

# Blowing Kisses



## Managing Three Uncommon Relationships

By Terri Stone and T.A. (Todd) Stone

We all know you have relationships with your significant other, your children, your editor, agent, publisher, and chocolate, but you also have relationships with three “people” you normally don’t think about your idol, your inner critic, and even the IRS. Managing these three relationships will not only improve your writing, it will also improve how you feel about your writing and about yourself.

Two steps in managing any relationship are first, recognizing that the relationship exists, and second, managing the give-and-take so that both parties end up satisfied. Now that we’ve taken the first step and pointed out that you have relationships with your idol, your inner critic, and the IRS, how do we go forward and manage these so that they are better relationships?

Let’s start with your idol, the author you really, really like. You read everything she writes and you’d love to have her mastery of the craft in your own work. What do you give her? Clearly, you give her your money—you buy her books. You give her recognition and admiration, and you probably give her some concentration and effort because you are trying to write to that level. You even give her publicity when you tell others about her books.

What do you get? Often, you may feel like you get nothing or nothing but frustration. Perhaps you

think you can’t live up to her standards or success, or are constantly comparing yourself to her. But let’s look at that. You can have a better relationship by looking for different things. Look for her use of techniques. Look to her for inspiration. And, look to her for just plain entertainment—for a story well told. This can make the relationship more balanced and therefore better.

Like it or not, you have a relationship with your inner critic as well. Normally, we’re told to turn off our inner critic in order to write, yet we know there’s a point in the writing process when we need her in order to make our writing better. So, we can’t just dump our inner critic, toss her clothes out onto the front lawn, and change the locks on the house and the code to the garage door opener. When she speaks, we tend to get frustrated

and blocked because we feel only the barrage of negativity. In turn, we give her worry, time and even some of our best creativity. So, we’re sacrificing more to the inner critic than we are receiving.

Let’s turn this around. The best way to manage this relationship is to give this inner critic her due, but at the right time and place in your writing. You have to manage this so that when you are trying to create and draft a manuscript, it’s not her time. Learn to tell her to shut up. Give her time when

*Steps in managing any relationship are recognizing that it exists and managing the give-and-take so both parties end up satisfied.*

(Continued on page 11)

## About Windy City

### 2005 Officers

President	Dyanne Davis 630-972-0777
Vice President	Jackie Wallis
Secretary	Theresa Stevens
Treasurer	Adrienne Maynard
Newsletter	Kelle Z. Riley
Presentations	Luisa Buehler
Membership	Chris Foutris
Critiques	Barb Harrison
Contests	Lauren Ford
Librarian	Cathie Linz

#### Meetings

Windy City meets for a general business meeting and program from 7-9:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at the Naperville Municipal Center, 400 S. Eagle St. unless otherwise specified. Critique sessions are at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of each month at the Lisle Library, 777 Front St.

Visit our website at  
[www.WindyCityRWA.com](http://www.WindyCityRWA.com)

#### Blowing Kisses

Blowing Kisses is published semiannually and is the official publication of Windy City Romance Writers, Chapter 104. Articles may be reprinted by other RWA® chapters and should be attributed to the author and Windy City.

Submissions are welcome. Copy should be in text format on PC disk or via e-mail. Please include a hard copy.

Send to Fredericka Meiners  
610 Golfers Lane  
Bartlett, IL 60103  
E-mail to [fameiners@msn.com](mailto:fameiners@msn.com)

## RWA: The Rewards of Networking

I've worried about this letter since I decided to run for president. My predecessors gave such words of inspiration that I knew they'd said it all. Windy City is definitely a nurturing place for writers and I do agree that we offer a lot in the way of help with the various programs.

Since this has already been said, I've decided instead to share with you my selfish reasons for joining the board, something I swore I'd never do (joining not sharing). There's a lot of work and a lot of complaints.

So why did I do it?

Because of the things that I want for Windy City that has nothing to do with the programs. If I had a magic wand, I would wave it over our group and have all dreams instantly fulfilled. Since I don't, I want to tackle something that has a chance of success. I want to blur the lines, if not totally erase them, between published and not-yet-published. As a member of Windy City since 1997, I've seen both sides of the coin.

