to address—because as much as I would love to I unfortunately can't respond to all the email inquiries I get—and I've curated a list of useful resources that helped me get started in the industry of indie authorship. ***This pamphlet will be updated whenever I find a new resource or come up with another commonly asked question!***

You can use the table of contents below to skip to the section you want, but I do suggest working your way through the entire resource list.

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## Resource List

*There are a lot of writers out there who are far more knowledgeable about writing and the publishing industry than me, and I could never cover everything they have. So here's a list of the resources I have found the most helpful!*

*(Note: All the podcasts and youtube videos are FREE. If you're on a tight budget, check those out first!)*

### **Books on writing:**

*DIY MFA: Write with focus, read with purpose, build your community* by Gabriela Pereira : **This is the book to get if you're starting out.** The book is designed to help you get your own personalized version of a Master of Fine Arts degree. It runs over how to write your book, editing, how to learn from other books/do research, and it does a great job explaining the publishing industry.

*How I Write* by Janet Evanovitch: This gives you a great, overall picture of what writing a book is like, and how you can make it easier and swiftly improve. *(Your local library system more than likely has this book as Janet is a big-name author!)*

*No Plot, No Problem* by Chris Baty: This book is useful in teaching you how to push through and finish your first few manuscripts. *(Your local library system likely has this book as well.)*

*The Emotion Thesaurus* by Angela Ackerman and Becca Puglisi: This book is great for character expressions—something that can get repetitive really fast.

*Save the Cat! Writes a Novel:* By Jessica Brody: This book is all about story structure! If you love to outline, or have a problem with saggy middles, this book is all for you!

*Dear Ally: How Do You Write A Book?:* By Ally Carter: Calling all young writers, this novel is for you! Ally Carter is a huge YA author, and she does a phenomenal job of laying out the entire book writing process in this manuscript. Writers who are specifically looking to get traditionally published will find this book helpful as well.

*Wired for Story* by Lisa Cron: This book is **advanced!** It doesn't dig into writing (so there aren't chapters that teach you how to outline or create a character arc) but it takes a look at what makes a story *good*.

### **Books for marketing:**

*Write to Market* by Chris Fox: Read this BEFORE Launch to market. It takes a look at how/what you should write if you want to snag a lot of readers.

*Launch to Market* by Chris Fox: The follow up book that takes a look at how to successfully launch a book that has been written for a specific market.

*How to Write Sizzling Synopsis:* by Bryan Cohen: This is the book to read if you're starting to craft your book summary to go up on product pages. Plus Bryan is hilarious, so it's worth reading just for the laughs alone.

*Blogging for Writers* by Robin Houghton: This is an excellent reference book if you're trying to decide what platform to blog with, what to blog about, and more. If you are at all interested in blogging I highly recommend you give this book a peek!

**Books for Increasing your writing speed:** *Writing your first book is a difficult, new process. Pressuring yourself to finish it ASAP when you haven't yet established a flow is going to make you miserable. So if you're a first-time writer I would recommend using these books as guides until you hit your stride and then try to crack down on your speed.*

*2k to 10k* by Rachel Aaron: This book is *the* building block for learning how to increase your writing speed.

*5,000 words per hour* by Chris Fox: This book is especially helpful if you struggle to find time to write!

## **Industry News**

[The Passive Voice](#): Posts daily updates linking to articles/videos/blog entries about the writing/publishing industry.

**Magazines:** *Note: Your local library system likely has a subscription to one or both of these, I highly suggest checking them out there as the issues can sometimes be hit or miss.*

The Writer  
Writer's Digest

## **Videos:**

[Chris Fox's Youtube Channel](#): This channel is great to check out no matter where you are in your journey as a writer. It contains videos for outlining your novel, motivation, how to edit your novel, increasing your writing speed, etc. (A new video is released nearly every week.)

[Jenna Moreci's Youtube Channel](#): Jenna is a very personable (and funny!) author who digs into the craft side of things in her youtube videos—like how to outline your novel and write dialog. She's most well known, however, for her "Top 10 Pet Peeves," which is a series of videos where she dives into cliché/over used bits of writing—like unrealistic characters, overused romance plots, and so on. She does swear, but she has some really great insights.

