

Web Serial Toolbox

Why & How To Serialize
Your Fiction Online
(for almost no money)

by Cecilia Tan

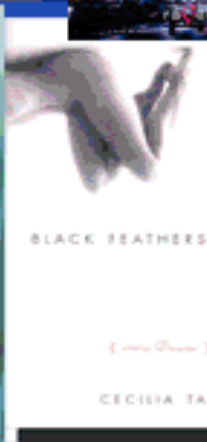
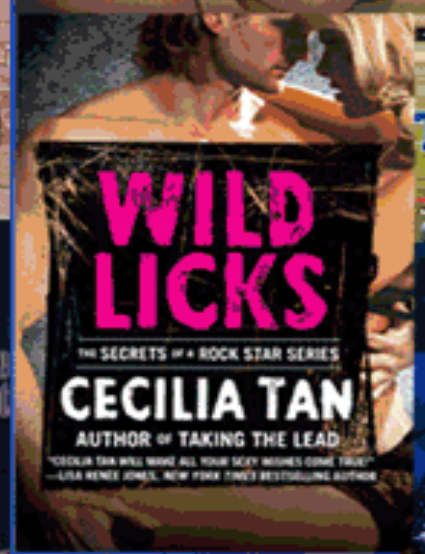
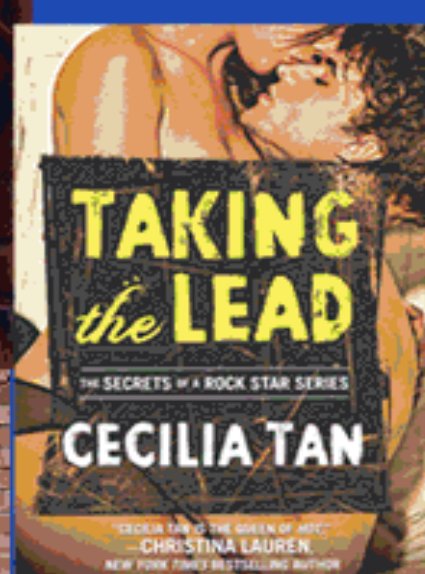
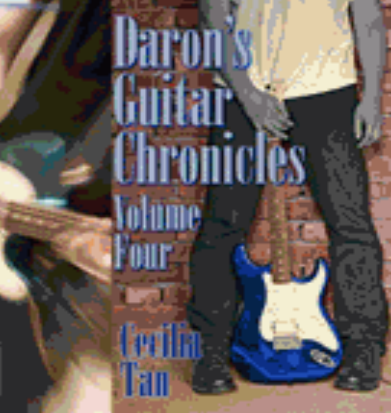
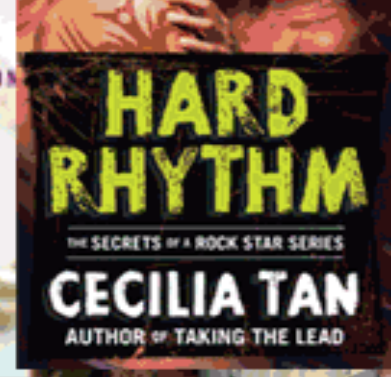
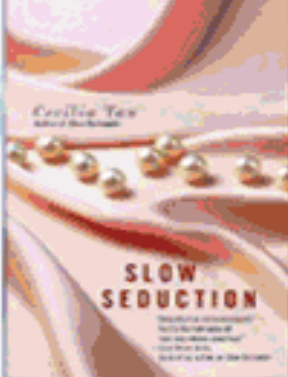
ctan.writer @ gmail.com

Twitter @ceciliatan

#serialtoolbox



CECILIA TAN



DARON'S GUITAR CHRONICLES

Sex•drugs•rockroll•the closet•the stage•the 80s

WORLD SHUT YOUR MOUTH

The first of two stylists arrived in the morning. His name was Bernard and he was a tall, willowy black man with close-cropped bleached hair, which was a striking contrast to his brown skin. I gathered from the banter going on between him and Ziggy that he was a drag queen who wasn't in his drag yet, but he would be getting into it soon enough, after he was done with us.

Every queer in New York would be getting into their drag or finery or marching boots or whatever that day. It was the day of the Pride parade. [CONTINUE READING »](#)



Posted 05 May 2016 + daron § Daron's Guitar Chronicles + Comments (39)
Tagged: people are power

LULLABY

Ziggy and I went home and fell easily into bed. The only time in my life I'd had this much sex with this little effort or argument about it for this long was while I'd lived in Spain. Well, maybe right at the beginning with Jonathan, too, but as we all know, the easy part didn't last. [CONTINUE READING »](#)



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\$0 \$100



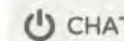
Raised so far: \$18

Progress towards a bonus post!



FORUMS

DGC discussion!



What is a web serial?

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Serialized storytelling is already the norm in

-

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- web comics

Charles Dickens (*The Pickwick Papers*) and Alexandre Dumas (*Three Musketeers*) used the emergent mass media of their era (broadsheet printing & early newspapers) to serialize to mass audiences. *Now we have the Internet.*

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 - open serials are like a soap opera
 - may or may not be posted free to read
 - most are free to read on the web
 - some are to subscribers only, or are “freemium” going first to subscribers and then free to read for all later

Why write a web serial?

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**Find readers as
addicted to reading as
you are to writing.**

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but also...