First and foremost, we're a group of writers who come together to learn, to get new ideas, to rejoice in our triumphs, lament our woes and build each other up. I've seen the emphasis placed throughout the writing world on things that should have little or no meaning to us as writers. Are you with the right publisher? Are you e-pubbed? Are you self published? Are you POD?

As members of Romance Writers of America there are

## President's Message



**Windy City**  
Romance Writers of America

certain things we have to do to be considered recognized and we all support that position even if we don't agree with it, or we wouldn't be members.



Sometimes the snobbery and elitist attitudes we see on some loops make us forget that our primary goal is to write. I do not want that for Windy City. I never want to see us become divisive over whether a writer writes erotica or Christian fiction, sci-fi or paranormal. I don't want the feeling that if you're published, you're special and deserve special privileges. We're all special and deserve the same privileges.

After reading a recent article in RWR concerning what can we do for our published authors, I've thought about it. Walking on the other side for a moment, I know a lot of chapters worry about the published writers not attending more meetings.

This is what I think our published authors want: to be treated as anyone else, not special, not the font of knowledge, not as the person with all of the answers. I think maybe unconsciously we've put undue pressure on them to come and impart wisdom. And maybe

(Continued on page 11)

## Blowin' in the Wind

Susan Elizabeth Phillips will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award at the RWA National Conference. Susan sent this message:

“Needless to say, I’m incredibly honored. I’ve learned that a number of Windy City members wrote to the Board recommending me for the honor, and I can’t tell you how touched I am by this. I know how busy all of you are, and I’m so appreciative that you took the time to nominate me. I hope to be able to thank you personally in April at the Librarians and Booksellers Appreciation Dinner.”

Margaret Watson is a RITA finalist in the Long Contemporary Category for her Superromance, *Hometown Girl*.

Susan Carroll’s *The Dark Queen* is a RITA finalist in the Best Long Historical Romance category.

Todd Stone’s book—*Novelist’s Boot Camp*—is the Main Selection for the Writer’s Digest Book Club. In addition, the Barnes and Noble executives met with the Writer’s Digest Executives and singled out *Novelist’s Boot Camp* as a “fantastic” book and the book will be in all the B&N bookstores. It’s online just about everywhere and it’s also being sold in Great Britain through David & Charles.

Barb Deane and family are moving to Germany for two to four years. She’ll stay in touch by e-mail.

Teresa McCarthy’s *The Convenient Bride* is a finalist in the Award of Excellence contest from the Colorado Romance Writers.

Jesse Petersen’s *Scandalous* finalled in the Gail Wilson Award of Excellence (Southern Magic RWA, Alabama) in the Historical Category and is also an RT Reviewers Choice Award Finalist for Best Sensual Historical Romance.

Diane Whiddon-Brown received an Honorable Mention in the Romancing the Tome Contest for “Only in L.A.” from the Coeur de Louisiane chapter.

Haley Hughes placed second with her entry “Prairie Fire” in the 2005 First Kiss Contest, presented by the New England Chapter of RWA.

Kathie Clare and Pat Casiello won second place for “Reunion For The First Time” in the short contemporary category in both the Beacon Unpublished contest sponsored by First Coast RWA and Great Expectations unpublished contest sponsored by North Texas RWA.

For “Be Mine, Valentine,” Lauren Ford placed third in the Northwest Indiana RWA chapter’s Grand Beginnings contest and is a finalist the Smoky Mountain Romance Writers 2006 Laurie Contest in the Long Contemporary category

Sharon Nelson’s “Reasons of the Heart” historical placed fourth in North Louisiana StoryTellers & Authors of Romance 2005 “Suzannah” Contest and second in Red River Romance Writers 2005 “Ticket to Write” Contest.

Ann Macela’s *The Oldest Kind Of Magic* is a finalist in The Beacon from First Coast Romance Writers.

*Our newest member, Todd Stone, tries to fit in with the rest of the membership.*

*Shown here with fellow Windy City member, Terri Stone, at Autumn Authors.*



## Lemons Revisited

### What a Rejection Really Means To Me

By Deborah Pfeiffer

Plenty of people will tell you how to interpret comments in rejection letters and learn from them and improve. I'm going to tell you how to ignore them. So they don't debilitate you. So they don't keep you from writing. This isn't about accepting harsh reality; this is about keeping a positive mental attitude, no matter what.

