

To 3 or not to 3



To continue our conversation on my returning to the Jeremy Shuttle Adventures to tell more tales of Jeremy, Natalie and the gang, we'll need to revisit the past again to explain the future.

The central idea behind my creation of *What if?* was that of a young, imaginative boy finding a sketchbook that allowed all that he drew in it to become real...and possibly reality. In the process of trying to use the book he would go on adventures, encounter danger, uncover the mystery about his Dad's disappearance and learn about responsibility.

My main desire was to write a fun story. I wanted to see if I could write a story that would be adventurous without being bleak; dangerous without being dark; offer a message with subtlety, not preach with a blunt object.

So, I sat and I wrote. And the more I wrote, the more I...uh...wrote.

Either I was not a good enough writer to complete my tale in a single book or my characters and story had more to them than simply a central idea.

I never wanted to "make" people buy three books to read the whole tale. My humility as a writer is far too great to imagine I could convince anyone they should invest that much disposable income into a neophyte writer.

I just didn't have a choice. That's where the story took me. I

had to cut whole sections of *What next?* and *What now?* just so I didn't need a *fourth* book!

Flash forward to now, as I mentally plot out the final story I wish to tell about Jeremy and his sketchbook and I'm afraid I once again won't be able to get all my ideas down in just a single volume.

Beyond just the sheer fun I have writing out sketchbook adventures, there is so much more I want to explore about Jeremy and Natalie's relationship (at the more mature ages of 17 & 18, respectively).

I'd also like to have some fun with William and Teresa Shuttle. Separated for more than a decade, they have a lot to share with each other as they renew their love.

And, of course, there's that curious sketchbook, whose origin was not clearly explained and whose ultimate fate needs to be determined.

Unlike the first story-turned-trilogy, I don't feel a pressure to publish "while the iron is hot". I want to try to write the whole tale start-to-finish and see where it takes me.

That's a bold and possibly unrealistic goal, considering it took nearly four years to complete the first three books.

Still, I don't have a strong desire to publish a 700-page book and I do like the synchronicity of matching the first trilogy with a second.

I guess I'll let the story tell me whether I need to do three books or not.