- Creative Reasons

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- Good medium for complex plots, large casts, and episodic stories.

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- Tales of MU: \$5,000 per month

- Wildbow (Worm/Twig) \$2,900 per month

- Daron's Guitar Chronicles: \$500/month

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- Reboot older books after rights reversion

Why NOT write a web serial?

- You need a lot of editing to be readable
- You don't enjoy interacting with readers
- You often start things you don't finish
- Your muse operates poorly with feedback while in process
- You're about to undergo some major life change that will disrupt your writing (i.e. relocation, start new job, have baby, etc)

Web serial best practices: creative

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- Majority of web fiction has sf/fantasy elements of some kind
 - including YA, paranormal romance, superhero, horror, dystopia, steampunk

top web fiction all · fantasy · science fiction · modern fiction · young adult

interval: 1 week

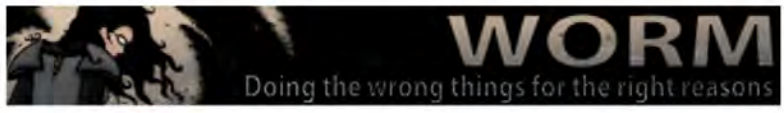
1 twig by wildbow

info | vote
319 votes



2 worm by wildbow

info | vote
233 votes



3 how to avoid death on a daily basis by mooderino
It looks like a game. It feels like a game. It isn't a game.

info | vote
220 votes

4 the zombie knight by george m. frost

info | vote
199 votes



5 savage divinity by ruffwriter

info | vote
158 votes

6 the gods are bastards by d. d. webb

info | vote
127 votes



7 **the iron teeth** by clearmadness

info | vote
117 votes



8 **heretical edge** by cerulean

info | vote
108 votes



9 **citadel** by unillustrated

info | vote
104 votes



10 **pact** by wildbow

info | vote
104 votes



11 **a practical guide to evil** by erraticerrata

info | vote
101 votes




12 **super powered** by drew hayes

info | vote
98 votes



top web fiction all · fantasy · science fiction · **modern fiction** · young adult

interval: 1 week

- 1 daron's guitar chronicles** by cecilia tan **info | vote**
13 votes

- 2 for riches or more** by lawrence ilmehouse **info | vote**
10 votes
- 3 elan meets rafa** by the mice **info | vote**
1 vote
- 4 the darker side of paradise** by jdt **info | vote**
1 vote
- 5 a few good conversations (well, at least 10)** by hans taylor **info | vote**
1 vote
Alcohol, empathy, and other poisons.

top web fiction is a service of the **web fiction guide** · to submit a story, please **use our form**
you can find more listings on wfg — each listing has a vote link under "have your say"

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- The more cliffhanger-able the better

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- Communicate with readers, reply to comments, interact, find out what works

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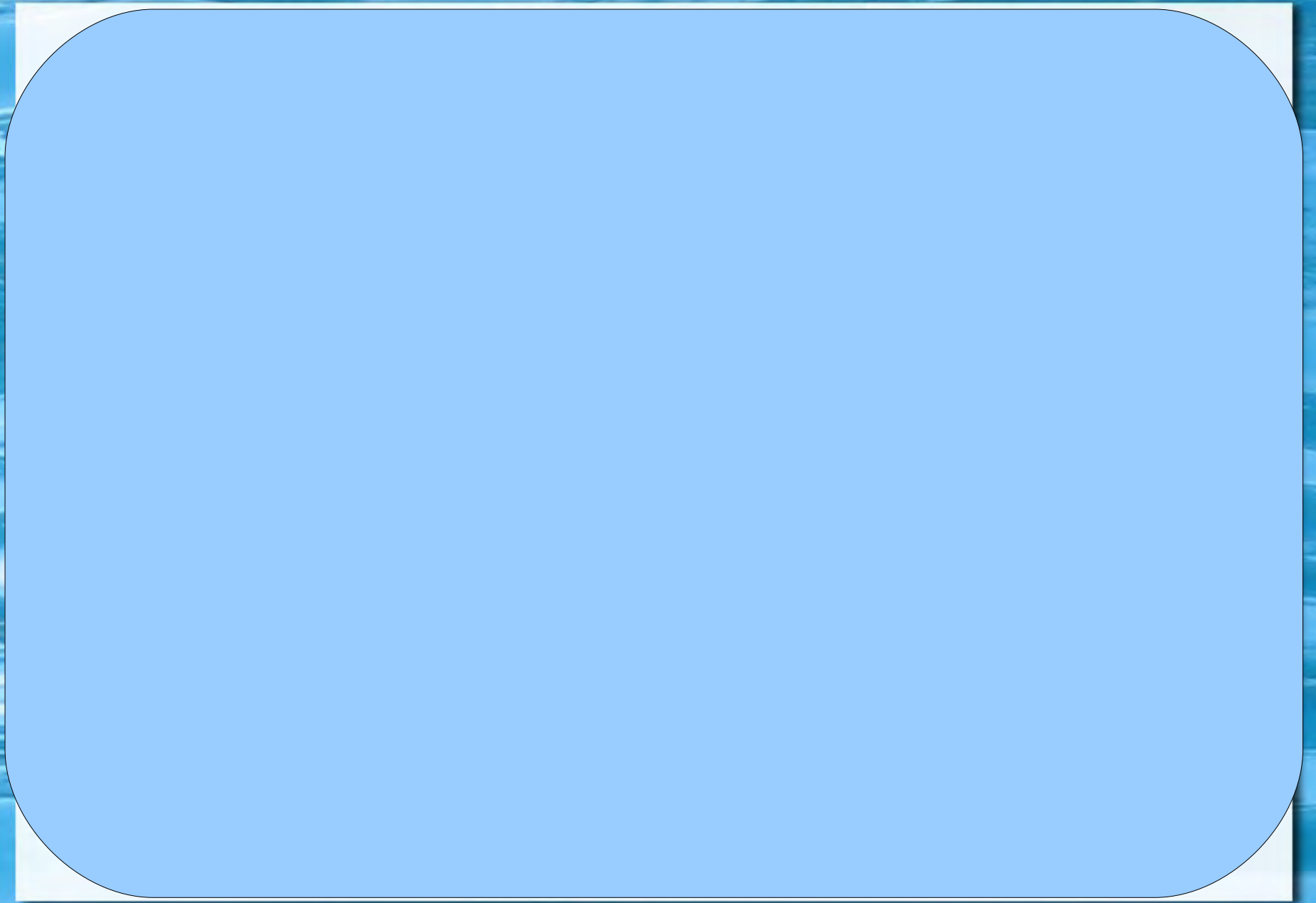
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- **WARNING:** Read TOS, beware of content restrictions, obscenity clauses, and rights grabs