First, let me just say it. Rejections suck.

OK, I just had to get that out of my system. If you've sent your well-polished baby out, along with all your professional writing hopes and dreams, to that perfect-for-you agent or editor, only to receive a rejection letter back, you know exactly what I'm talking about. It's about as much fun as forcing yourself to chomp down on a lemon wedge and or asking a passerby to please stomp on your toe.

Unfortunately, for most of us, rejections and rejection letters aren't probably going to go away. You've probably heard the usual spiel—opening yourself to rejections means you're opening yourself to acceptances too. A seasoned writer also has told me to view rejections more like a countdown, each "No" putting you one step closer to "Yes."

Don't get me wrong. These are certainly great ways of putting a positive spin on a potentially bad experience. But when the actual rejection letter appears in your hands, such shifts of perspective aren't always so easy to grasp and hold onto. I don't know about you, but I've been known to want to act like a big baby when I get a rejection letter—throw a tantrum, kick or break something, cry uncontrollably till someone promises to take that mean ole nasty rejection letter back.

Sure, sooner or later, I get over that reaction. But even after putting on a good face, residual doubt and fear can stop many a writer from moving forward after a rejection. I've seen that double-eyed monster in myself. And no amount of positive spin is going to help.

So what's a poor writer to do?

If I had a magic amulet that could ward off rejections like garlic does a vampire, I'd be rich ... and published in fiction, many times over. And I'm not, not yet anyway. But what I do have is perspective, from years of being a professional editor as well as a professional writer. And that perspective just may help you see rejections differently so you don't let them keep you from what you really need to do: *write*.

#### The Unavoidable, Unwritten Rules

First, give up the idea that if you somehow follow all the rules (stated, unstated, imaginary) just right, you'll never get a rejection. This isn't a game of "step on a sidewalk crack, break your future editor's back"—and she'll be mad and reject you.

At one time or another, we writers tend to fall victim to thinking—"Well, if I just submitted something a little differently, I wouldn't have been rejected."

The real world doesn't work that way, even though we'd

sometimes like to think it does. So we keep writing. It's much easier to point to some silly technicality for why we were rejected vs. the horrible conclusion most of us immediately jump to—that our writing sucks. (Cue up the screeching horror movie soundtrack.)

But you know what? It could be something completely different. I propose that most of those little mishaps, like missing one comma (not 45) in your submitted manuscript, aren't what get you rejected. If you submit good, solid writing, things like margin spacing a point or two off isn't going to make or break your writing in an editor's eyes. On the other hand, if you get a rejection, it isn't (now trust me on this) necessarily that your writing is horrible.

I'm putting to you that there is a gray area, a middle ground, where your work is rejected, not

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*Don't let them keep you from what you really need to do:  
Write.*

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## Lemons Revisited

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because of the quality of your writing, not because you forgot to dot an i, but because of circumstances *beyond your control* that have really nothing whatsoever to do with you or your writing.

### It's Not Always 'All About Me'

I know. Instinctively you're already bucking against that "beyond your control" statement. You don't want something this important to be beyond your control. But that relinquishing of control is something you can turn to your advantage. In the case of rejection, it can mean the writing equivalent of an Act of God. It means you're not guilty. It means that rejection or "pass" is just dumb luck (or dumb bad luck), but that also means it's not really about you and your writing.

How can a rejection not be personal? How can a pass on my writing not be all about me?

Here's how. Editors have a whole laundry list of reasons why they reject someone's work that has nothing at all to do with its quality or appearance.

