

**From:** kmortimer@mortimerliterary.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2008 11:09 AM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** April Newsletter



*Diabolically Diligent. Maniacally Moral.*

No. 4 / April 2008



## Yeah, Write!

Mortimer Literary Agency Newsletter



### Welcome to My World

I was gonna dazzle ya with a story about the "Green Machine." Yes, before the Silver Bullet, there was another that went out in flames of glory. Literally. Buuut, a mega-editor who shall remain nameless read my last column, and convinced me I should write a collection of my stories. So, you'll haveta pay to read 'em! I'll keep you updated on, *Welcome to My World: A Bipolar Christian Tells All...*

by Kelly Mortimer

**A New MEGA-Site For Writers!**

... J U N E , 2 0 0 8



### The Dirt

**Keep Your Shirts On (at least the gals). HarperCollins Is NOT Taking Away All Advances!**

The sky isn't falling. HarperCollins is starting an experimental "Publishing Studio" line headed by the founding publisher of Hyperion, Bob Miller. Instead of paying advances and keeping reserves against returns, this line will share profits with authors (50/50 was mentioned) and refuse to take returns from bookstores.

Why? Well, we all know the huge advances some best-selling authors can command. Those dollars haveta come from somewhere. Even if those books are successes, houses may not reap huge profits (I said "may"). Then there's the spending frenzy for a few pre-pubbed authors

everyone wants. Houses could take a bath (or shower, depending on preference) and eat it on those.

So, HC is trying something new. Can't fault them for that. Mr. Miller said, "Let's take all the things that we think are wrong with this business and try to change them. It really seemed to require a start-up from scratch because it will be very experimental."; (As opposed to *just* experimental? Sorry.)

Will it work? Dunno. Worked for Sylvester Stallone when the studio wouldn't let him play the starring role in *Rocky*. My problem with it? They're seeking to take what they think is wrong with the business and fix it. I think one of the big problems with the industry is most authors don't get big enough advances. Some never see royalties, and we all know publishers aren't free-and-loose with numbers, so can ya trust 'em?

The new as-of-yet-unnamed line will start by pubbing 25 titles a year, the first coming out in spring of 2009. They'll also release e-books and digital audio editions for every title on their list.

We'll have to wait and see how it all pans out.

### **RWA Ain't Takin' No Bull**

Enter small California Christian Press, *Tsaba House* and author Molly Noble Bull, and their fight with Romance Writers of America (RWA). To refresh your memory, Ms. Bull attempted to enter her book in an RWA **chapter** contest, which morphed into a RITA Contest battle. PW made a factual error in their March 13, 2008 article, and since RITA finalists will be announced March 26, 2008, RWA thought it important to get the facts straight:

*The article that appeared in the March 13, 2008 issue of PW Daily regarding Tsaba House and Romance Writers of America contained a factual error. The Tsaba House author referenced in the article was not trying to enter RWA's RITA contest. She called to inquire about a contest sponsored by an RWA chapter. The rules governing RWA chapter contests are independently determined by each chapter. At no time did the author mention the RITA award when communicating with the RWA office. According to RWA records, the office was not contacted by the author or publisher until February 2008, several months after the RITA entry deadline, which was November 30, 2007.*

RWA stated that Ms. Bull's publisher was a "subsidy publisher" under their guidelines. A subsidy, also referred by some as a vanity publisher, is so named for writers who can't sell or don't want to sell their manuscript to a traditional publishing house, so they pay someone to publish it (why that's considered "vain" I don't know). Not to be confused with self-publishing, BTW.

While *Tsaba* doesn't outright charge a writer to print a book, they do have language in their boilerplate contract (a contract that's non-negotiable on it's face) that according to RWA classifies them a subsidy publisher. RWA won't recognize any publisher that might charge an author for anything. According to RWA's policy manual, a subsidy publisher is defined as

"any publisher that publishes books in which the author participates in the costs of production in any manner, including publisher assessment of a fee or other costs for editing and/or distribution." Clear-cut and concise. Here's part of RWA's response to the article in PW:

*The facts are:*

*Pam Schwagerl, President/Owner of Tsaba House contacted the RWA office on February 25 to request that the publisher be added to RWA's "approved list" so one of its authors could enter a contest. (It should be noted that some chapters limit their programs to authors and publishers who appear on RWA's list of non-vanity/non-subsidy publishers.)*

*RWA does not maintain a list of "approved publishers," but it does maintain a list of non-vanity/non-subsidy publishers. RWA's definition of "Subsidy Publisher" is any publisher that publishes books in which the author participates in the costs of production in any manner, including publisher assessment of a fee or other costs for editing and/or distribution. This definition includes publishers who withhold or seek full or partial payment or reimbursement of publication or distribution costs before paying royalties, including payment of paper, printing, binding, production, sales or marketing costs.*

*At RWA's request, Ms. Schwagerl supplied a copy of the company's boilerplate contract which listed several instances in which costs could be charged to the author. It therefore failed to meet RWA's standards. The contract wasn't even written by anyone at Tsaba, but bought on a Web site, which I wouldn't recommend for obvious reasons.... (Too bad I have a RWA recognized literary agency and can't collect fees, or I could start a third business.)*

RWA spokesperson Allison Kelley described *Tsaba's* contract as "intended for a textbook or nonfiction publisher," and that *Tsaba* "is trying to apply it to fiction." RWA maintains that the clauses found in the contract are not standard for works of fiction.