[Terrible Writing Advice](#): This channel uses sarcasm and wit to dig into clichés and issues that make a book flat and less appealing. If you're trying to up your storyteller game, this channel is a much see! (New videos every month!)

[The Writing Gals](#): If you write romance, or want to improve your romance craft, this show is a must see. It's available only on Youtube, and is hosted by four sweet romance authors. Usually it's just them, but they do occasionally have amazing guests—they did a two-week special about taxes and had a tax lawyer come on to give everyone a detailed explanation. This is the *only* show I've seen that ever gets into the nuts and bolts of sweet romance and discusses various ways to improve your romance subplots. They also have a **facebook group**, but I personally have learned the most from their show. (A weekly show held on You Tube live, so you can watch it live and ask questions if you like.)

**Podcasts:** *There's so many amazing podcasts out there, and it's almost certain that you don't have enough time to listen to them all, but I highly recommend you go through the archives of these podcasts and listen to anything that interests you. All of these shows can be downloaded to your smart phone, ipod, etc, so you can listen to them on your commute or while you're walking the dog!*

[Sci Fi and Fantasy Marketing Podcast](#): Three hosts (successful indie authors Lindsay Buroker, Jeffrey Poole, and Joseph Lallo) interview other successful indie authors to learn about what they are doing and why. A new episode is posted every Tuesday night/Wednesday morning. A GREAT resource for anyone interested in fantasy or sci fi. **Note: this podcast is no longer active...technically.** Two of the hosts have gone on to start a new podcast: [Six Figure Authors](#). It's the same type of show, but even better because now they interview authors from all genres! (But you should still go through the sci-fi & fantasy podcast archives as there are some great past episodes.)

[The Sell More Books Show](#): Hosts Jim Kukral and Bryan Cohen tackle industry news, new author tools, book marketing strategies and more in their weekly show. If you're looking for something that will keep you up to date on the industry and have fun along the way, this is absolutely your show.

[The Creative Penn Podcast](#): Mega-star indie author Joana Penn tackles a wide assortment of topics in her weekly show. Like most podcasts, she interviews other writers, however, she covers a lot of topics you wouldn't see in your usual indie-author focused podcast. (Like coloring books, having a youtube platform, and writing short stories) She also commonly has guests that look at the nuts and bolts of writing (developing setting, characters, etc) while most podcasts focus on marketing ideas.

[Spa Girls](#): The SPA Girls are a group of female New Zealand writers who cover a wide array of topics—from newsletter to dos, to author branding, to ways to improve craft! They usually interview other authors, though they also do round table discussions as well.

**Blogs:** *There are some amazing author blogs out there that tackle everything from the nuts and bolts of writing, to marketing and tracking promotions. Each blog will be a mixed hat, but most of them do tend to specialize.*

[Amy Laurens](#): If you check out Amy's blog you'll see on the right side of her site is a box that lets you select the blog post topic you would like to read up on. She's got a section for writing that is positively masterful! She's covered everything from geography and world building (*a MUST READ if you're writing an Epic fantasy*) to mastering plotting!

[DIY MFA](#): *Write, Read, Build, Discover*: I list the book in the book section, but Gabriela Pereira has a massive site online with articles, podcasts, and more. This site mostly tackles the writing side of the business, but it does have some community-building advice as well.

## Cover-Artists and Editors

### Cover Artists:

My cover artist, *Myrrhlynn*, has done the majority of my covers and has done a stellar job. Unfortunately she's uninterested in working with anyone else at this time. However, [Nibelart](#) did all the covers for my "Second Age of Retha" A. M. Sohma series, and he is open for commissions!

[DDD](#) (Deranged Doctor Designs) did all the cover art for my *Fairy Tale Enchantress Series*! (Note: DDD is in high demand—they usually schedule about six months out. So if you know you want them to do your covers, submit your request ASAP!)

Otherwise, a good place to look for cover artists would be on the searchable database [Reedsy](#) or by trolling through the art website, [Deviant Art](#). (I found [Nibelart](#) through Deviant art!)