- Internal deadlines: The editor is so swamped with current assignments that she or he has no time to deal with submissions now.
- Management/strategic/administrative changes: New leadership may have just decided to take the whole publishing house/division/imprint in another direction, so they're no longer buying the type of book you submitted. Or the editor you submitted your work to just got promoted, switched responsibilities, or took maternity leave or a sabbatical. Or internally in a department, politics are such that editors within a particular line or imprint have different visions.
- Monetary reasons: The editor/s at the publishing house have already spent their budget for the year (or the next or the next), or just bought all the historicals they need right now, or all the romantic comedies or....
- Budget reasons: Publishing houses probably have a different term for this, but most newspapers use a budget (what stories/content are planned for a specific issue) and most magazines have a yearly editorial calendar (shows the subject matter they're committed to cover in each issue). Though some may have a more formal or more just-by-feel proc-

ess, editorial departments pay attention to the balance of the type of books they buy and publish. So if they just bought a book or several books of the same type of yours, they may not be buying more at this time. A house that has a posse of high-profile suspense writers may not be looking to buy more suspense right now. Or more specifically, perhaps they've just signed a new author who wrote a book that has a character who's an expert on the Mexican Hat Dance Song. If your book comes in just after that, and it prominently features the Mexican Hat Dance Song, they're likely to pass. They don't want to necessarily become known as the MHDS publisher.

These circumstances can also be mixed and matched and interrelated. A new editor may come in (due to the previous one taking a promotion) and, with a new vision, start cutting purchasing budgets and ban all books that even mention the MHDS.

Yes, these reasons are nebulous, and you're not likely to have an editor give such reasons why your book is being rejected. You're more likely just to get a message that "I'm sorry but it's just not right for us at this time."

So with these rejections, at least for me, it makes me feel better that it's *not* personal. Yes, then I have to deal with the disappointment that perhaps I got treated unfairly, but at least it's not just me being treated unfairly, but the whole system. Stupid system! (Insert temper tantrum here.)

In other words, I would rather take the approach that the rejection had nothing whatsoever to do with me personally or, worse, that my writing sucks big lemons.

Sure I could take full ownership or blame for being rejected, but what good does that do me, thinking I was singled out and therefore I suck? That might make me stop writing. And why? Just because I am *guessing* they rejected me for my writing alone? Well, forget that.

To paraphrase another writer friend, if a rejection makes you stop writing, the only person who loses is you. In fact, that's giving the person/entity who sent the rejection more power over your work

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## Lemons

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than they probably want.

Of course, once in a great while, you might get a “pass” where the editor found time and energy to give you some valuable input to make your baby a more viable selling proposition. But for the most part, they’re underpaid, overworked, and underappreciated. They need all their precious energy for the books they didn’t pass on. So don’t go trying to squeeze water out of a lemon. If, however, you’re one of those lucky ones, and the rejection letter is filled with information that is both illuminating and energizing (that is, your almost immediate reaction is to get excited and want to sit down and make changes to improve your book), wonderful! Personally, I wouldn’t even classify that as a rejection so much as a gift!

For the rest of those rejections, take heart. When you get one, that’s not a time to think, “It must’ve been me, I must’ve turned that one phrase wrongly, burped at just the wrong time.” Getting a rejection sucks enough. Don’t take all the blame for the pass. It’s a pass—as in, I’m sorry, but I’m going to have to pass on that today. You don’t have to stand in the middle of the road and say, “Hey, come on, hit me!” OK, ha, you do, when you send your babies out, but you don’t have to do that when a rejection comes in.

I hate rejections as much as anyone else and immediately think it’s me, me, me, I suck. But interestingly enough, I get mad when I hear another writer friend has gotten a rejection. I even get upset with that friend if they get upset by that rejection. Because my first instinctive, emotional reaction when I hear a friend has gotten news like that is, “Boy, oh boy, was that editor or agent stupid to have rejected your work! You, my friend, are going to come back with a vengeance, and they’ll rue the day they ever passed on your work. They will be making nice, and you will be like the returning celebrity at your high school reunion (even better, you WILL BE the returning celebrity at your HS reunion), and editors will be fawning over you at every industry event and . . .”

You get the picture.

Anyway, this is how I feel for my writer friends when they suffer a rejection. So why is it we don’t

react this way when we ourselves get one? Huh? To survive and live again to create something new, we really need to cultivate this reaction for ourselves. If we don’t do it instinctively, then maybe we should train ourselves to do it. So instead of chomping down on that lemon wedge, go for a nice juicy orange or apple or chunk of dark chocolate!

Deborah Pfeiffer writes Fairy Tales with a Modern Twist, a.k.a. contemporary romantic comedy, young adult and women’s fiction. Her book *Dreams Come True* was a 2004 RWA Golden Heart Finalist in the Single Title Contemporary category. She also has 20-plus years of professional publishing experience and runs SWYM Editorial, providing varied freelance editorial services to international clients. She will be co-presenting a workshop with Blythe Gifford at the ’06 RWA national conference in Atlanta on “60 Minutes to Your Marketing Strategy.”

