

Gayle Link

From: kmortimer@mortimerliterary.com
Sent: Wednesday, July 09, 2008 6:09 PM
To: Vanessa Riley
Subject: Weekly Newsletter - July - A



July 9, 2008

From Kelly:

Hey Y'all. Don't faint, but I'm hosting my blog this week. Five tips to lessen your stress at conference. Sign up at: www.perilsofpublishing.com

If you'd like to be a guest blogger, please contact Laura Drake at:

laura_drake1123@yahoo.com

I'll be on vacation next week, so no newsletter, and if you're not my client and are waiting for a submission response, you're likely to get one. Also, all of you copy editors will hear from me as well. I appreciate your patience!

Don't forget to go to www.mortimerliteraryagency.com on the Boo-Yahs page to find the qualifying initials for July queries.

Welcome to My World

I've had a few requests for my letter to the editor of RWA's *Romance Writers Report*, so here it is...

Dr. Sheila's Rules for Success as a Writer - Dealing with Agents

(Romance Writer's Report, Nov. 2007)

Below is my "Letter to the Editor" in response - RWR February, 2008

I guess I'm breakin' Rule #4: Learn the Art of Mouth Mastery.

I think the good doctor needs a check-up. What's with Rule #7: "Be Professional"?

The doc states: "...when you need a shoulder to cry on, don't go to your agent."

I want my clients to know I'll be there to wipe their tears, or if they live outside of California, I'll send 'em a box of tissues. They're like my children (and I'm old enough to be their mother), so who better

to comfort them?

And: "Your agent is in the business of making money, hopefully off of you."

Ugh! I don't think of my clients in terms of how much money I can make off of them, but how much money I can make them. Yes, if they make money, so do I, but that's not my goal.

Further: "When the day comes that you aren't making money together, she will, most likely, have to drop you. Nothing personal. It's just business. She has to eat, and it would be unfair to expect her to carry you."

Eek! I take that personally. I have authors whom I've worked with for years. Drop them? I'd rather drop a 100lb. boulder on my baby toe. They might get e-mails of encouragement, phone calls, or a gentle nudge, but not a "Dear John" letter. I have two arms. If they weren't meant to carry things, I'd have been made with one. And if I was broke and hungry, guess who'd offer me food? My clients.

Last point: "She doesn't have time to yak or to offer input on minor plot points."

It's my job to get my client published, so why wouldn't I offer input? Oh, and I'm Italian, so yak away!

I can't speak for other agents, but Dr. Sheila shouldn't either. She's made blanket statements written as facts that encompass an entire set of people. She broke my Rule #1. *Unless you're an agent and have asked EVERY agent how they run their businesses, think before you submit such an article.*

Say, doc, if ya find yourself without an agent someday, give me a call. I'll make time for ya.

Kelly L. Mortimer
Mortimer Literary Agency

Going, Going... Gone!

Proudly announcing the sale of **Stephanie Morrill's** Inspirational Young Adult manuscript, ***Being Superior***-plus two! Yep, it can be done, so all of you pre-pubbed, there-ain't-no-market-for-what-I-write-writers, there's hope. Here's the scoop:

We start with a pre-pubbed writer with no writing credits and no platform. Agent reads first chapter, which needs some work. Instead of rejecting, Agent asks for edits and a resubmit. Writer has, as she puts it, "a stinkin' cute baby," and Agent gets the manuscript many months later when the market for inspy YA ... well, there is no market for inspy YA. Agent edits the manuscript, and Writer turns out a fan-tab-ulous read. Buuut, Agent doesn't represent inspy YA, and so, has no contacts in that area. Agent does the "friend-of-a-friend" routine, as Agent loves said Writer and her manuscript, and plunges off the cliff with no river runnin' below it. (I'm an *extreme* agent.)

Whaddaya get? A three-book deal. Not only a three-book deal, but a good one, considering. I originally thought the offer was too low. My author was worth 30% more than the advance mentioned. (I'd never read an inspy YA before Steph's, but I couldn't put hers down. I *knew* it had "the stuff," and another house was interested.)