Web serial best practices:technical

- In addition to your own site/blog, there are dedicated fiction serial sites:
 - Wattpad (HUGE, 100K new users join daily, 40M unique users per month. No pay.)
 - JukePop Serials (supposedly pays top serials a share of ad income)
 - Channillo (Very new. Netflix model, pays a portion of monthly membership fees but requires writers to pay also)
 - Radish (freemium) and others popping up

Web serial best practices:technical

- Wattpad: being used by DC Comics & Harlequin to build brands & readership
- Wattpad has 85% mobile users
- Wattpad has 60-65% female users
- Wattpad is best used like a social media site itself, high engagement => growth
- Wattpad provides readership stats
- Wattpad is nonexclusive

Web serial best practices:technical

- You will probably want some COMBINATION of self-hosting, third-party sites, and reading sites/apps to reach your audience
- Probably not ALL of them but where you think/discover it catches on best
- Consider how much time you want to spend on posting, formatting, etc.

Web serial best practices:technical

- ELEMENTS YOUR WEB SERIAL NEEDS

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- copyright notice

- (in a WordPress site there's a built in place to fill this in)

Web serial best practices:technical

- ELEMENTS YOUR WEB SERIAL NEEDS

- copyright notice
- Next/Previous navigation buttons/links

(most blogging sites/software has some version of this – if your WordPress theme doesn't have it built in, there are plugins that create it for you)

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 - Way for readers to comment (Some consider this optional; I don't.)

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- **OPTIONAL ELEMENTS**

- digital product shopping cart

- i.e. sell ebooks, MP3s directly

- WP Estore for WP, Zencart plugin, or integrate with Gumroad or StoreEnvy

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- offsite FB groups, Yahoo loops, etc best fan run/fan generated

Web serial best practices:Promo

- **FREE Listings & Directories**

- TuesdaySerial.com - add new listing every week & also promo news, book tie ins, arcs ending etc

- Web Fiction Guide (<http://webfictionguide.com/>)

- Top Web Fiction (<http://topwebfiction.com/>)