Special thanks to Sharon Nelson, Lauren Ford, Dyanne Davis, Wendy Byrne, Barb Deane, and Kelle Riley, whose email discussion helped spur this article. And to Pat McLinn who started me on the countdown. (I’m sure I’m getting close!)

### Members’ Websites

Denise Swanson: [www.DeniseSwanson.com](http://www.DeniseSwanson.com)

Myrna Mackenzie: [www.myrnamackenzie.com](http://www.myrnamackenzie.com)

Cathie Linz: [www.cathielinz.com](http://www.cathielinz.com)

Lindsay Longford: [www.lindsaylongford.com](http://www.lindsaylongford.com)

Melody Thomas: [www.MelodyThomas.com](http://www.MelodyThomas.com)

Dyanne Davis: [www.scribesworld.com/dyannedavis](http://www.scribesworld.com/dyannedavis)

Elysa Hendricks: [www.geminimoon.org](http://www.geminimoon.org)

Teresa MacCarthy: [www.teresamccarthy-author.com](http://www.teresamccarthy-author.com)

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Luisa Buehler: [www.luisabuehler.com](http://www.luisabuehler.com)

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Susan Elizabeth Phillips: [www.susanephillips.com](http://www.susanephillips.com)

Todd Stone: [www.storytellerroad.com](http://www.storytellerroad.com)

Windy City RWA: [www.windycityrwa.com](http://www.windycityrwa.com)

## Programs

By Luisa Buehler

Inform and Entertain.

That was the charge passed to me as program chair for this year. Inform and entertain. I could do that.

- First: Search through the hundreds of cards I'd collected through years of business.
- Second: Divide them into informative and entertaining, ideally both.
- Third: Call to find out if the phone numbers were still current. Great way to update my business database.
- Fourth: Call and invite them to 'wow' my friends at Windy City. Everyone wants to rub elbows with writers.
- Fifth: Work around their schedules.
- Sixth: Turn to Windy City to fill in with our own informative and entertaining sisters.
- Last: Dust off one of my own programs to fill in last slot.

And voila we have:

April 12	Stuffbusters, Professional Organizer
May 10	Sue Peterson, Owner of Brain Snacks
June 14	Penny Vickas, Decorative Gift Baskets
July 12	Valaney Liontonia
August	Recap of National Conference
Sept.	Denise Swanson
Oct.	Luisa Buehler, Cemetery Presentation
Nov.	Teri Stone, Make Taxes less taxing
Dec.	Holiday Party



## Northern Illinois Librarian of the Year, 2005 Betty Wampach

On receiving the Northern Illinois Librarian of the Year for 2005 Award, Betty Wampach said,

Thank you, Cathie, and all the members of the Windy City Romance Writers group. I am really thrilled to receive this. I have been a librarian since 1967, and this is one of the nicest things that's ever happened to me in my career.

Just like the Oscar winners I need to thank a few people. First is Sherry Weddle from your group who helped me in training our staff in the Romance and Romantic Suspense genres and inspiring me to make displays of your books. When she invited me and my colleagues from our other two buildings to your annual appreciation dinner in the spring, we were amazed at the number of books that your group has published. This got me to thinking that displays at all three buildings in October would be a good way to let the public know about the benefits of joining your group.

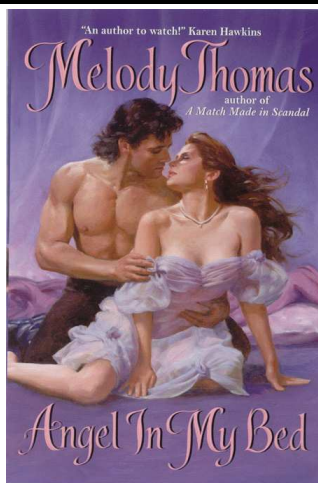
I also need to thank my boss, Karen Dunford, who is with me today. She goes along with most of my crazy ideas and constantly encourages me. I had help with the art work for the display and from our collection development person, Donna Pistolis (she made me promise to mention her name!) who agreed to buy the books we were missing for all three libraries.