I rejected the offer and asked for a 30% increase (yes, I'm serious). They bumped up their offer by \$1,500. I said nope, I wanted a 30% increase (yes, I keep telling you I'm crazy). The editor said she'd haveta go back to the dreaded pub board if I didn't accept the offer on the table. I told her I'd appreciate it she'd go back to the dreaded pub board for my author, cause I wanted a 30% increase.

Took an extra week, but guess what we got? A 30% increase and a higher royalty rate, but more importantly, a wonderful editor--Ms. Jennifer Leep of Revell--who went to bat for Stephanie, and who loves her work as much as I do.

Am I writing this to brag? Of course! You know me. But, seriously, no matter how hard I fought for Steph, if her writing wasn't awesome, I couldn't have sold the manuscript (plus 2) for a plug nickel.

Thanks to the insight of Jennifer Leep, Stephanie Morrill will be *the* voice in Inspirational YA Fiction for years to come--and ya heard it here first.

BOO-YAH, Steph and Jennifer. You're PHLLY!

The Dirt

Everyone Loves the Underdog (We're countin' on it...)

UNDERDOG PRESS announces the pre-sale of **Robin Miller** w/a **Robin Carroll's** debut single title inspirational romantic suspense release in Trade Paperback, ***Torrents of Destruction***.

Raging rapids aren't the only thing causing turbulence in the lives of a river rafting guide and an undercover FBI agent ... catching criminals is as dangerous as the undercurrent of attraction they have for each other.

Torrents is an edgy Inspirational Romantic Suspense with an "E" rating (go to our site for our rating key -- www.underdogpress.com). We have an exciting video trailer (thanks to the efforts of the maaavelous Natalie Eggeman) for ***Torrents*** that takes just over a minute to view (I know y'all have short attention spans). (Go to our site to view the trailer -- www.underdogpress.com)

So, what does "edgy Inspirational Romantic Suspense" mean? This book is great for Christians and heathen-pagans alike. There ain't a church or pastor in sight. Not even a choir. No Bible verses ya haveta memorize either. There *is* an undercover FBI agent, Hunter Malone, who loves God. But he's also a man, and river rafting guide Katie Gallagher is an attractive woman who's lost her faith. The "inspirational" aspect of this book comes in the form of his internal struggle to keep impure thoughts in check (I told ya, he's a man), and his desire to help Katie return to God.

Torrents of Destruction is a romantic suspense book jam-packed with exciting scenes devoid of those nasty cuss words, includes love scenes that stop at kissing, and features people in life-or-death situations. I couldn't sell this book to a Christian publisher because "the dude thinks the chick is hot," and vice versa. Fine, if ya can't sell 'em-join 'em. Guess where y'all can go to pre-order the book? (www.underdogpress.com)

Here's the bottom line: **UNDERDOG PRESS** needs your support to publish great work that needs a home. Please visit us at www.underdogpress.com and **pre-order *Torrents of Destruction*** in Trade Paperback today ... this minute ... **NOW!** Even if ya don't know how to read (a lame excuse, as you're reading my newsletter).

We've scheduled ***Torrent's*** release for October 2008. We need **hundreds** of orders to leverage a decent price on our first print run. Tell your family and friends, post to your loops and groups. Buy! Buy! Buy! Think of today as December 24th. *Whaddaya mean; ya haven't*

bought your Christmas presents yet? Go to UNDERDOG's Web site and order a copy of **Torrents** for everyone on your list. Take a tour of our site. Hope you like our style. Gayle Link took a lot of time putting up with me-I mean putting up the site (I designed the logo. Woof!).

Seriously, I wanted to cut-and-run when the person who promised me thousands in funding, cut-and-ran. Y'all begged (yes, begged!) me to keep this small press open. I've put my money on the line. We either sink or swim on this book. If we don't make a profit, there won't be an UNDERDOG PRESS. It's up to you.

