

Imagine me throwing a handful of the confetti I keep in the drawer of my writing desk and shouting, “Happy September!” Can you picture it? All the lovely tissue paper confetti raining down and covering the floor in a splendid pastel rainbow. Some of the shiny gold pieces may blind you in the sun. Don’t worry about the mess. I’ll vacuum it up later.

For writers getting ready for [NaNoWriMo](#), September is the starting point. It’s time dedicated to coming up with a new story idea, creating characters, drawing maps, and setting up files for the approaching writing season. My local writing group meets each week during this season, and we get up to some crazy things while trying to aide each other along in fleshing out characters and story ideas.

We don’t spend a lot of time plotting, saving that for October. September prepares for October’s scaffolding. Or, in writing terms, we sharpen our pencils, select our new notebooks, ink our typewriters, and create new files on our computers.

It’s a time of excitement as we prepare to delve headfirst into a new world of characters, but I confess I’m a little nervous this year. I’ve devoted less time to mentally plotting a new story than before. I have some bare bones to work with, build from, create upon. But I’m one of those crazy writers who likes to tell myself the entire story before committing it to paper. Sure, when I type it up, things change, characters rebel, unforeseen plot twists present themselves. The unexpected outcome makes me shake my head and chuckle.

Having spent time alone with my characters prior, I’m more prepared to know how they’ll respond in each situation that arises. It’s been a while since I’ve told myself the upcoming story I plan to delve into, and I’m not sure I ever worked it out front to back. So there you have it. I’m a wee bit nervous about the whole half-baked story thing I’ve got going on.

So much so, I’ve uttered the words, “Perhaps I should read the cat book.” Aloud. You’ve may have heard of the book(s) in the [Save The Cat series](#). They offer steps to take your story from idea to completion.. I’ve never read the book, although I own it — in two different forms, no less.

But, I’ve never read it because it’s a trend. I’m the against the flow, upstream swimmer, who

couldn't care less about being different. I'm always open to improving my writing skills. Which may explain why I own a paperback and audio copy of the book.

Will I finish it in time? Find it worth applying the techniques to the routine I already use? Only time will tell. I know, I can hear you now, "Of course you can finish it, we've seen how fast you read." True. But those are fictional books that I go back through and highlight all the beautiful words and passages that make my heart sing after I'm done reading.

Non-fiction always takes me longer. A lot longer. Because I read it in small bursts, chew on it for a while, and then when I'm convinced I've digested it, I read more. I highlight, annotate, and put down a billion sticky notes as I read. The good news is, not only do I own more than one copy of this book, I'm fully stocked on post-it notes, although I may be low on post-it flags.



Writing is a strange thing. I sit down expecting to work on one thing and soon find my brain has taken a different turn. That's how this small piece was created. I'd sat down to write about some of my favorite books on writing. Clearly not the cat book, and the next thing I knew I was writing about Set-up September.

It's a lot like sitting down for an editing session and finding one day you're on fire and can make it through a couple of chapters. The next day, it takes every ounce of willpower just to make it through a couple of paragraphs.

Speaking of editing, it is the sole reason I am not as prepared for the upcoming writing season as I have been in previous years. It's made me wondering if I should delve into a fresh new story, or rewrite a couple that have been simmering on the back burner. Yet another good reason we scheme in September to be prepared to hit the ground running in November.

Now, to find where I placed my copy of Save The Cat.

The Reluctant Author.

