

“Where *have* you been?” I hear it distinctly said in Mrs Weasley’s voice, do you? The high shrill, the extra emphasis on *have*, the terror her voice evoked as her boy’s avoided looking directly at her. I’ve had that very quote running through my head for weeks now.

Life has been crazy, and I’ve not been writing much on this little corner of the web. It’s not that crazy and unusual things aren’t happening, oh they are. I mean, today for instance, I was out on my morning bike ride dodging runners, and shouting “on your right” or, “on your left” channeling my inner Captain America and all that jazz, when I suddenly screamed, “TURTLE!”

Yes, really. There was an itty bitty box turtle on the local track I was on, and I wanted to be sure that my husband heard, he was a few bike paces behind me. I also wanted to be sure that the runner coming down the hill heard. And, I don’t know, perhaps the entirety of the nearby golf course, and maybe the town.

I debated stopping to take a picture, but I was in the middle of a glorious downhill coast, and the last thing I wanted to do was miss out on the wind rushing in my face and pushing me along before I had the final uphill slog before home. So, instead I simply alerted the entirety of my state to the fact that there was an itty bitty box turtle on the track.

Then, not to be left out, a frisky squirrel ran out of the nearby brush and started running straight for me. Now, I like squirrels. I think they are quite funny to watch. Little Pistachio’s picture is hanging above my desk, and when I’m staring off into Neverland trying to find *the word* or *the phrase* that will make my current project sing, I watch her and wonder if it’s really possible for a squirrel to type.

On the other hand, having a wild squirrel pop out of the nearby undergrowth and charge straight for you is another situation entirely. I watched as it drew closer to me, and thought surely at any moment it would turn and swing back the way it had come, but it did not. It was close enough that had it wanted to, it could have jumped on me and run up my leg. Which is exactly what I was afraid it would do. That left me with only one choice: I screamed, and picked up speed.

Maybe the squirrel was trying to have fun racing me, or not, who knows. What I do know is that when I alerted the rest of the town to it's presence, it quickly stopped, stared and then ran back into the brush.

Weird and unusual things just seem to happen around here, often with very little explanation. But I'm completely off course from where I started. You know, answering the, "*Where **have** you been?*" question.

To be quite honest, I've been up to my ears attempting to write a synopsis for my manuscript. Not the nifty little blurb that you find on the back of a book, or just inside the dust jacket. Oh, do say you read those, and don't simply judge the poor book by its cover! Yes, I know, the cover sells the book sometimes, but... never mind, where was I?

This synopsis is all about taking my entire manuscript and condensing it down to just a page or two. I addressed the situation like any normal person would: wide eyed panic, denial, more panic, and putting it off as much as possible. Then, each time my poor unsuspecting husband asked if I needed anything I would say, "Yes! A synopsis of my manuscript that does not exceed the 3 page limit, and with the knowledge that less is more."

I tend to panic when I embark on an adventure of newness, do you? The problem is that I tend to glance between the finish line and the start line and instantly feel overwhelmed. It's the insane idea that the moment I step forward I will be incapable of reaching the finish line with the desired outcome. Which, honestly, I know is utter nonsense. I know that the only way to reach the finish line is by taking one step at a time, and yet my mind still plays these tricks on me.

Once the initial panic wore off and I decided the task was completely doable, I set about looking over my outline and chapters, and then began putting pen to paper. Quite literally. And then that turned into summarizing things even more and now there's a gaudy yellow post-it note hanging on the wall in front of my desk reminding me of the main plot points to my novel.

I took a breather for a couple of days before returning to the task at hand. Several million

edits later, I decided to do a quick scan to make sure I was on the right track. Oh, I was, but I made one fatal error. I read someone else's synopsis. You know, about their amazing quartet of [Sci-Fi Fairy Tales](#). Seriously, if you haven't read them you should. Anyway, I was back to feeling horribly overwhelmed again.

And then, just because I love to punish myself in odd ways, I decided I was completely sunk. Which made my writing buddies jump up and tell me to calm down and keep my eyes on the prize. I'm not saying it came together that easily, or quickly, but with a fair amount of determination, a few critiques, and some more editing I finally laid my pen down and breathed a great big sigh of relief.



I feel rather under qualified to speak about writing your book synopsis, but I also suspect that if you're a fellow writer and struggling to figure out that weird and strange thing, you might like some help, tips, or just an idea of what to do.

Having said that, there seems to be two very firm opinions on synopsis writing, the link that I found the most useful is more down the short, sweet, semi boring, just the facts thank you, method. While I read a lot of articles and surveyed a lot of sample synopsis options, I'm choosing to share one article that made the biggest impact, and fit the requirements for the submission peice I'm working on.

The [article from Jericho Writers](#) was the most helpful, and probably more so because it came with a small worksheet that helped me work through things a little at a time. The worksheet is supposed to help you write out your synopsis within an hour, it took me most of the day, but I had a lot of interruptions. Once I was able to just sit and concentrate on the work at hand, it came together fairly quickly.

The Reluctant Author

