Story Notes based on Etya Krichmar's story, "Wings of Memory"

1. **Create a personal editing checklist.** Use these story notes as a basis to build a personal editing checklist. Add other items you often overlook, and use these sheets to check your future stories *before* submitting them for review. I included a blank editing checklist you can fill in and add to.

2. **Quantify.** Wherever possible, quantify your descriptions in terms of size, amount, number, age, etc. If you don't know the exact number, qualify it somehow, but still provide a specific point of reference.

   We've been best friends for a long time.
   We've been best friends for more than thirty years.

   She is such a smart little girl.
   She is such a smart three-year-old.

3. **Repetition.** We have at least one million words in the English language, so we don't need to repeat words in the same or nearby sentences. Make use of a thesaurus for help.

   I moved to South Florida, and then, I moved to Wisconsin.
   I moved to South Florida, and then I relocated to Wisconsin.

4. **Pronouns.** Unless there is only one person being talked about in a story, it's best not to start paragraphs with a pronoun. It can make it difficult for the reader to know *what she* or *he* you are talking about. You don't want to force the reader to finish the sentence before learning *who* the pronoun represents.

5. **Line spacing.** Your stories should be double-spaced. But even though you have your spacing set to double, ensure that MS Word or any other word processing system is *not* adding extra space between the lines.

The default setting in MS Word is to set the spacing to *Auto*, which means the software will add extra space when it deems it necessary. The problem this creates is determining if the extra space between paragraphs denotes a deliberate break in the text or not.