Special thanks to all those giving me a hand, and a foot, and a...

Gayle Link - Does everything, I'm merely a figurehead
Laura Drake - Public Relations
Robin Haseltine - Troubleshootin' (no, she doesn't have trouble shootin'-I don't think)
Natalie Ellis - Spectacular Trailer
Dale Ankrum - Designed Robin's bodacious book cover.

You guys ROCK!

I'll be on Steve Bonenberger's Radio Show Thursday and Friday talkin' about Underdog Press. For a schedule, go to: www.businessstalkradio.net

Launching a New Mag!

Christian Fiction Online magazine is chock full of fun, informative stuff. Boo-yah! Editor-in-Chief Michelle Sutton did a lot of work to get the magazine going, so take some time to read some of the articles. Oh, and I have a column. Click on "Buzz." The "buzzword" for July is "Emergent." Here's the link:

www.christianfictiononlinemagazine.com

Copyright e-Filing!

After months of testing, the US Copyright Office will finally allow the submission of copyright registrations electronically. As ArsTechnica explains, "the benefits include ten dollars off the normal filing fee (\$35 instead of \$45), faster processing time, credit card payments, and online status tracking. Certain works (mostly unpublished and electronic-only pieces) can even be uploaded directly to the Copyright Office; everything else, including hull vessel designs (!), still require a mailed hardcopy for deposit in the Library of Congress, but the application form and payment can be completed online."

B&H Publishing Group launches fiction Web site

B&H Publishing Group has launched an all-new Web site for its growing line of fiction releases at www.PureEnjoyment.com. The portal features the latest information on current titles plus contests, giveaways, author pages, and an increasingly popular series of book video trailers. [Hey, they stole my idea!]

"Like a movie trailer, these videos make books come alive in a way that really helps the potential reader," said Ben Todd, B&H electronic marketing manager. Two new books with video trailers are *Forsaken* and *Shade*. Other new fall 2008 fiction titles from B&H will include Patti Hill's mother-daughter dramedy *The Queen of Sleepy Eye* and *Lookin' Back*,

Texas, the second novel from million-selling author Leanna Ellis.

PureEnjoyment.com is also currently offering a free download of *Sisters, Ink*, the first in a series of four novels by Rebeca Seitz following the lives of four daughters adopted into a family and connected by their late mother's love of scrapbooking. [CBA online by way of Robin Miller]

Simon & Schuster Signs on with LibreDigital

Simon & Schuster has joined with LibreDigital, who will provide digital distribution for the publisher's electronic content. Ellie Hirschhorn, executive v-p and chief digital officer for Simon & Schuster, says, "Our new digital warehouse will afford us the flexibility to syndicate our content to meet the needs of a wide variety of partners, from social networks to portals to retail sites." [PW]

Reader Statistics

In a poll conducted by Random House/Zogby, 86 percent of the respondents seek out books by authors they like. Fifty-two percent of people's book purchases are swayed by cover art, and 43 percent of people go into a bookstore looking for a specific book. Read more statistics at: www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6565475.html

Literary Agent Sues Sites for Ruining Her Reputation

By Lynn Andriani -- *Publishers Weekly*

Literary agent Barbara Bauer is suing 19 bloggers and websites, including Wikipedia, YouTube and AbsoluteWrite.com, claiming they are ruining her reputation, the *New Jersey Star-Ledger* reported yesterday. Online critics call Bauer one of publishing's "20 Worst Literary Agents," (no, I'm not on the list) claiming she charges clients high fees for little work, and is a "scam agent." Bauer did not return *PW*'s calls for comment.

Bauer's web site says the New Jersey literary agent established her firm in 1984, and that she has helped get numerous books by award-winning authors published in multiple languages around the world.

Bauer also sued the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America web site. The case has caught the attention of free-speech groups and online activists.

The two sides are scheduled to argue the motion before a Monmouth County, NJ, judge today. (From all I've heard, this agent deserves it, but those who've threatened to ruin me [Can you imagine? Nope, I can't...] take heed!)

