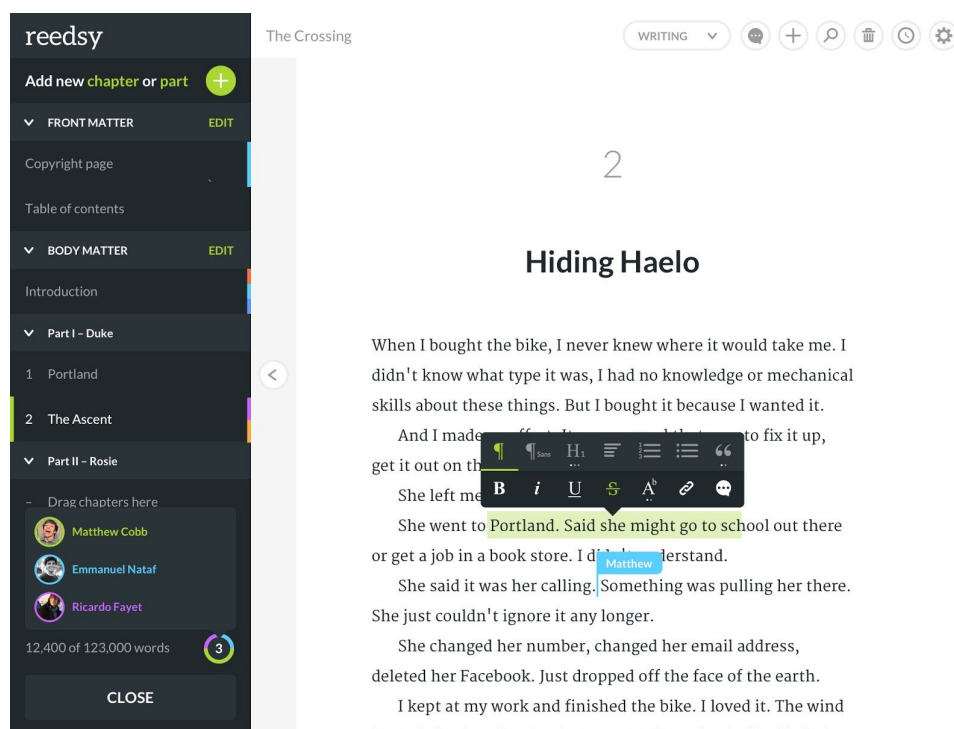# Reedsy Book Editor V2

Reedsy Proposal Number: 734046

The Reedsy Book Editor provides authors and publishers with a simple yet powerful tool that can typeset their manuscripts into high-quality books. With the release of version 2, authors and publishers have more control over the formatting of their final PDF and EPUB exports and can begin to work collaboratively with other Reedsy users in real-time.

Among the changes are new formatting options, a new romance export template and updates to the real-time collaboration features beta tested with publishers in February 2017.
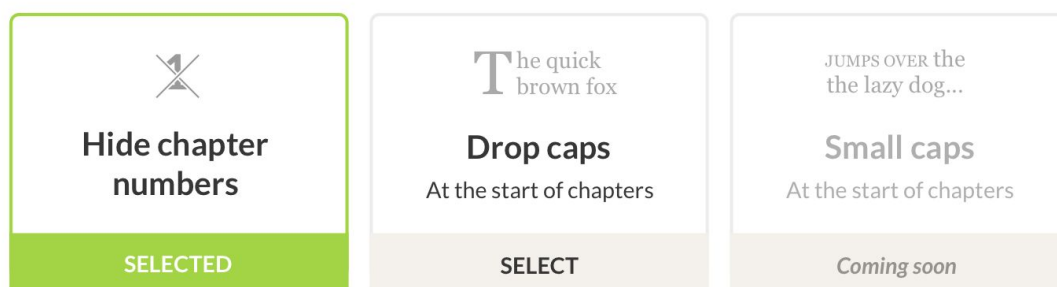

The Editor Interface

New formatting options

These formatting options allow authors and publishers to customize the exported PDF and EPUB files.

New formatting options on the export page

Dropcaps

A common feature of fiction books. Users can select this option on the export page and a dropcap will be automatically applied to body-matter chapters on both the PDF and EPUB export.

1

In the Beginning

The roots of history lie in the pre-human past and it is hard (but important) to grasp just how long ago that was. If we think of a century on our calendar as a minute on some great clock recording the passage of time, then Europeans began to settle in the Americas only about five minutes ago. Slightly less than fifteen minutes before that, Christianity appeared. Rather more than an hour ago people settled in southern Mesopotamia who were soon to evolve the oldest civilization known to us. This is already well beyond the furthest margin of written record; according to our clock, people began writing down the past much less than an hour ago, too. Some six or seven hours further back on our scale, and much more remote, we can discern the first recognizable human beings of a modern physiological type already established in western Europe. Behind them, anything from a fortnight to three weeks earlier, appear the first traces of creatures with some human characteristics whose contribution to the evolution which followed is still in debate.