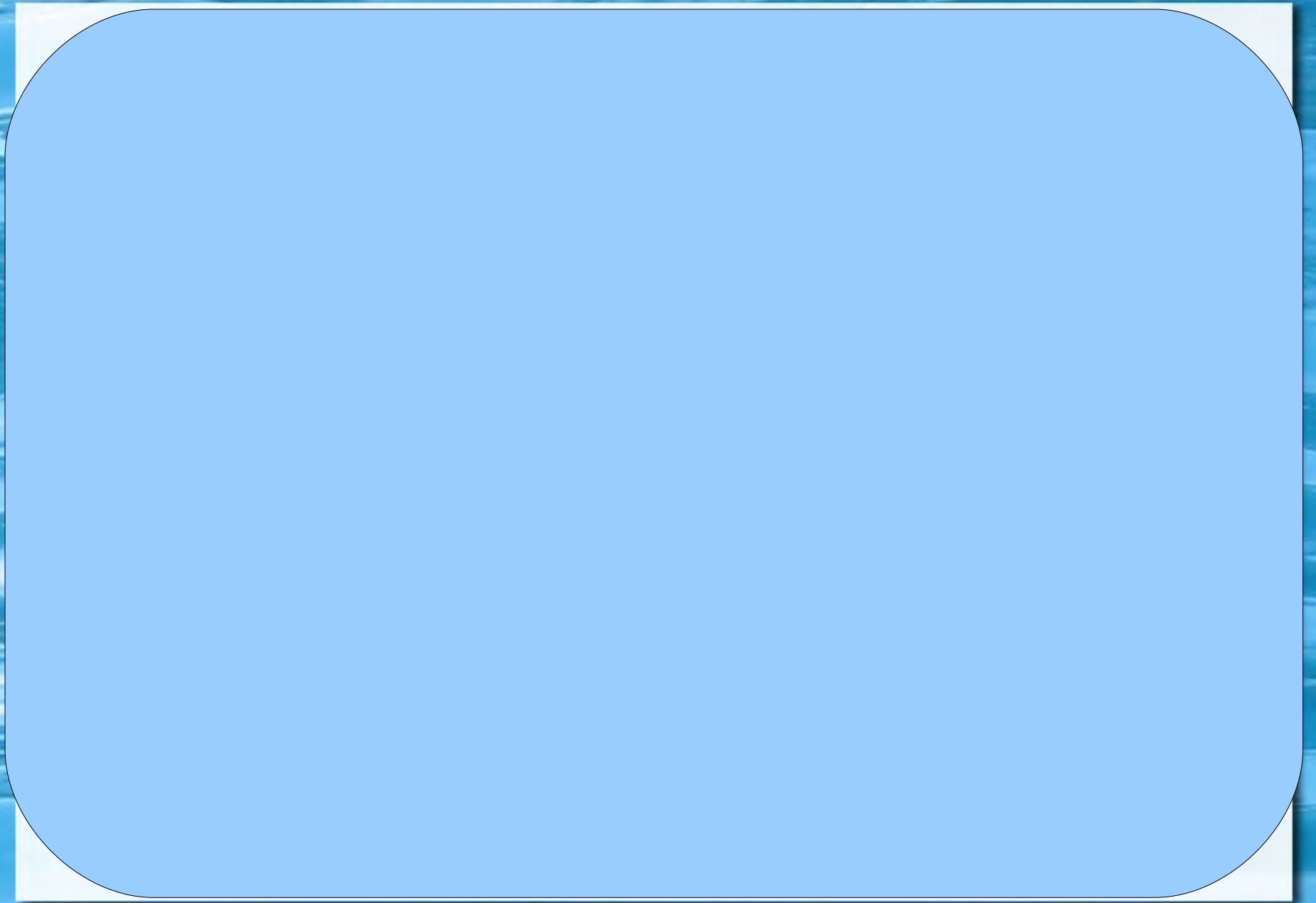
- Muses Success (<http://muses-success.info/>)

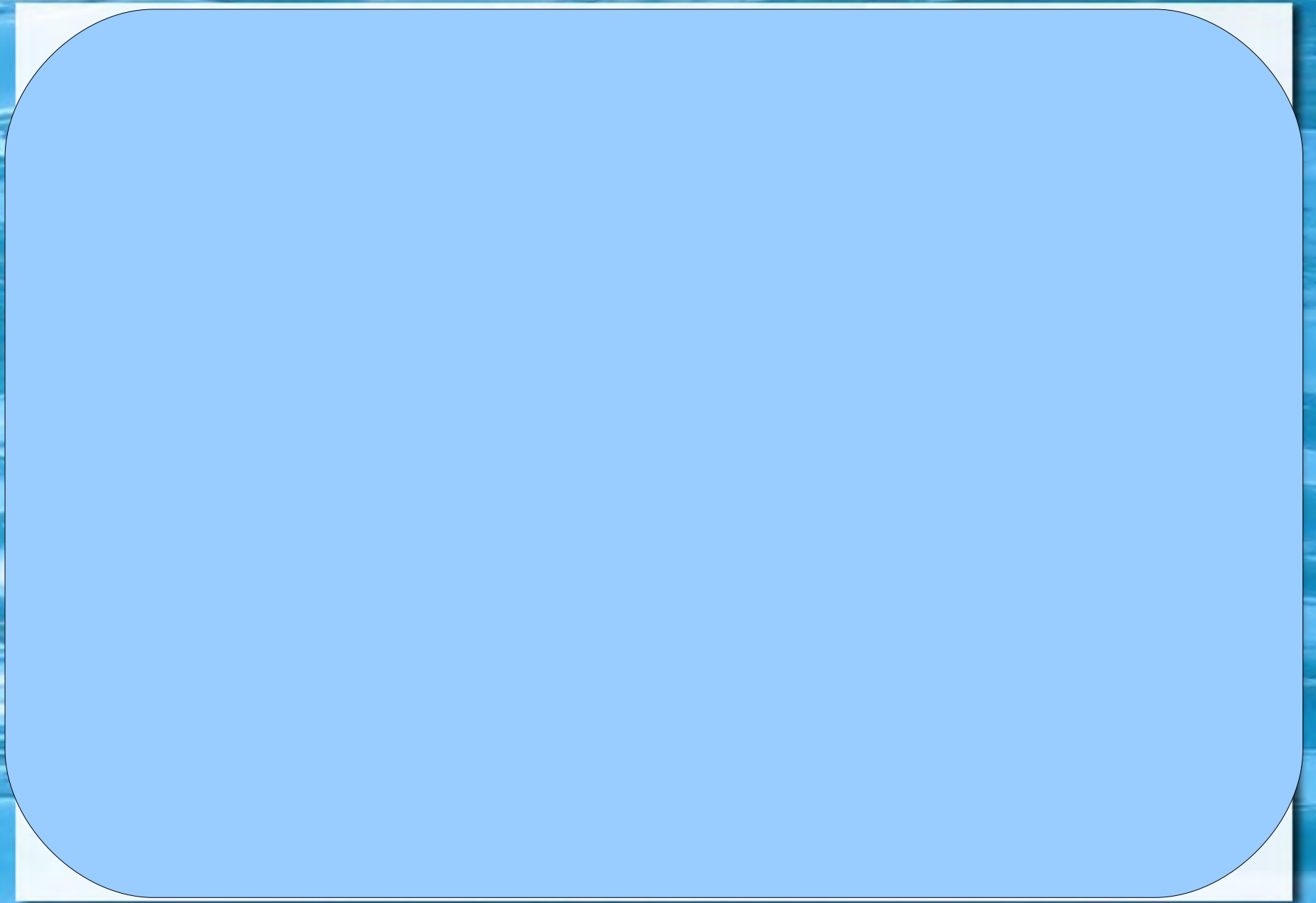
- EpiGuide (<http://www.epiguide.com/forums/>) - online forums for all web entertainment

