

Acting Naturally

For weeks now, if not longer, I have been trying to wedge my *Empty Luck* characters into pre-planned actions that resolve plot dilemmas. I have tried to figure out in advance what needs to happen to save them from one threat or another and then I attempt to go back and have the circumstances and specific behavior take place to create that desired outcome.

The result was a kind of working backwards, where I had to force decisions and actions on the characters in order to lead them to a specified result.

Well, it just hasn't worked. Not at all. They were stepping out of character, behaving in ways contrary to their wishes, to their true natures. I learned that characters cannot serve the author. The author must serve the characters. So I have decided to set my boys free.

Each of them will do whatever he might realistically do in his current circumstances. Whether that ultimately extracts him from his problems or not, we'll have to see. I don't know what will happen. I'm just letting each character act naturally.

For example, we have Ricky Sullivan who has fallen hard for an exotic dancer but now it is time for him to leave town, and do so quickly and quietly. That would probably serve the plot better, but dammit, it is not what he would do. He wants to see her again or at least talk with her before he goes and so he will, the consequences be damned. That's just the way he is. He can't help it. He knows he will be putting himself and his friends at risk, but as we learn so often, the heart has needs the head cannot always control.

Anyway, simply put, I will continue writing this book having my characters all do whatever they naturally would and we'll just have to see how that goes.