



The Month-Long Novelist Agreement and Statement of Understanding

(From page 37 of Chris Baty's book, *No Plot? No Problem!*)

I hereby pledge my intent to write a 50,000-word novel in one month's time. By invoking an absurd, month-long deadline on such an enormous undertaking, I understand that notions of "craft," "brilliance," and "competency" are to be chucked right out the window, where they will remain, ignored, until they are retrieved for the editing process. I understand that I am a talented person, capable of heroic acts of creativity, and I will give myself enough time over the course of the next month to allow my innate gifts to come to the surface, unmolested by self-doubt, self-criticism, and other acts of self-bullying.

During the month ahead, I realize I will produce clunky dialogue, clichéd characters, and deeply flawed plots. I agree that all of these things will be left in my rough draft, to be corrected and/or excised at a later point. I understand my right to withhold my manuscript from all readers until I deem it completed. I also acknowledge my right as an author to substantially inflate both the quality of the rough draft and the rigors of the writing process should such inflation prove useful in garnering me respect and attention, or freedom from participation in onerous household chores.

I acknowledge that the month-long, 50,000-word deadline I set for myself is absolute and unchangeable, and that any failure to meet the deadline, or any effort on my part to move the deadline once the adventure has begun, will invite well-deserved mockery from friends and family. I also acknowledge that, upon successful completion of the stated noveling objective, I am entitled to a period of gleeful celebration and revelry, the duration and intensity of which may preclude me from participating fully in workplace activities for days, if not weeks, afterward.

Signed

Date

Novel Start Date

Novel Deadline