

Juliet Sampson's review of 'Not Just a Piece of Cake: Being an Author'

Good Reads 5 star.

...a Most Valuable Resource for Aspiring Writers...



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A review of a most valuable resource for aspiring writers.

As we all know it is not just a piece of cake in any profession, yes it is hard work... I remember someone once telling me that if someone who has succeeded in life tells you it has not been hard work they are lying...

Not Just A Piece Of Cake Being An Author is a true account of Hazel

Edwards long spanning career as an author. Now at the age of 70 she continues to be passionate about what she does.

Hazel's book starts with her memories of reading. This is an interesting point for everyone to think about. Who fostered your love of reading? Was it your grandparents or mother?

Deadlines are also a part of the world of a writer. Hazel discusses the importance of taking your writing seriously and setting goals, time limits and cut off dates. I have observed this with other writers who work on their manuscripts for years. Yes, I believe in editing and getting to know your characters but there is a time when you need to let go. Nothing is ever perfect and I still find mistakes in professional novels I read.

Criticism and risk taking are also mentioned. Yes all authors get rejections and rejection can be for many reasons. For example, a story of a similar nature has just been published or the budget does not allow for a new book. Do not always take the path of thinking my writing is crap so that is why it was not picked up by a publisher. Seek path B if you want to really write, re edit or start a new story, there are so many options to success.

Hazel stresses the fact about being different. It is a 'strength' rather than a 'weakness.' Another chapter discusses Literacy Speed Dating, interviewing your characters and getting to know their viewpoint. I loved reading this chapter and learning about the hippopotamus. I think if you know your characters well this will come across in your story.

As Hazel mentions, I also do not believe in writer's block. She states 'I don't believe in writer's block. I think it is self-indulgence by those unwilling to discipline themselves. Routine writing can be produced to a deadline by a disciplined professional and the quality will be acceptable.'

These are wise words from an experienced author.

Not Just A Piece Of Cake Being An Author also discusses Fan Art, Fan Mail, Witty Women Lunches, Author visits, What happens on a National Book Tour and how talk back radio draws interesting questions.

Hazel discusses the influence family and friends have had on her writing. The trials and tribulations of writing, time management, less sleep and compromise just to name a few.

In her long spanning career, Hazel has taught professional writing, adult education courses and mentored others. She discusses how she wanted to be an author from the age of six but never personally met a writer till aged 23. I learnt Mintee is the name for ‘those who are mentored.’ But Hazel also has her own self named group ‘Hazelnuts.’

I also loved reading a section that mentioned the difference between ‘an amateur writer’ and a ‘professional writer’ but will let you read the book to find this out for yourself.

Just to summarize location, settings, travel, research and how she has developed ideas for story writing are also included in the book.

Final reflections for aspiring authors.

Why do I write?

Is this something I want to do?

Nothing is easy and as Hazel says it is not just a piece of cake being an author.