When my fellow librarians in charge of reader's advisory and I were guests at your annual appreciation dinner, we were delighted to see how supportive you all are of each other in your work. As veterans of many in-service workshops, this was indeed the liveliest and most enjoyable of all our outings. In fact, when I protested to them that they deserve to share in this honor, they said, "That's all right, just make sure we get invited to that dinner next year!"

So, thanks again and I promise to continue to spotlight your work each year. May all your publishing dreams come true!

*At the left, Cathie Linz, Betty Wampach, and Sherry Weddle at Autumn Authors.*

## The Windy City Bookshelf

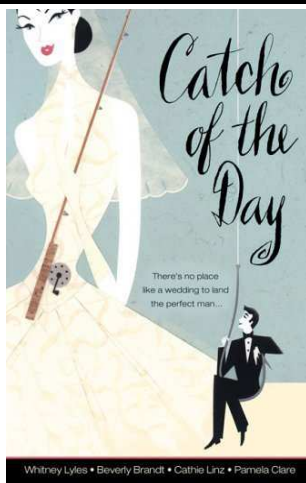


**Angel In My Bed**  
Melody Thomas  
Avon Romance  
ISBN 978-0-06-074233-1  
May 2006

Angel...  
or the devil in disguise?

On one final mission for the crown, David Donally is hunting for a missing treasure. His only clue is a dazzling, gem-encrusted earring, and it is leading him to the most desirable woman he has ever known, an enchanting thief he once seduced and betrayed in the name of duty, an exquisite lover he'd believed was dead—his wife!

Meg Faraday thought her former life was behind her until the night the treacherous husband she'd eluded for nine years suddenly appeared. By rights, she should despise the handsome spy who had once captured her heart, then shattered it. But the fire between them still burns, and what was once an irresistible passion has now become a dangerous game of betrayal.

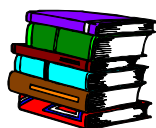


**Catch of the Day**  
Anthology  
Whitney Lyles, Beverly Brandt, Cathie Linz, Pamela Clare  
Berkley Trade  
ISBN: 0425209865  
June 2006

Four all-new stories that show there's no place like a wedding to catch the perfect man.

To go down the aisle or not to go down the aisle. Is that even a question? Well, it depends on whether you're the bride or just a bridesmaid-for the fifth straight time. Or whether an old flame is determined to wreck the wedding weekend. It's enough to make a girl say "I don't."

Now, these brand-new stories about four matrimonially-challenged women demonstrate how one of life's best days can go so wrong—and still be sexy, hilarious, and deliciously right.



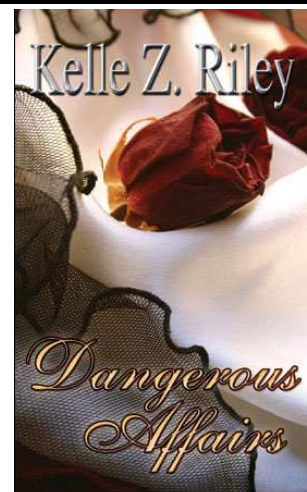
**Family First**  
Margaret Watson  
Harlequin Superromance  
ISBN 0373713371  
March 2006

Never get involved with your patients.

That's no problem for by-the-book police department psychologist Kira McGinnis. She has enough on her plate taking care of her five-year-old daughter and her troubled teenage brother. And now she has the difficult—and disarming—Detective Jake Donovan as a patient. Can she ever get him to drop the tough-guy act and open up?

Jake says he'll do anything to get back to active duty. But he doesn't seem to be trying very hard. He has good reason not to trust shrinks, and he doesn't want this one to know what he's thinking or feeling.

The thing is, he'd really like to get to know Kira better—outside the job. But that's impossible, because he is her job.



**Dangerous Affairs**  
Kelle Z. Riley  
Echelon Press  
ISBN 1-59080-468-6  
March 2006

A woman who doesn't exist . . . hiding from her violent ex-husband, she hopes her next alias will be her last.

A man who wishes he didn't . . . haunted by a string of failures, blaming himself for his sister's murder.