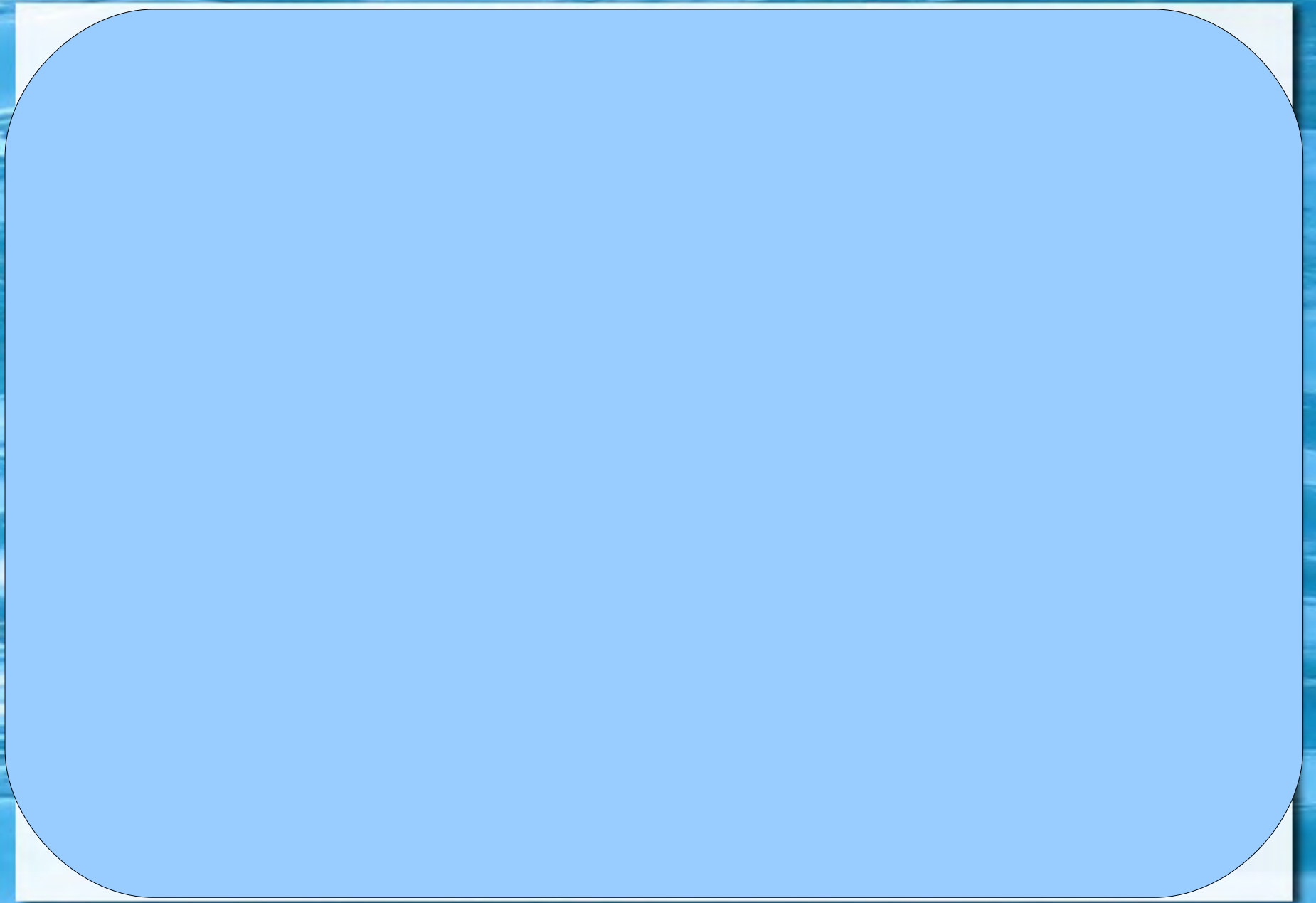
(EpiGuide hosts WeSeWriMo every August, hosts a podcast, takes paid advertising, has resources page)

