

# Building A New Partnership Between Readers and Writers

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## Here's The Problem Most Pro Writers Have to Contend With

**In commercial publishing, readers are numbers with dollar bills attached.** They are things to be counted.

**The writer's business relationships are not with readers, but with an editor,** who is the gateway through which all money passes, and who passes on, like the Oracle of Delphi, the pronouncements of accountants, marketing representatives, cover artists, book designers, copyeditors, and everyone else whose work goes into making the book.

A writer's personal relationship with her readers is at best something charming to the editor, and at most a problem to be dealt with, because writers who want to write stories the readers they know will like are getting in the way of all those numbers with dollar bills attached.

(I'm using **her** as my pronoun for this intro, because I'm a **her**. Mentally replace with your own personal pronoun.)

When the writer is told, repeatedly, "You're writing too smart for the demographic," or "This audience isn't looking for complex plots," or "You've stepped outside of your genre with this proposal—you need to write something like **TITLE OF LAST BOOK YOU WROTE**," what the writer realizes is this—you aren't writing for the readers who like what you write. **You're**

writing for the publisher who wants to chase faceless strangers attached to dollar bills.

## **This Is Where Indie Publishing Wins BIG**

**In indie publishing, the Oracle of Delphi is gone.** You either are your own cover artist, editor, marketing representative, book designer, etc, or you're paying them out of your own pocket, and you have to decide what's going to work best for your readers.

**Furthermore, the only readers you have are YOUR readers**—the people who like what you do. Your readers are real people who post on your blog, write you emails, cheer you on when you hit a rough spot in the current book and wail about it on your blog (Thank you for that, by the way. I really appreciate the encouraging words.), and when the book is done, your readers pay you money so they can read your story, and so you can live to write another one.

**In indie publishing, your business relationships are with your readers—and the more honest and connected these relationship are, the more both readers and writers win.**

Writers win because as they get to know their readers, they get to know what about their writing appeals to their readers.

Readers win because the more they open up about themselves to the writers whose work they love, the more these writers can tell stories that appeal to them.

On several occasions, I've put a particular, personal subplot into a story because a single reader told me of some awful thing he or she had survived, or was facing. I worked it out in one form or another in the story. I don't tell anyone, ever, what these subplots are, and I disguise them heavily so they'll resonate for the one person they're actually in there

for without saying, “Hey, I used your life.” But they’re there to offer comfort. Help, if I can see a way to help.

And they’re frequently the sections of a story other readers will write to me about, saying, “Thank you for this—it helped me get through...”

But as readers and writers, we can go deeper. We can connect through our shared love of stories, and help each other even more. Readers can help writers, in both anonymous and personal ways, to make their books better. Writers can learn who their readers are, what matters to their readers, and where they connect with readers on things like favorite authors, favorite story types, and so on.

## **So This Is What We’re Building NOW, as Readers AND Writers**

### **A COMMUNITY that will:**

- **Give readers a chance to be rewarded and recognized for helping writers improve their fiction, while you...**
- Find writers whose careers they want to actively support by...
- Get involved in the debug/ testing/ promotion part of the writer’s journey...
- Recommend favorite writers to other readers...
- And pay real money (at really good prices) to buy the books of the readers you love most.
- **And that will give writers a chance to get their manuscripts, cover art, and cover copy into the best possible shape while you...**
- Reward the readers who help you by giving them spendable points toward books, personal acknowledgement in your fiction...
- as well as other benefits through your personal websites

- While gaining True Fans through personal interaction with the readers who most love your work and who will help you grow your readership.

**Dan Allen (my site developer) and I  
are now building the first real  
software for  
ReadersMeetWriters.com.**

[LINK OPENS IN NEW TAB]

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