

Period of Adjustment

Editors tweak plots and release dates to cash in on the crash

WHEN THE STOCK MARKET began gyrating in the fall, some publishers had more to worry about than devastated share prices—like what to do with buzzy novels set on Wall Street. Since a year can pass between a manuscript's purchase and the time

when the finished product is shipped to stores, a book's setting can easily become outdated. While not all publishers had the luxury of making changes, some fiddled with plots, others with marketing plans. The mission: revision. —LAUREN LIPTON

Natural Elements

BY RICHARD MASON
Knopf, March 17

PLOT: A hedge fund manager in London takes a gamble on an obscure metal to finance her mother's assisted-living care.

INSPIRATION: Mason, who lives in Scotland, researched the novel by spending time with friends who run hedge funds.

NOTES: Several publishers bid on Mason's manuscript in 2006, says Victoria Wilson, the book's editor. "If he were writing this book today, my hunch is that it would have ended differently," she says.

The Ex-Mrs. Hedgefund

BY JILL KARGMAN
Dutton, April 16

PLOT: Against a backdrop of lurid excess, the former wives of two mogul brothers forge an unlikely friendship.

INSPIRATION: Kargman, the daughter of former Chanel C.E.O. Arie Kopelman, came up with the novel's plot in 2006 after attending a lavish 200-guest kiddie birthday party held in a ballroom.

ADVANCE: \$500,000 for a two-book deal
NOTES: The publisher updated a late draft to make it clear that the story is set in 2006.

Triple Cross

BY MARK T. SULLIVAN
St. Martin's Press, April 14

PLOT: Anti-globalist guerrillas wreak havoc on the international economy by taking seven of the world's wealthiest men hostage at an exclusive ski resort.
INSPIRATION: The resort is based on the now-bankrupt Yellowstone Club in Montana.

ADVANCE: \$350,000
NOTES: In light of the market crash, publicity for the book may focus more on rich people in peril.

Hedge Fund Wives

BY TATIANA BONCOMPAGNI
Avon Books, May 5

PLOT: Four women's lives change when their husbands' fortunes rise and fall in an economic collapse.

INSPIRATION: In the summer of 2007, Boncompagni's friends in the financial world started to talk about a real estate bubble.
NOTES: The author, who's married to Maximilian Hoover (of vacuum-cleaner fame), is in a legal battle with her sister over who really wrote the book. Avon fast-tracked the pub date to take advantage of the changing economy.

