

Hello. I'm John from VJ Books and we're talking books.

I'd like to talk today a little bit about publishing and how it works. Publishers typically issue the first copy of a new title in a hardbound book. These go out to the bookstores in quantity. Most bookstores buy these on a returnable basis. What that means is that the publisher wants these out and displayed while the book is new and hot. Once it comes off its peak, the bookstores have the opportunity to return them to the publisher for credit. That goes on for about a year.

After that, there comes the paperback book. These come out almost a year almost to the day after the hard cover. Publishers don't want the paperback and the hard cover competing so the hard cover disappears while they do their major marketing on the paperback book. After it's run its peak, what happens then is the remainder, really the remainder of the hard cover books are then sent back out into the market is what's known as a remainder and typically, these have remainder marks. We're going to talk about those and I'm going to show you a few examples.

As books are returned from bookstores, publishers put a mark on the edge, the page block. Typically, it's with a Sharpie or a marker of some kind and these are known as remainder marks. On this book, you can see it's just a slash across the page block with a black marker. They can be simple, bold. Some publishers use their logo or letters, but any marking on the edge of a page block is typically a remainder mark. Same book, different remainder mark. As you can see, it's just a plain black dot on the page block. This is a remainder mark.

Remainder marks can vary in size, shape, and color. This is a red one, again on the page block. Typically, you'll find them on the bottom. The reason they mark them is so that these books aren't sent back out as new. When a bookstore orders another box or another carton of a new title, they want to make sure that they get fresh ones. Any books that have been out in circulation and come back to the publisher are typically marked.

Some remainder marks can be rather offensive as in this one on the edge of a book by Vince Flynn. As you can see, it's large. It's red. Again, it's on the bottom so you won't really see it when it's sitting on a shelf, but it will devalue the book to some degree. They will vary. Remainder marks will vary from size and shape and color. It all comes down to the guy that's wielding the pen.

This is John from VJ Books. You know a little bit about remainder marks and what they mean to your collecting. They do devalue a book in some degrees. The scarcer the book, the less it devalues them so don't be afraid of them. They can be real bargains.

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