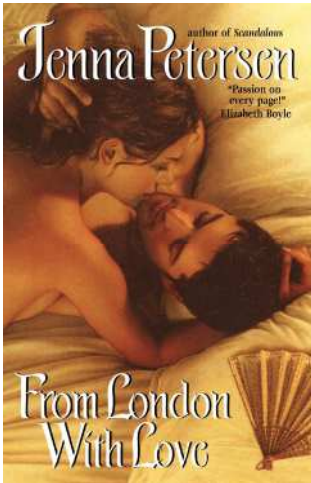
Fate brings these two lost souls together in an unlikely alliance where they fight to protect themselves and to teach others to do the same.

Close proximity and circumstance ignite passion, and soon, long dormant dreams of love and family take root. Yet even as they cling to new hope, the past closes in. Desperate, they unite and take cover . . . defending themselves against the barrage of fears and failures that threaten to destroy the fragile bonds holding them together.

But evil may be more than the couple can endure when forced to face and conquer their deepest nightmares.



## The Windy City Bookshelf

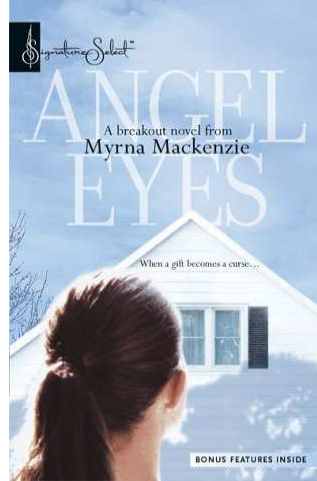


**From London With Love**  
Jenna Petersen  
Avon Books  
ISBN 0060798610  
July 2006

Meredith Sinclair is everything a lady of society should be. She sparkles at every party, men fall at her feet and every woman longs to be like her. But beneath that popular exterior lurks a serious spy.

And her newest assignment is very personal. She is sent to investigate Tristan Archer's involvement in the robbery of a painting that may have hidden secret information about the British Army's movements in France.

Meredith knows she shouldn't grow too close to a potential traitor, but many years ago Tristan saved her life. And it's harder and harder to believe he could be so wrong when his kisses are so right. Will the evidence break her heart ... or will her heart set them both free?



**Angel Eyes**  
Myrna Mackenzie  
Silhouette Signature  
ISBN 0-373-83697-X  
May 2006

When a gift becomes a curse...

Sarah Tucker, a woman born with the ability to see things others can't has been running from her gift all her life.

Now she is thrown together with Luke Packard, a man who has powerful reasons to despise those who claim to have special gifts, and she needs his help...



### Promises to Keep

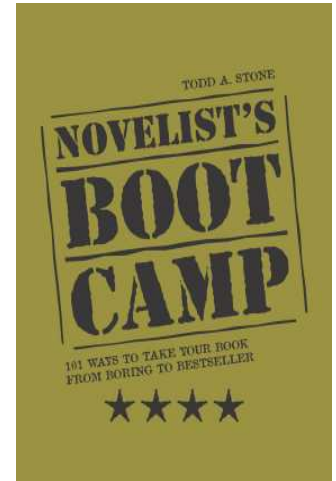
D.L. Larson

**Promises To Keep**  
D.L. Larson  
Helm Publishing  
ISBN TBA  
August 2006

Annie Douglas is angry—angry at her wayward husband who spends too much time gambling at the saloon. She asked Joe to stop, but he doesn't comprehend how serious his habit is and Annie does the one thing she thought she'd never do. She sleeps with another man.

Christine Douglas Frailey is frustrated. Her quiet and distant husband Francis never makes time for her or their son. Most times he treats them like polite strangers and she is determined to strengthen the bond between them. Then she discovers he has a mistress. His deceit is more than she can tolerate and she vows to never trust his affection again. But their ties of love are not so easily broken.

Join the Douglas family on an adventure of the heart and soul.



**Novelist's Book Camp**  
Todd A. Stone  
Writers Digest Books  
ISBN: 1582973601  
March 2006

Take command of your novel.

It's time to plan and execute a writing strategy that's in sync with your ultimate mission objective: getting published.

