Submitting to a Journal, in First-Person

This paper narrates the publication process primarily from a recently-minted PhD's point of view, recognizing that a systematic and straightforward walkthrough on the subject is not a part of many graduate students' educations, even while they hear regularly about the pressures to publish and consume many articles themselves. I first discuss how I selected the journals I submitted to, emphasizing the range of options and speculating about how digitization and online searches have affected journals and our perception of them. I then describe in detail what the initial responses from the editors were like and the wait for referees' comments. I give the audience a sense of the quantity and nature of those comments, in part to encourage authors to look at the submission process as an opportunity, low-stakes in that their work is anonymous at this point, to improve present and future work. After this I discuss honestly my efforts to revise the articles and what I learned in the process. Along the way I include practical advice such as when to worry about reformatting an article to a given journal's standards and how varied these standards can be. While a first-person account of my own experiences, meant to demystify the publication process for those looking to submit articles soon, makes up the bulk of this paper, I do incorporate other personal anecdotes from veteran scholars about their own experiences with editors and referees in order to give a more full understanding of what it is like to publish an article.