Otherwise, if you check out some of the podcasts I recommend they tackle cover art in various episodes so you can do a search in their archives and listen to those as well!

### Editors:

I have one main editor: Editor #1, the Comma Queen, and several amazing beta readers! Unfortunately, Editor #1 isn't available to take on new clients at this time. However!...

I also used to work with a second editor, whom I fondly called the Stylistic Wizard. Although I no longer work with her, I still highly recommend her—she taught me so much stylistically speaking and in storytelling—you can find her at [A Little Red Ink](#). (Her name is Bethany!)

But if you're still on the prowl for an editor, fret not! You can use the searchable database [Reedsy](#) to find an editor—and there are hundreds of them on there.

I found Editor #2 by looking through the copyright material of books similar to mine, and finding her name listed as an editor. (Copy right material appears as exemplified below, usually in the front of the book so you can see it on the free sample Amazon shows.)

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST  
Copyright © 2013 by K. M. Shea

Cover design by Myrrhlynn  
Edited by Jeri Larsen and Bethany Kaczmarek

Otherwise, if you're lucky enough you'll find a qualified reader to help you! I am so blessed because Editor #1 reached out to me after she suffered through my first version of *Beauty and the Beast*, and offered to help me edit it. Keep in mind when I say blessed, I mean I am *indescribably blessed* because Editor #1 is amazingly talented and finding someone like her would be like looking for a needle in a haystack, so you might be surprised at just how talented some of your readers are!

If you're a little tight on cash you could ask readers to serve as Beta Readers—meaning they'll help you stamp out errors and typos in exchange for getting free, early copies of your book. I know some new authors have had great success releasing the first few chapters of their books on websites like Wattpad, and then contacting knowledgeable readers who leave reviews, and asking them if they would read the rest of the book. Otherwise, try to pay careful attention to your emails and messages. Occasionally you'll get readers who will offer to help you proofread a book!

## Maps

[Daniel's Maps](#) made the map of my Timeless Fairy Tale world, and I *highly* recommend him. He's fast, detail-orientated, and simply brilliant at what he does. Ilari Nikkarikoski created my Verglas map—you can reach her at [ilari.nikkarikoski@gmail.com](mailto:ilari.nikkarikoski@gmail.com)

Otherwise, check out the [Cartographer's Guild](#)! You can post about the map you're looking for, and various cartographers will respond with their pitch. I linked up with Daniel and Ilari through this guild, and there are some simply *stunning* mapmakers out there. This place will not disappoint you!

## Website

My nifty website was created by [Design by Insight](#), and runs on a wordpress.org engine. (I think I got that right. Honestly I threw myself at Erin's feet and begged her to help me. She's a Coding Magician, so my website is the end result!) My site is hosted on Siteground—which thus far has been a great place for us.

If you're looking for a cheaper option, you can't beat wordpress.com! If you pay the business subscription (I think it's about \$90 for the year) that will make your wordpress page ad free, and it opens up a bunch of different themes for you to use. If you want to get fancy you could purchase a domain name and forward it to your wordpress.com page. (I use Godaddy.com) I used the wordpress business plan and domain forwarding for several years before launching my new website, and it worked quite well!

## Other Useful Tools

For newsletters, I use and highly recommend [Convert Kit](#), particularly if you or someone you know is good with data.

For some pretty images you can plug into photoshop to create instant images of paperback books, check out [Cover Vault](#)! (It's kind of difficult to describe what Cover Vault is, so just go check it out!)

I use [BookFunnel](#) to give out copies of my K. M. Shea Starter Pack, as well as Princess and the Pea, and I can't recommend them enough! (BookFunnel is also useful to distribute books to an ARC team if you have one, or to use to distribute copies of books to winners of giveaways.)

Rock-Star-Assistant-Meg is the Empress of [Vellum](#), the program used to format my books and make them pretty for both ebook and paperback distribution. (Purchasing Vellum is a lot cheaper than paying someone to do your formatting in the long run, the only downside is you MUST have a Mac to use it!)