

GOING IT ALONE

WHY JUST WRITING YOUR BOOK
IS NOT ENOUGH!

*A PERSONAL GUIDE TO SELF-PUBLISHING
FOR THE SERIOUS WRITER*

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PART I: CLIMBING 'MOUNT PUBLISH': Developing your book for release

Let's begin ... Climbing that mountain

Your masterpiece is finished, you've approached countless publishing houses and submitted your manuscript for consideration. One after another, the crushing rejection letters keep rolling in. Routine two-liners one and all with no reasons or feedback given. Your spirits sink. Then finally, a well-known publisher decides to have a closer look at it. 'At last!' you think, spirits soaring. However, the publisher procrastinates for months, demands countless changes and gives you the run-around—slowly extinguishing your spark of optimism—and finally rejects your manuscript without an explanation. Catastrophe! You've wasted a year! 'Where to from here?' you ask timidly, despondently.

Sound familiar?

Once you dust yourself off and pick up the pieces, you begin to face the obvious question: 'What now?'

Well, I was there. I know what it feels like and, like you, I stood up, looked around and began to consider my options. I can still remember that watershed moment; most vividly.

What's green and stands in the corner? Usually, it's a naughty frog, but not that time. On that occasion it was me who was green with envy. Envy? What envy? I was looking at successful, self-published authors who had managed to go it alone without the involvement of traditional publishers. They had obviously found a way to publish their books and were enjoying considerable recognition and success. I wanted to be like them, but how? I was determined to find out how they had done it. Come, let me show you what I've learnt along the way.

The good news first: It *can* be done!

Forgive me for stating the obvious which applies to every writer: You stand or fall, you'll be judged, acclaimed or condemned, ridiculed or admired by one thing, and one thing alone: *the quality of your work*. In the end, there's nowhere to hide. This may sound tedious, but it is critically important to understand this at the very beginning, because it has a bearing

on everything we'll talk about. Every little detail counts here—and there's a lot to take in and to master—from editing and proofreading to cover design, blurb and book production, to name just a few. And once you've mastered all this, you'll have to start thinking about your website, marketing and promotion, author profile, platform and social media ...

Is that you I can see heading for the door? Stop! It isn't as daunting as it may appear right now. Just keep reading and, hopefully, it will begin to make sense and become easier to get your head around. It did so for me.

I know, it's quite a mountain you have to climb here, so let's give it a name. How about *Mount Publish*? But once you start and put one foot in front of the other, it's surprising how quickly you can rise above the clouds and glimpse the blue sky. And once you are up there, well, you can almost see forever.

However, as every experienced mountaineer knows, not only do you need the right gear and equipment, success or failure often depends on meticulous preparation and sound advice. And there's one more important thing you need: *a guide*. Come, let me be your guide. Together we can do this!

The basecamp: polish that manuscript

Make sure you create the best possible manuscript you are capable of, because anything less isn't going to work. And to do this properly and professionally, you will need help and resources.

'Help? What are you talking about?' you ask, unable to hide your annoyance. 'I'm the author, it's my book, I'm the one who's written it. I've devoted years to this project, countless hours—no, days, if not weeks—researching, and now you tell me *I need help*? My work will speak for itself. I don't need any help; thank you.'

You do—trust me! This brings me to ...

TEAM MEMBER I: The editor

TIP: You need a competent, professional editor.

Virtually all successful books on the market have been professionally edited. Without an editor, you might as well pack up now and walk away.

'But ...' you interrupt.

No buts! It doesn't matter how talented you are, how original your ideas, how meticulously you've researched your subject, or how beautifully you write, you will *need* an editor! And to find one you can trust and respect, who understands you and you can work with will, without doubt, be one of the most important decisions you'll have to make if you are serious about becoming a successful, published author.

'If what you tell me is true, how do I find such a person?'

Later. For now, it's enough for you to understand that the right editor can make the difference between success and failure, between fame and oblivion.

**** End of Chapter Excerpt ****

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