Karp On Publishing

Twelve publisher Jonathan Karp has an essay in the Sunday Washington Post on the state of publishing. He remarks on "the relentless, indiscriminate proliferation" of commercial "ephemera" on the bookshelves" and freely admits "I too have sinned. In weaker moments, I've been seduced by tales of celebrity, money, gossip and scandal." He notes: "Most authors want their work to be accessible to a typical educated reader, so the question really isn't whether the work is highbrow or lowbrow or appeals to the masses or the elites; the question is whether the book is expedient or built to last. Are we going for the quick score or

enduring value? Too often, we (publishers and authors) are driven by the same concerns as any commercial enterprise: We are manufacturing products for the moment."

Karp also observes: "I can't prove it empirically, but when I talk to literary agents and fellow publishers, they acknowledge an unarticulated truth about our business: Fewer authors are devoting more than two years to their projects. The system demands more, faster. Conventional wisdom holds that popular novelists should deliver one or two books per year. Nonfiction authors often aren't paid enough to work full-time on a book for more than a year or two." One result: "Journalism has long been regarded as the first rough draft of history; lately, however, books have too easily been thought of as the second rough draft, rather than the final word."

His prediction/hope: "Publishers will be forced to invest in works of quality to maintain their niche. These books will be the one product that only they can deliver better than anyone else.... For publishers, R&D means giving authors the resources to write the best books -- works that will last, because the lasting books will, ultimately, be where the money is." [\[Post\]](#)

Small Publishers Feel Power of Amazon's 'Buy' Button

By [DOREEN CARVAJAL](#)

PARIS - **Amazon**, the online retailing giant with a fast-rising share of the consumer book market, has adopted the literary equivalent of a nuclear option for rebellious publishers who balk at its demands. (As previously reported, I HATE BULLIES! I wish every publishing house would boycott Amazon like Hachette has, and get them under control. Y'know, they don't even house books. There's no massive "Amazon warehouse." Sheesh!)

In the latest in a series of disputes over the division of revenue from online sales, Amazon has disabled the "buy now with 1 click" icon on its British Web site for hundreds of books published by the British unit of Hachette Livre, from back-list **Stephen King** novels to, naturally, "The Hachette Guide to French Wine."

The button allows registered users to purchase titles instantly, with free shipping. Customers can still buy the affected books, but they have to navigate to an open marketplace that links them to third-party sellers of new or used books. And they have to pay for shipping.

The struggle comes at a time that Amazon's power as a bookseller is increasing, with sales growing online in an otherwise tepid global book market. Some publishers fear that with the introduction of Amazon's Kindle electronic reader, the company will rise into a position to be able to demand more concessions.

"The buy button is their weapon of choice and that's how they impose market discipline," said Paul Aiken, executive director of the Authors Guild, an American trade group that also briefly lost the buy icon, for titles sold from **BackinPrint.com**, a print-on-demand service for infrequently purchased works. "This is such a clear indication that once they have the clout they are willing to use it to the full extent that they can. It's ugly with Amazon and will

probably get uglier."

Amazon is saying little about its tactics. But bloggers have been organizing letter-writing campaigns and petition drives accusing Amazon, which bills itself as "Earth's most customer-centric company," of transforming itself into the bully of the publishing industry.

Damien Peachey, an Amazon spokesman in Britain, declined to comment on the dispute with Hachette Livre, a subsidiary of the French media company Lagardère. It is the second-biggest English-language trade publisher in the world, after the **Random House** division of **Bertelsmann**.

"We wouldn't discuss publicly our relationship with publishers," Mr. Peachey said.

He also refused to discuss the strategy of disabling "buy" icons, offering the same reason.

Amazon's communications office in its Seattle headquarters did not respond to repeated telephone calls.

In Britain, where Amazon opened a digital store in 1998 and where it now commands about 16 percent of the overall book market, publishers participate in tough annual negotiation sessions with Amazon about their cut. In markets where it does not have such a commanding position, like France or Germany, negotiations are much less demanding, according to publishers.