This boot-camp-in-a-book includes 101 carefully crafted drills to:

- Identify and develop story ideas
- Create realistic "alpha" characters
- Know what motivates your protagonist's enemy
- Outline your story
- Dodge the land mines of bad writing
- Triage your scenes to ensure a thorough and precise revision process

*Novelist's Boot Camp* provides you with all the ammunition you need to approach your work with dedication, confidence, and skill. Now, report for duty and start writing that bestseller!

## Three Uncommon Relationships

(Continued from page 1)

you are rewriting and editing. Then you can tell her to quit whispering in the background as she does when you are drafting and get her butt into the writer's chair when you need to rewrite and make your sentences better. You can't make her go away—you need her—but set boundaries so she's only allowed to speak when you need her to. This takes practice because she can be sneaky and manipulative. Perhaps your inner critic is a teenager.

Ah, now for the IRS. Normally you feel like this relationship is one way. You giveth the IRS money and they taketh away even more. You need to manage this relationship by giving the IRS what they need—not necessarily money—in the way that they need it. The IRS needs paperwork—electronic or actual paper. Just as you need your significant other to help you sometimes by not doing anything but just listening, the IRS needs what it needs in the way that it can understand it. That means using the correct tax form in the right way to report income and/or expenses related to your career as an author. What you get from managing this relationship is a legally lower tax liability and a sense of confidence that you are operating within the rules, which is important if you are audited by the IRS.

Your relationships with your idol, your inner critic, and even the IRS all affect your success as a writer. You can guiltlessly get more from these relationships by acknowledging and managing them.

Now as to managing your relationship with chocolate—that's a different story.

Todd A. Stone writes mysteries and technothrillers. His most recent book is *NOVELIST'S BOOT CAMP* (See page 10). He is also the author of the Digital Literature Institute Best of Fiction Winner and INDIE Mystery Winner *CLOSE TO HOME* and the NY Times Review of Books acclaimed military technothriller *KRIEGSPIEL*. His second military thriller, *THE BEST DEFENSE*, has received bestseller status and acclaim from around the globe.

Teresa (Terri) V. M. Stone is a frequent presenter at writers' conferences and author of the several articles on research techniques and the business of writing. Terri's knowledge about taxes and writers helped her shepherd a writer and writing business through the dreaded IRS audit process with positive results.

## President's Message

(Continued from page 2)

we've forgotten that as writers they still need the same things: the camaraderie, the refilling, not to be looked upon as vessels of knowledge but just as another member, a writer. We all come to the meetings to be nourished and fed creatively. It doesn't matter the stage of your career, you have to refill your creative well. Maybe if we begin to erase or at least blur that invisible line between published or not, we might see more participation.

I want every single member whether new or long time to feel that Windy City belongs to her. I've been preaching this so long that I know most people are tired of it. But I'll stop preaching it when I believe everyone believes it.

The best way to feel a part of something is to volunteer, and there are so many committees that would welcome the help.

Write an article for *Blowing Kisses*. Share with your Windy City family your triumphs and your disappointments. No one understands and appreciates it more and no one will cheer louder for you. I want each member to know and believe in their heart that each sentence they put down on paper is worth shouting from the rooftops.

Take advantage of everything at your disposal. If there's something you need, please make it known. If there's an idea for a panel discussion you'd like to hear, or if you're working on a book and could use an expert in the field, please let us know. Everyone is waiting for ideas, trying to give us all that we need. But they won't know unless we tell them.

When I look out over Windy City and see on every single face a feeling of belonging, I'll know that what I've been working for during the past five years has come to pass and I will gladly step off my soapbox. I've wanted this as program coordinator, as vice president, and now as president.

Aren't you all ready for me to let it go and move on to a new topic?

Dyanne

## In and Around Windy City

### Chapter Activities

May 10	7 p.m.	General Meeting, Naperville City Center
May 24	7 p.m.	Critique Meeting, Lisle Library
June 14	7 p.m.	General Meeting, Naperville City Center
June 28	7 p.m.	Critique Meeting, Lisle Library
July 12	7 p.m.	General Meeting, Naperville City Center
July 26-29		RWA National Conference, Atlanta
Aug. 9	7 p.m.	General Meeting, Naperville City Center
Aug. 23	7 p.m.	Critique Meeting, Lisle Library

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