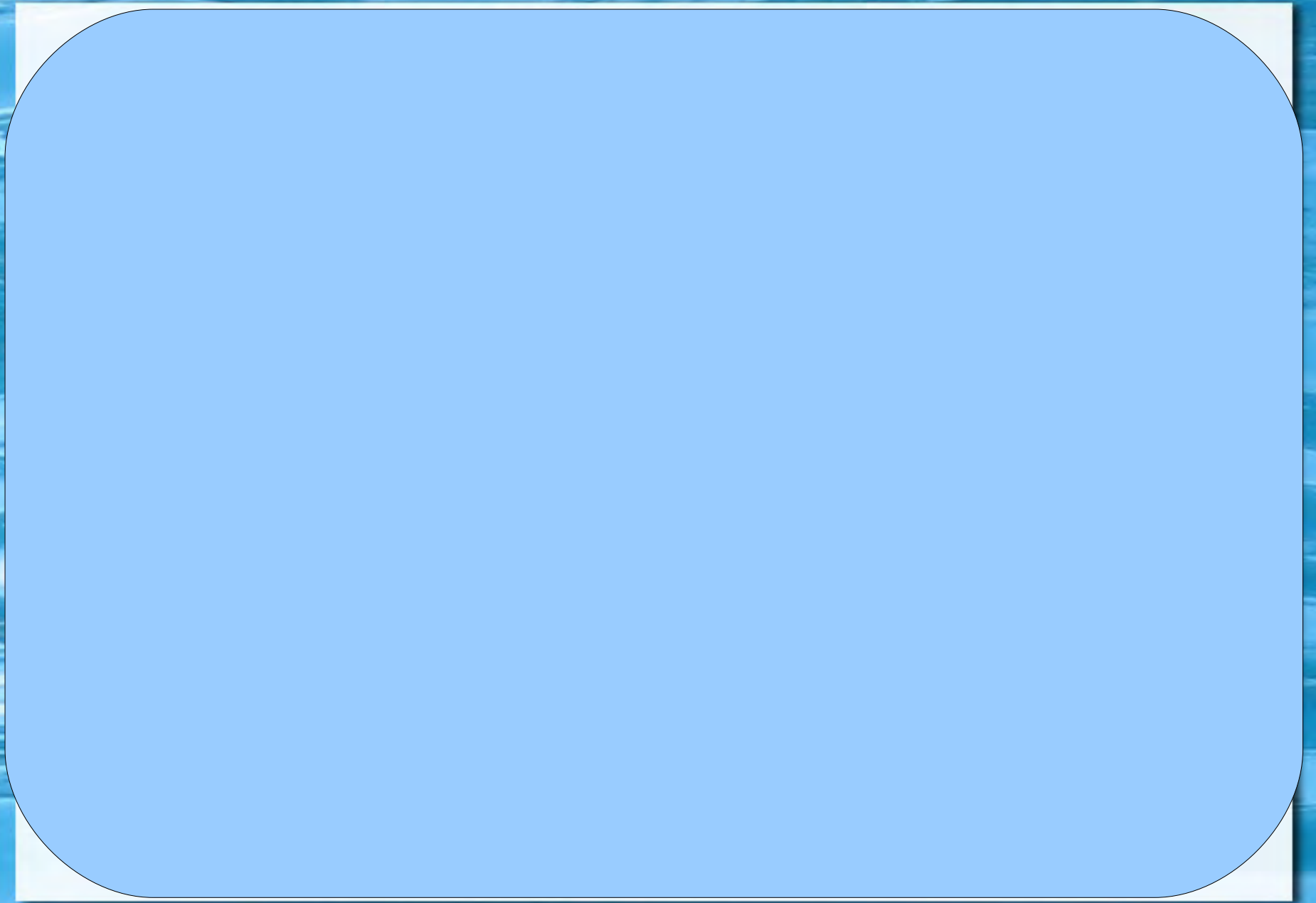
Web serial best practices:Promo

- Places to advertise to get readers
 - (in case you want to spend a little money on spreading the word)
 - Project Wonderful
 - Facebook
 - Don't spend a lot. Pennies per ad, a few dollars per day max in short ad campaigns









Web serial best practices:Promo

- SOCIAL MEDIA

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- "We are a notification society."

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(For notifications but also interaction)

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- SOCIAL MEDIA
 - Automate as much of the social media work as possible

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- IFTTT (If This Then That) can trigger from RSS to post to Twitter, Tumblr, FB
- Wordpress has crossposting plugins
- Mailchimp even has RSS campaigns for DIY email notifications

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- Ongoing nature of a serial means promo is a bit different from a book which has a “launch date”
- Create promotional hooks & opportunities:
 - anniversaries (1st month, 1st year, etc?)
 - milestones (100th post? 500th post?)
 - 10,000th comment?
 - Periodic ebook releases?

-

Web serial best practices: Promo

- SOCIAL MEDIA

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- Full engagement on social media:
 - posting quote art/memes?
 - making Twitter/FB accounts for characters?
 - Facebook events/giveaways/live chats?
 - Twitter hashtag chats?

-

Web serial best practices:Promo

- Email list
 - important to have a list you own (you don't own FB or Twitter followers)
 - Mailchimp, MailerLite, TinyLetter, WP plugin SimpleLetter

(This is important for any author right now, not just serial writers, btw...)