The first to spar with Amazon this year in Britain was Bloomsbury, the British publisher of the **Harry Potter** series by **J. K. Rowling**. Before they reached a compromise on undisclosed terms, hundreds of Bloomsbury's older, back-list titles lost buy buttons on the Amazon site in Britain.

Bloomsbury best sellers like "A Thousand Splendid Suns" and "The Kite Runner," which are big earners for Amazon, were spared the same treatment.

Then the struggle with Hachette broke into public view this month when the publisher's chief executive, Tim Hely Hutchinson, sent a defiant letter to many of his authors explaining the "oddities" of vanishing buy buttons. The online retailer, he said, was demanding a bigger slice. Publishers traditionally sell books to retailers at a discount off the recommended retail price, but Amazon was demanding more than its existing 50 percent.

"Amazon seems each year to go from one publisher to another, making increasing demands in order to achieve richer terms at our expense and sometimes at yours," Mr. Hely Hutchinson said in the letter. "If this continued, it would not be long before Amazon got virtually all of the revenue that is presently shared between author, publisher, retailer, printer and other parties."

Mr. Hely Hutchinson declined, through a spokeswoman, to comment further, and Amazon has not specified how much more it is demanding.

Claire Alexander, a literary agent in London and former president of the British Association of Authors' Agents, said authors were reluctant to speak out about the issue because of the "power of Amazon."

"This is about profit and who gets the profit and what we're beginning to see is that Amazon can be very ruthless in negotiations," she said.

For now, the dispute is unresolved. So the buy buttons are missing from older titles like "Labyrinth" by Kate Mosse or "Duma Key," by Stephen King, who still managed to get favored treatment for titles in his "Dark Tower" series. Many Hachette titles have also been dropped from Amazon promotions suggesting other titles for customers in their favorite genres.

The dispute with Hachette is not the first in which Amazon has resorted to removing the "buy now" buttons for certain books. In the spring it started disabling the icons for some small publishers in the United States that resisted Amazon's demand that they use an Amazon-owned company, BookSurge, for print-on-demand services. Amazon is the dominant seller of such titles.

As a result, some smaller publishers in the United States have signed service agreements with Amazon. But a few refused Amazon's demand to shift the instant printing of their books to BookSurge, which they say has been demanding a discount of as much as 52 percent on the retail price. (Not only 52%, but the service sucks! Sorry.)

"They're still threatening us and other publishers, but they haven't flipped the switch yet," said Angela Hoy, the co-owner of Booklocker.com, a print-on-demand publisher in Bangor, Me., which filed a lawsuit in May seeking an injunction to keep Amazon from imposing BookSurge's services on publishers.

The Book Factory: Authors pressured to crank them out

By [David Mehegan](#), *The Boston Globe*

In an age when reading for pleasure is declining, book publishers increasingly are counting on their biggest moneymaking writers to crank out books at a rate of at least one a year, right on schedule, and sometimes faster than that.

Many top-selling writers, such as John Grisham and Mary Higgins Clark, have turned out at least one book annually for years. Now some writers are beginning to grumble about the pressure, and some are refusing to comply.

Not that writers are being explicitly harassed, but costly advance marketing plans are increasingly tied into the expectation that the most profitable authors will have a new book out at roughly the same time each year. In today's intensely competitive marketplace, readers will turn to another author if a writer fails to come through at the usual time, which could cost a publisher big bucks.

Many writers below the top tier are also being urged to pick up the pace. In some cases, publishers have made a book-per-year promise an explicit condition of taking on a new author.

"It's no problem, as long as you don't have a life," said Patricia Cornwell, author of the enormously successful Kay Scarpetta crime thrillers. "The Scarpetta [manuscript] that's due out Oct. 7 is due in a few weeks, because they have to reserve the storefront real estate and pay for it. If I don't get the book turned in on time, they'll be freaking out. If I miss my deadline, I miss the entire year. Sometimes there's an overwhelming feeling of panic. It's like a rock 'n' roll concert, and what if I don't show up?"

