



How Not to Write a Novel: Confessions of a Midlist Author

David Armstrong

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Every week, agents and publishers in this country receive hundreds of manuscripts from would-be authors. Of these, fewer than one per cent will make it into print. David Armstrong was one of the one per-centers, his first crime novel plucked from the slush pile at a major publisher and published to acclaim. So far, so good. But it rapidly became clear to Armstrong that being a published novelist is not always as glamorous as it seems from the outside. There are the depressing, ill-attended readings, the bitchy writers' conventions, the bookshops who have never heard of you and don't stock your book. All of these will be familiar to any writer who, like Armstrong, falls into the category euphemistically known in publishing as 'midlist'. The reality is that for every JK Rowling, there are 1,000 David Armstrongs; for every writer who is put up in a five-star hotel and flies first class courtesy of their publisher, there are 1,000 who sleep on friend's floors during book tours and dine at motorway service stations... Witty, acerbic and wise, *How Not to Write a Novel* lifts the lid on publishing. From agents to editors, publicists to sales reps, it explains the publishing process - and how to survive it - from the point of view of a non-bestselling writer. A unique book, it is essential reading for anyone who dreams of getting their novel published - and for anyone curious about the inside workings of the publishing game.



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