How much further back into a growing darkness we need

Hidden chapter numbers

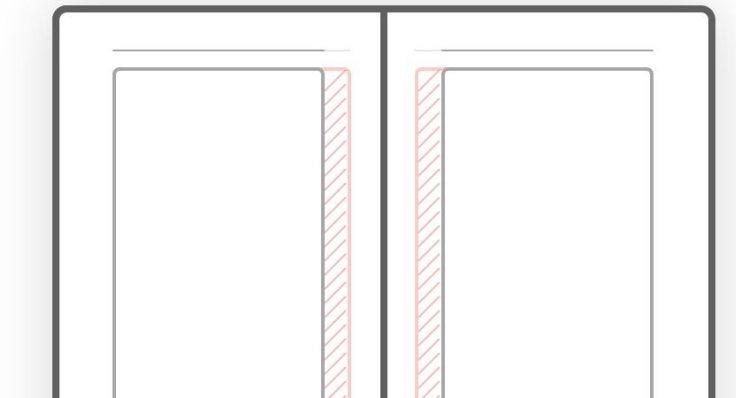Not all books require chapter numbers, so we added an option to hide them.

In the Beginning

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How much further back into a growing darkness we need
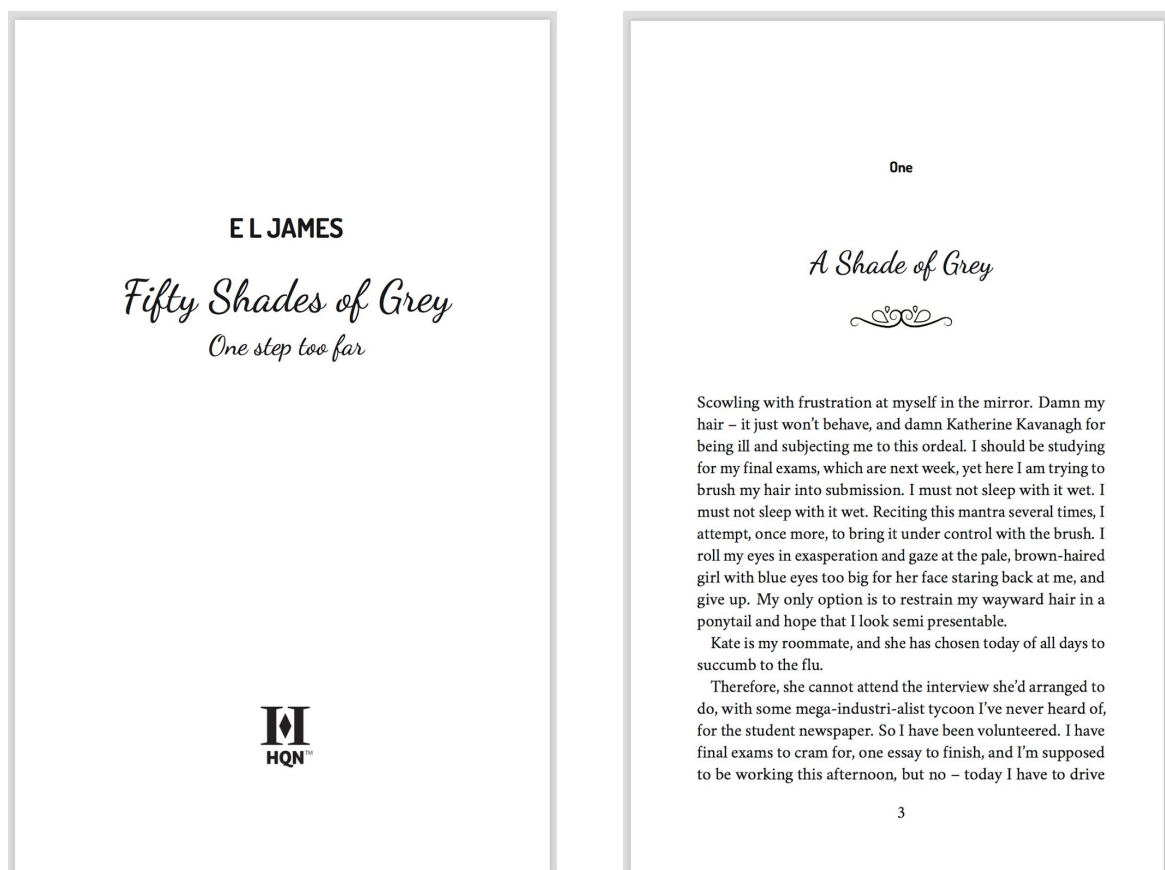
Improved margins for Print-on-Demand

To improve our books when printed with print-on-demand companies, we have developed a technology that allows to automatically increase the gutter margin depending on the page count of the PDF. Typically, thicker books require more inner-margin as the extra pages do not allow the book to open as easily once bound. This means that longer books exported from the Reedsy Book Editor, now look much better when printed.