There are signs of a growing resistance among suspense authors to becoming factory producers, even if it costs them sales and readers.

"There's pressure to treat authors like Coca-Cola," said California thriller writer Brad Meltzer, who was asked to publish once a year but refused. "Every time you get a bunch of writers together, this is all they complain about. The trend is, 'How many books can you put out?' "

No one is forced to sign a book-a-year contract, of course, but in the thriller and suspense genres, which make the biggest profits and dominate best-seller lists, publishers are desperate for writers to be as predictable as the seasons. "There's enormous pressure on writers to repeat at least annually, and some can do it more frequently," said Meg Ruley, a New York literary agent. "The rapid publishing sequence is a reality of the retail marketplace. In commercial fiction, it's crucial."

It's all part of an ever-fiercer competition for a dwindling number of book buyers in the age of mass electronic entertainment. The huge success of J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter" novels has tended to obscure the underlying stagnation of book publishing. Book Industry Study Group, a research organization composed of publishers and printers, projects a 0.9 percent increase in trade book sales (that is, apart from text- and professional books) for 2008, and a measly 1.4 percent increase between 2009 and 2012.

Publishers insist they are not asking the impossible. "There's no one rule that fits all," said Lisa Gallagher, senior vice president and publisher of William Morrow. "We want the best book an author can write. It doesn't make sense to force them to deliver on a schedule that will make them suffer." Yet she acknowledges that "every book has a deadline," and those who crank out a new novel per year enable the publisher to bring out last year's book in paperback around the same time, doubling the opportunity to promote the brand.

In the various suspense genres - serial killers, international conspiracy, romance suspense and traditional detective fiction - the public's memory can be short. "If you don't write a book a year, it might not be devastating, but it helps to keep your face out there," said thriller writer David Baldacci, who says he doesn't mind the pace.

Michael Palmer, author of medical thrillers including "The First Patient," wrote a book every two or three years with his previous publisher, but his sales began to decline. "My reviews were uniformly good," Palmer said. "I had to assume the reason was that I wasn't getting a book out frequently enough."

Then Palmer's agent pitched him to Matthew Shear, publisher of St. Martin's Press. "I told him, 'I'm a big fan, but in this competitive market, I need a book a year. If you do that, I can increase your sales,'" Shear said. Palmer agreed, with trepidation, and has made his deadlines for the first two books in a three-book contract. Like Cornwell, he has sweated

bullets over the deadlines. Even so, he acknowledged, "I've gotten tons more mail and attention."

Some writers contend the time pressure corrodes their work. Dennis Lehane tried the book-a-year pace once, to his regret. He had written a second book by the time his first novel, "A Drink Before the War," was published in 1994. He wrote a third book, he said, "blazing fast, a real fluke." His fourth took 2 ½ years.

"Then they asked me to turn a book around in a year," he said. "I did it ["Prayers for Rain" in 1999], but the week it was published I realized what would have made it a really good book. The anger of that realization haunted me. I said I would never go back on that hamster wheel. It's what led me to write 'Mystic River.'" He took two years, published it in 2001, and it was his biggest book. The 2003 movie won two Academy Awards.

Penguin UK to Discuss Non-Returnable Backlist with Accounts

Penguin UK is expected to meet soon with Booksellers Association officials and other booksellers to discuss their plans to make backlist sales non-returnable. CEO Peter Field told PN earlier in the month: "We intend to speak to everybody we need to about this; it's an important conversation to have. We believe backlist should be firm sale but are attempting to identify a common purpose. I believe there will be different ways to tackle the problem, depending on different customers and regions, rather than a one-size-fits-all policy. We will talk about risk and reward and get the balance right. A common purpose can be found and, if we all manage our logistics better, we will all benefit and retailers will save money on returns."

THIS IS TOO FUNNY!