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- Website/blog for author, separate from serial
 - RSS your author posts to Goodreads author page, Amazon author page

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- Promote permafrees book via BookBub once you have 2-3 sequels
- Plus many free/cheap Bookbub-like sites
 - DigitalBookToday.com
 - ReadCheaply.com
 - BookGoodies.com
 - Frugal-freebies.com
 - Ebookshabit.com
 - BookDealHunter.com
 - OHFB (100 Free Bks)
 - etc etc etc

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- Other free bargain newsletters
- Blog exchanges with other writers
- Goodreads web serial forum
- Interact on Wattpad
- Reddit communities

Web serial best practices:Revenue

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IF YOU DON'T ASK

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Web serial best practices:Revenue

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IF YOU DO ASK

MANY WILL PAY

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- “Tip Jar” (Paypal)

Web serial best practices:Revenue

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In theory, tip jar = passive income

In reality you must actively solicit or remind people in various ways

DARON'S GUITAR CHRONICLES

Sex•drugs•rocknroll•the closet•the stage•the 80s

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Every queer in New York would be getting into their drag or finery or marching boots or whatever that day. It was the day of the Pride parade. [CONTINUE READING »](#)

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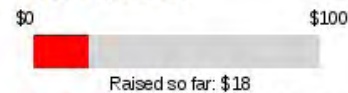
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DGC discussion!

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Olimometer

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Web serial best practices:Revenue

- “Tip Jar” (Paypal)
- Technically the Paypal “donate” button is only for non-profits but until you reach \$10K in donations, they don’t pay attn.

REAL MEN

In the end we hired a trumpet player Mitch knew and liked working with and who Marvelle knew from other gigs, a serious-looking chap with round glasses named Lorne Acevedo. He was from New Orleans and had played with Wynton Marsalis. Fran and Clarice booked to come in for two weeks of full band rehearsal in July, after everyone took a break for the Fourth.

I saw Court a couple of times during that audition and rehearsal period in New York—took her to dinner once, that kind of thing—but once she figured out that she could make it to The Hangar for the last hour (or more if we ran late) of our rehearsals, she was there pretty much every night.

One Friday at the end of June, when she'd come by five nights in a row, I asked her if she shouldn't be spending more time socializing with people from the company where she was working, i.e. shouldn't she be going out for drinks to schmooze with people or whatever?

She looked at me funny. "Why would I do that?"

"Isn't the point of an internship that you're making connections with people you might get a real job with later?"

She blinked. "You're kind of an idiot, aren't you." [CONTINUE READING »](#)

[Flattr this!](#)

¶ Posted 28 April 2016 † daron § Daron's Guitar Chronicles ‡ Comments (22) ° Tagged: band hiring is complete, courtney, limelight again, masculinity, new york city, still have to figure out techs and support though

CATEGORIES

- [Admin](#)
- [Daron's Guitar Chronicles](#)
- [Donations & Site News](#)
- [Fanworks](#)
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CONTRIBUTE OR HELP OUT

Via Paypal:

Suggested contributions:

- ✓ \$25-Nice donor! \$25.00 USD
- \$10-Big tipper! \$10.00 USD
- \$5-Thats lunch! \$5.45 USD
- \$2-Lucky tip amount! \$2.26 USD
- \$1-Classic tipper! \$1.33 USD

Or support via Patreon:



Or Flattr! [Flattr this!](#)

TOP WEB FICTION

Vote weekly for us at [Top Web Fiction](#)

WATTPAD

Upvote our mirror at [Wattpad!](#)

Pull
down
menu

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- “Tip Jar” (Paypal)
- Technically the Paypal “donate” button is only for non-profits but until you reach \$10K in donations, they don’t pay attn.
- Create other types of Paypal buttons or just use Paypal pay links (payme.name)

Web serial best practices:Revenue

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- Set up recurring Paypal payments

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- Set up recurring Paypal payments
- Incentivize donations with bonus content

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- Kickstarter - for big occasions
(i.e. producing a paperback edition)
- Kickstarters can be a ton of work
- Readers may expect a paper edition as a matter of course, very standard in the webcomics world
- IndieGoGo, other crowdfund sites

KICKSTARTER

Discover Start a project About us Search Projects

Grim Tides: A Marla Mason Novel



Grim Tides will be a free-to-read online serial novel about Marla Mason, latest in the urban fantasy series started with Blood Engines.

Created by
Tim Pratt

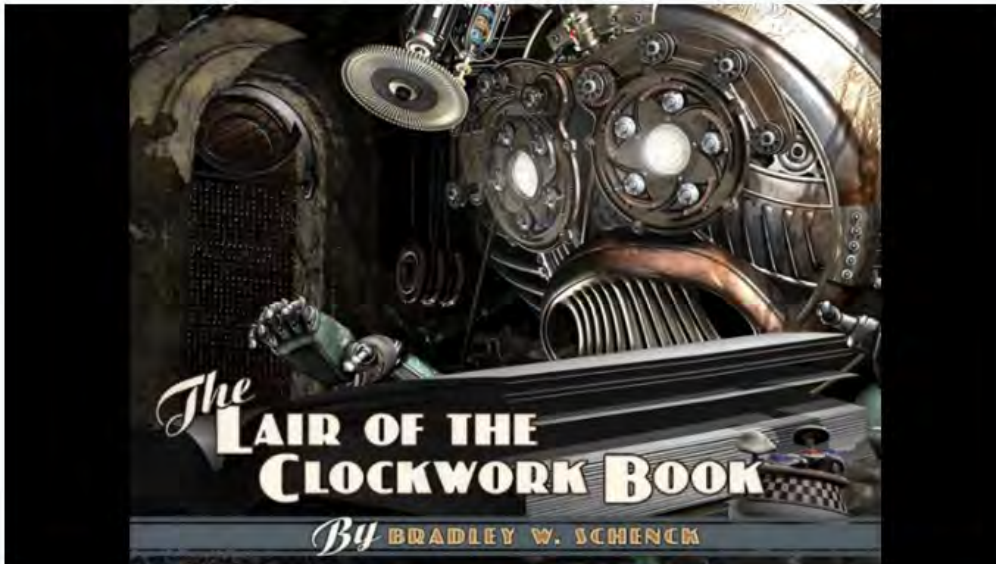


182 backers pledged \$11,241 to help bring this project to life.