Red hatch indicates where the margins move as page count increases.

New Romance book export PDF and EPUB template

The romance book template is now available to users exporting to both EPUB and PDF from the Reedsy Book Editor. It features new open-source fonts and layout styling. Chapters now have a "chapter ornament" that sits below the chapter title, a commonly requested feature from romance authors.
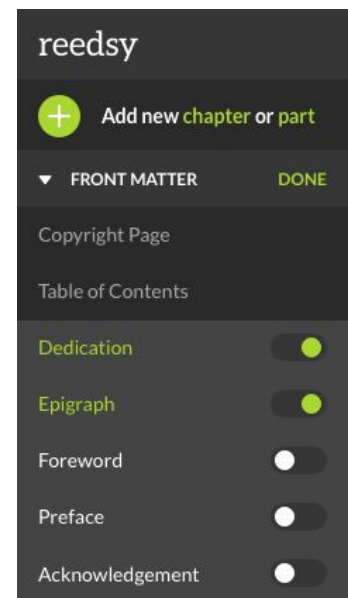
Improvements to the front-matter

Toggle common front-matter chapters in the sidebar

To help educate authors about the correct structure for their book, we have redesigned the sidebar. Authors can now toggle common front-matter elements of their book on and off. The order of these chapters is very important. By having it built into the sidebar we can ensure that authors always typeset their books correctly. Each chapter within the front matter is customised to display the content correctly, following the guidelines established by the [Chicago Manual of Style](#).

For example, the dedication page removes all page formatting and centres the text on the page and typesets it in italic.

Custom copyright page

The copyright page will allow for further customisation. It includes common legal clauses that authors can add to the automatically generated copyright page on their Reedsy exports. Authors are often unsure about what to include on this page, so providing them with a framework will make it much easier.

Copyright chapter interface

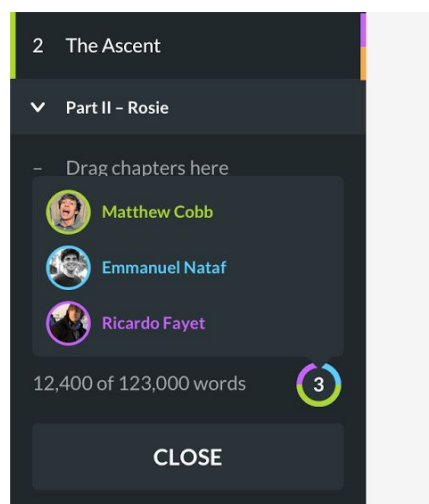# Real-time collaboration improvements

We have been building on the initial release of the real-time collaboration features that were given to a select number of publishers in February. Members of publishing accounts can now work collaboratively in real-time on manuscripts shared with their team members. In order to achieve this, a number of changes have been made:

Shared books

Books can now be shared with other Reedsy users. This allows other members to access a book created by another user and begin editing the manuscript in real-time. Changes are synced between clients using Operational Transformations and stored on a MongoDB database that updates all instances of the editor when a user make changes to the document.

Cursors

An important aspect of the UI that manages this is the syncing and displaying of the cursor positions across clients. In order to achieve this we have had to add a cursors module to the open-source Quill text editor that we have been using.

The cursors allow you to see where other users are editing the document.

Open sourcing our Cursor module

The [Quill](#) project is quite far behind the development of multi-cursor capabilities suited for multi user editing. Given our recent investment in researching and adding these features to our version of Quill, we decided to open-source our custom cursors module and offer it back to the Quill community. By doing this, not only are we contributing to the open source project, but also hope to leverage the developer community behind Quill to both improve our code and help the project move forward.

Our cursor module is published and maintained on Node Package Manager and available to anyone who wants to use it on their own project. Since releasing the code, it has been downloaded 200+ times by developers involved of the Quill community. In the short-term, our goal is to work closely with Quill project so that this code, and further variations of it, can serve as the basis of multi-cursor functionality in future versions of Quill.

Published NPM package: https://www.npmjs.com/package/quill-cursors
Development repository: https://github.com/reedsy/quill-cursors

Next steps for the Reedsy Book Editor

Our ambition is to allow authors and publishers to work collaboratively with a professional editor from the Reedsy marketplace. To achieve this, we will need to build a robust commenting, change tracking and versioning system.

Once these features are in place, the Reedsy Book Editor will transition from being a professional typesetting tool, to a fully fledged publishing platform; accommodating authors throughout the entire lifecycle of their book. We want authors to be able to write and outline their first draft, collaborate with a professional editor and instantly typeset it perfectly for print and distribution, all via Reedsy.