

Spider Webbing Characters

If you are writing more than one fiction book or writing a fiction series, you can tie your works together by sharing characters. I have done this through the Wrong Side series of action adventure novels. There are two main characters, each introduced in an individual book. Mike Marshall, the Marine, is introduced in *The Wrong Side of Bravery*. Eddie Donevant, the Air Force fighter pilot, is introduced in *The Wrong Side of Honor*. The next two books in the series are parallel stories which tell two sides of the conflict between the two – Marshall in *The Wrong Side of Justice* and Donevant in *The Wrong Side of the Badge*.

Even before these two main characters meet in the third and fourth books, there is a character that is tied into both of them. John Slaughter is a DEA agent fighting the CIA drug trafficking in Southeast Asia in *The Wrong Side of Honor*. He is then found in *The Wrong Side of Bravery* where he is working with Marshall in the DEA. Slaughter continues as a secondary character in both the third and fourth books interacting with both Marshall and Donevant. He also appears as a primary character alongside Donevant in the sixth book, *The Wrong Side of Service*. Marshall also reappears in the sixth book as a secondary character.

Weaving several characters into each of these books from the other books in the series helps tie each book into the others in the series. The reader wants to read each book in order to keep up with the total story in the series. Reading them in order is also helpful.

A minor character from one book can be spun off into the lead character in another book. When we finished the Wrong Side series, Donevant was an aviation attorney in Houston. His law partner was Jake Masters, who made a minor appearance in *The Wrong Side of Service*. Masters emerged as the lead character in *Ghost Birds* and Jungle Jim Bowden from *The Wrong Side of Loyalty*, and *The Wrong Side of Service* carried over as a major character. Even Donevant managed to make a cameo appearance in *Ghost Birds*.

Minor characters can be developed into second-generation characters in other works. Marshall's daughter Truda was introduced in *The Wrong Side of Service*. She is now the lead character in *The Secret Life of Truda*. Her father appears in this new work, which will entice a reader to find out about him in *The Wrong Side of Bravery* and *The Wrong Side of Justice*. The readers who follow these Marshall Ginevan books will want to know if this pretty little girl is as tough as her former Marine father. I'm sure they will be impressed.

Spider webbing characters into several novels allows the character to change over time, just as people do when they change jobs or retire. It also ties the characters together through networking. And the reader can see a minor character grow into a lead character in another book, as we see with Marshall's daughter, Truda.

Marshall Ginevan