Robert Crais' new novel, *Chasing Darkness*, is not-repeat NOT-about homicidal bears, despite the **full-page New York Times ad** promising a 'grizzly' murder. His Simon & Schuster rep says, 'We meant 'grisly.'"' (Wonder how much a full-page ad in the NYT costs? Yikes!) [[NYDN](#)]



EDITORS

At Atria Books, Nick Simonds has been promoted to associate editor.

Mauro DiPreta has been promoted to vp, publishing director at Harper Entertainment. He will also continue to acquire and editor for William Morrow, where he is executive editor. [PM]

Stefanie Bierwerth is leaving Macmillan UK for Michael Joseph, where she will be editorial director for crime, report to fiction publisher Mari Evans. [PM]

At William Morrow Jennifer Pooley has been promoted to senior editor. She has been with Morrow since 1998. Peter Hubbard is being promoted to editor, continuing to report to Henry Ferris. [PM]

Charles Kochman has been promoted to executive editor at Abrams. He now reports directly to publisher Steve Tager. [PM]

At the Simon & Schuster imprint, Roger Labrie has been promoted to senior editor and Michelle

Rorke has been promoted to assistant editor. Labrie has been at S&S for more than a decade and has worked closely with editorial director Alice Mayhew on many of her titles. [PM]

At Ballantine, Paul Taunton has been promoted to editor, and he will focus on ESPN Books, and at Villard, Ryan Doherty has been promoted to assistant editor. [PM]

Associate Editor Faith Black is now the acquiring editor for Avalon Books.

AGENTS

Emma Parry is leaving the agency she co-founded with Christy Fletcher, Fletcher and Parry. After five years with Fletcher, Parry wants to pursue new challenges. The agency will absorb Parry's clients and her authors will work with other staffers at the agency, including Melissa Chinchillo and Donald Lamm, the former Chairman of WW Norton.

Boo-Yahs!

Romantic Times has accepted **Raz Steel's** workshop for their upcoming conference in Orlando next spring. He'll be presenting 'Heroes with PMS'!

Robin Haseltine submitted a humorous story on love and won Dorchester's contest in honor of Christie Craig's June book, *Weddings Can Be Murder*. Her winning entry can be viewed here: <http://www.dorchesterpub.com/Dorch/SpecialFeatures.cfm?ID=2505>

Feature

Robin Miller Still Needs Our Help!

EDITOR & AGENT EDITS THIS MONTH at MY eBay AUCTION for ROBIN MILLER!

Please distribute this info to every loop/group you're on/in. Thanks.

My client, Robin Miller w/a Robin Carroll needs our help. Her husband is unable to work, and they have three children. I'm trying to raise \$2,000 a month for the rest of the year to pay her mortgage. I'm taking monthly pledges of \$10.00 or more (now five more payments), and one-time gifts. Or, bid on an auction.

Exciting news! **For the agent edit this month**, you're bidding on ... **me!** Send me your first chapter. I'll edit it and give you thirty minutes of my time at either the RWA Conference in San Fran, or the ACFW conference in Missouri. We'll chat, have a soda (on me-well, not on me) and discuss your work. You will have to work around my schedule, though. If you're not attending either conference, I'll give you a thirty-minute phone consultation. (I'll edit any genres except erotica and romantica.)

Go to <http://www.ebay.com/> (after you finish reading this incredible newsletter I worked my tail off to put together...). To bid, type: '**Literary Agent Kelly Mortimer 1st Chapter Edit/Consult**' in the search box. All proceeds (minus fees) go to the Robin Miller Mortgage Fund.

I haven't heard back from my editors yet, so the editor auction will take place next week.

[Any editor or agent who wishes to help Robin by editing a partial through an eBay auction, please contact me at: kmortimer@mortimerliterary.com]

Contests

Please e-mail your contest info, in a format I can cut and paste, to: kmortimer@mortimerliterary.com. Type: "Contest" in the subject line. Thanks!