\$11,241

- 47. The Best - Tina Turner
- 48. On Our Own - Bobby Brown
- 49. A Little Respect - Erasure
- 50. Eternal Flame - the Bangles

The Lair of the Clockwork Book: Limited Edition Hardcover



A limited, hardcover archival edition of the retro futuristic, illustrated web serial from Thrilling Tales of the Downright Unusual.

Created by

Bradley W. Schenck



126 backers pledged \$8,706 to help bring this project to life.

\$8,706

Campaign

Updates ²²

Comments ³⁴

Community

- 47. The Best - Tina Turner
- 48. On Our Own - Bobby Brown
- 49. A Little Respect - Erasure
- 50. Eternal Flame - the Bangles

Sheet 1 / 3

Default

STD

Sum=0

62%

100%

Tokyo Demons: Book 2



An online, illustrated serialized novel in the tradition of the Japanese light novel, along with a fully voiced audio book.

Created by

Lianne Sentar/Rebecca Scoble



101 backers pledged \$7,849 to help bring this project to life.

\$7,849

KICKSTARTER

Discover Start a project About us Search Projects

The Legion of Nothing: Powers



The Legion of Nothing is one of the more successful web serials online. I'm working to turn it into a series of ebooks.

Created by
Jim Zoetewey



80 backers pledged \$3,470 to help bring this project to life.

\$3,470

Flesh & Blood



Sequel to 'Under My Skin', a web serial-go-novel about gender, sexuality & family - and the chaos that happens when all that intersects

Created by
Anna Dooland



198 backers pledged \$14,120 AUD to help bring this project to life.

\$14,120

Chimerical Tales (Lean-and-Mean Remix Edition)



A web serial fiction anthology offering daily fantasy, science fiction and pulp adventure for the discerning cliffhanger enthusiast!

Created by

Douglass Barre



62 backers pledged \$5,456 to help bring this project to life.

\$5,456

Campaign Updates 16 Comments 2 Community

- 47. The Best - Tina Turner
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- 49. A Little Respect - Erasure
- 50. Eternal Flame - the Bangles

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- Patreon - crowdfunding platform for ongoing funding, perfect for serials



Cecilia Tan is creating Serialized fiction

Facebook Twitter YouTube

29 patrons

\$41 per week of Daron's Guitar Chronicles

Become a patron

Why Cecilia Tan is on Patreon

Edit

Share

Creator Posts

Patron Posts



Cecilia Tan

Patrons only · 30 patrons · May 7 at 3:01am

May Week 1 at Daron's Guitar Chronicles

This week Daron recounts one of the life-changing experiences of 1991.

Tue 5/3 "Lullaby" <http://daron.ceciliatan.com/archives/5409>

Thu 5/5 "World Shut Your Mouth" <http://daron.ceciliatan.com/archives/5411>

And a new bonus scene coming next week! It'll be free of course to all Patreon backers, while others will have to either join the Patreon or make donations to get it.

In fact, to make is special for you guys, I'm going to post this coming Tuesday's chapter right here, right now. Come be surprised the chapters linked above FIRST and then have the special

Goals

View all

\$41 of \$75

per week of Daron's Guitar Chronicles



If we can get the weekly total of ongoing donations up to \$75 per week, I'll remove the banner/graphic ads from the DGC website!

1 of 2

Rewards

Pledge \$1 or more per week of Daron's Guitar Chronicles

27 patrons

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- Patreon - crowdfunding platform for ongoing funding, perfect for serials
- Flexible: charge readers per post or per month
- Provides a conduit to serious supporters
- Readers can drop pledge anytime and can cap their contributions per month

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- Merch!
 - subsidiary products like ebooks/books sold via Amazon, audio via Audible
 - ebooks/books sold *on your own site*
 - T-shirts, pins, dolls, etc on your site
 - T-shirts/mugs/etc via Zazzle/CafePress
 - TeeSpring/Booster (short term sales)

Web serial best practices:Revenue

- Ads running on your site
 - Internet ads are forever decreasing in value as the net grows

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- Expect pennies per day from:
 - Google Ads
 - Project Wonderful ads
 - BlogAds

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 - BlogAds
- ROLLOVER AD
INCOME INTO
RUNNING ADS
FOR THE SITE
ELSEWHERE

Web serial best practices: Readers

- Reader engagement is really fun!
(Some serial writers feel the validation from reader feedback is better than the validation that comes from money)

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 - reply to comments on posts

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 - polls (i.e. pick character for bonus story)
 - fanfic/fan art contests, other contests
 - And whatever else you can think of!

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 - signups for your author newsletter
 - promote other new releases
 - And anything else you want readers to do, write reviews, follow you, etc.

Web Serial Toolbox

Why & How To Serialize
Your Fiction Online
(for almost no money)

by Cecilia Tan

ctan.writer @ gmail.com

Twitter @ceciliatan

#serialtoolbox