

Book Brain Syndrome on the rampage

I've talked about this before. Book Brain Syndrome. That foggy phase I enter into when all but two of my brain cells are working with my subconscious to write, plot and fix that pacing snafu, or wade through the murky middle of a book. Or those times when I can't do simple tasks because the vast majority of my brain is being held hostage by my muse for book-related thinking.

Where was I? Oh yeah, Book Brain. What just happened in the paragraph above is a prime example. I start off doing or saying one thing, and it suddenly turns into something else, a la space cadet. I think of something I need to do, I go there to do it, and then stand there in a stupor trying to remember what the heck I'm there for. This is especially disturbing when I'm in the bathroom. I mean there are only so many things I could have possibly wanted to do in there.

When you get into the throes of writing a book, two brain cells are all you're left with to be a functional member of society. Believe me, two brain cells ain't a lot to get by on. For example, I was doing the grocery list on Saturday and I wanted to buy some mashed potatoes (the instant kind because since I'm writing, I don't have much time to cook). Anyway, I could remember "potatoes," but I was just standing there with my mouth hanging open like a complete moron trying to remember the word for what kind of potatoes I wanted. I knew what they looked like; I knew what they tasted like. I just couldn't remember for the life of me what the things were called. Fortunately, I recalled that I had one box of them left in the pantry. I could *read the box*. "Mashed." Yeah, that's what I wanted. (*smacks head into palm of hand*) Jeez.

Last night, I was doing a load of laundry. In a normal world, it's not exactly rocket science. It's simple. Apparently not for me in the grips of Book Brain. The laundry finished washing, I went into the laundry room, opened the washing machine to put the clothes into the dryer . . . then I just stood there, staring down at the wet clothes. Something just wasn't right. Then it hit me—oh crap, I forgot to put in the laundry detergent. So I washed the clothes again, and this time I used detergent. It was Book Brain Syndrome at its finest.

To use quasi-techie terminology, Book Brain is like when you try to call someone, but you can't get through and you hear the recording, "We're sorry, all circuits are busy right now, please hang up and try again."

In the next few months, I'll finish *All Spell Breaks Loose*, and hopefully, I'll once again be able to remember what I need to do when I go into the bathroom.