ENTER NOW

Go to NarrativeMagazine.com.

Don't forget: the *Narrative First-Person Story Contest*, with \$7,000 in prizes, is now accepting entries of fiction and nonfiction.

Entry deadline: July 31.

- First Place \$3,000
- Second Place \$1,750
- Third Place \$1,000
- and ten finalists will each receive \$125.

All entries will be considered for publication.

Narrative Contest Guidelines

The *Narrative First-Person Contest* is open to all writers. We're looking for works of fiction or nonfiction written in the first-person point of view in the following categories: short stories, short short stories, novel excerpts, essays, memoirs, and excerpts from book-length nonfiction. Entries must be previously unpublished, no longer than 8,000 words, and must not have been previously chosen as a winner, finalist, or honorable mention in another contest.

In seeking fiction and nonfiction written in first-person point of view, we are especially looking for works that transcend narrow self-interest and self-expression. We are looking for authors whose use of the first person demonstrates a sense of proportion and perspective, an engagement with the world beyond the self, for authors whose gifts of thought or feeling and of insight enhance a reader's sense of connection and possibility. And, as always, we are looking for manuscripts with a strong narrative, in which the effects of language are intense and total. Reading the first-person narrator-the I of the story-we hope to find the most necessary, most intimate, most personal stories made universal.

Awards: **First Prize is \$3,000, Second Prize is \$1,750, and Third Prize is \$1,000.** The prize winners will be announced in *Narrative* and will be eligible for publication. Additionally, **ten finalists will receive \$125 each.** We'll announce finalists in the magazine as well. All entries will be considered for publication.

There is a \$20 fee for each entry. And with your entry, you'll receive six months of complimentary access to [**Narrative Backstage**](#).

The contest will be judged by the editors of the magazine. Winners and finalists will be

announced to the public by August 31, 2008. All writers who enter will be notified by email of the judges' decisions.

We accept online entries only. We do accept simultaneous submissions, but if your entry is accepted elsewhere, please let us know as soon as possible (and accept our congratulations!).

Entries should be formatted as follows: Double-spaced, with 12-point type, at least one-inch margins, and sequentially numbered pages. Please give the author's name, address, telephone number, and email address at the top of the first page.

Happenings

Please e-mail your happenings info, in a format I can cut and paste, to: kmortimer@mortimerliterary.com. Type: "Happenings" in the subject line. Thanks!

Thrills Come to the Big Apple

By Jordan Foster -- *Publishers Weekly*

The third annual International Thriller Writers (ITW) Thriller Fest comes to Manhattan this week, with panels, presentations and workshops featuring some of the genre's biggest names. Held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel July 9-12, Thriller Fest will pay tribute to 2008 ThrillerMaster Sandra Brown, who will be presented her award by 2007 ThrillerMaster and bestselling author James Patterson. Events include a demonstration by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) entitled "Lethal Weapons, Bombs and Terrorism," an interview with Clive Cussler by Douglas Preston, and appearances by authors Lee Child, R.L. Stine, and Steve Berry. A meeting place for authors, readers, budding writers, and publishing industry professionals, the first Thriller Fest was held in 2006. More information on ITW can be found on their Web site www.thrillerfest.org.

Yada Yada

(A joke submitted by client Terry Odell)

A writer died and was given the option of going to heaven or hell.

She decided to check out each place first. As the writer descended into the fiery pits, she saw row upon row of writers chained to their desks in a steaming sweatshop. As they worked, they were repeatedly whipped with thorny lashes.

"Oh my," said the writer. "Let me see heaven now."

A few moments later, as she ascended into heaven, she saw rows of writers, chained to their desks in a steaming sweatshop. As they worked, they, too, were whipped with thorny lashes.

"Wait a minute," said the writer. "This is just as bad as hell!"

"Oh no it's not," replied an unseen voice. "We're published."

WISE WORDS by the SASSY SAGE

"Never say never, or God might believe ya."

That's it for this week and the next. Take care!

Smiles, Kelly

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