Flipside: *Tsaba's* Pam Schwagerl said, "They are simply using it as a tactic to keep a small press from submitting contest entries. It also looks to me like they are trying to control the outcome of who wins by who they allow in the contest. I really feel that this is an affront to independent publishers to try and once again group us in the category of subsidy presses and try to take away the advances the small publishers have made in the industry."

Well, I know I shouldn't interject my thoughts, but anyone who knows me, knows I can't stop myself. I say what I think, and I probably think too often. IMO, the above statement makes no sense. Why should RWA care who the heck wins their contest? Why would RWA go to such great lengths to bar small presses? RWA is an organization that *helps* writers. Shutting out small presses to turn back time and halt all the advances made by any such press is counterproductive to RWA's objectives.

Yes, my agency is RWA recognized, and no, that doesn't make my opinion biased. I've had my own scuffles with RWA. At that time, I wasn't fond of them. We settled matters to our mutual satisfaction. No, they aren't paying me to write this. (As if I ever need outside encouragement.)

Why won't *Tsaba* simply change their contract? Schwagerl said, "I feel strongly that they [RWA] should have no say in what is in my contracts with my authors or to re-define for the industry what a subsidy press is or isn't."

Exactly! And RWA has the right to specify their contest rules, and whom they choose to recognize as a viable publisher. You can't have it both ways, *Tsaba*. As far as I'm concerned, there's no "vast RWA conspiracy" against small presses.

RWA maintains a list of recognized agencies and publishers. Sorry, Molly, but if entering the RITA was your goal, you should've consulted the list and chosen one of the recognized publishers to sign with. My advice to *Tsaba*. If you're so concerned with being labeled a subsidy/vanity publisher, why not take the offending clauses out of your contract? If you wanna keep them in, fine, but don't waste RWA's money (which comes from the membership of often struggling writers) on attorneys. And why dole out your dollars on lawyers? It'd be better spent giving your authors decent advances....

### **Karen Young Crosses over From "The Dark Side":**

Rita award-winning novelist Karen Young just signed a three-book contract with Simon & Schuster's *Howard Books*, their inspirational imprint. First book is entitled, *Blood Bayou*, set for release in May 2009. With more than 10 million secular books in print, Ms. Young decided to take the plunge with encouragement from writer and friend Debbie Macomber.

Debbie introduced Karen to the talented (and sweet) winner of the American Christian Fiction Writers "Agent of the Year Award" last year, Wendy Lawton of Books and Such. Wendy soon had four publishers drooling over the manuscript (great job, gal!).

Karen Young is thrilled. She said, "Whenever people are in dire straits, or circumstances are dark in their lives, it's natural to turn to God. But in all of those books I wrote for the ABA, I just couldn't go there. I feel free now to write a fully human character."

BTW, I represent both ABA and CBA writers, and often find writing in the ABA makes it easier to write human characters, as there are fewer restrictions on what a character can do. But don't get me wrong. First and foremost, I'm a big-time Jesus lovin' woman, and always will be.

### **I Don't Like Bullies!**

It chaps my hide (and I have a thick hide) when a Big Fish shifts their weight around. In this case, Amazon.com. Amazon wants control of what we read and write (for those of us who know how to read and write).

They're discontinuing their POD published books to play Monopoly. Now, we can write what we want, choose a POD publisher, and sell our books on Amazon.com. But Amazon's decided publishers haveta use their (some say inferior and expensive) *BookSurge*. So, we get to pay more, and say "see ya later" to a few POD presses.

What's next? If we wanna sell our traditionally published books on Amazon, will our publisher haveta go thru a company Amazon's created?

Sheesh!

Some are letting Amazon have their way with them, so to speak, and others are defecting to Barnes and Noble, etc. Something to think about the next time you go to buy a book Online.

### **Rollin' in Dough**

I ain't talkin' "cookie." Hachette North America (once Warner) raked in close to 500-million smackers last year. (Uh, what was the amount of the advance you just offered my client?) No slowdown in consumer purchases here. In 2006, the number was around \$408 million. (I'm glad to know they have a solid company. Mayhap now we can get our reserves against returns-returned?)

### **Witches, Beware! (Yes, that includes one of my former mother-in-laws. The 2<sup>nd</sup> one, I think...)**

*The Last Apprentice: Revenge of the Witch* written by Joseph Delaney and pubbed by HarperCollins is being made into a Warner Brothers film under the book's UK title, *The Spook's Apprentice* (I think the name change is a wise choice.)

Another seven-book series (can't wait for *Prince Caspian*) this book chronicles the life of a 13-year-old boy training as an apprentice soldier to battle witches, ghosts, and other creatures. No release date yet, but filming starts later this year.

### **Yes, I'm Applauding Japan**

I never thought I'd see the day I'd like something the Japanese do that Americans don't. I ain't shy about what I stand for. Some have heard me say I'd rather crawl with two broken legs than buy a Japanese car. Think about it. Ya ever wonder if the Americans who were around for Pearl Harbor would buy one?

Yet, some Japanese bookstores are paying authors for used book sales. *Bookoff*, a chain of stores with 900 outlets, has offered to pay out roughly \$1 million bucks to groups including the Japan Writer's Association. A Japanese newspaper said, "Bookoff resells secondhand books in like-new condition. Authors have complained the sales cut into their new book sales and undercut their royalty income."

*Bookoff* listened. How 'bout anyone over here?

### **Collins Goes Wild**

(No, they aren't selling videos of what their editors do during Spring Break.) Steve Ross is on a spending spree buying books and hiring editors for the new *Collins* imprint. Wonder how the folks at HarperCollins feel about the internal competition for all those nifty non-fiction books?

### **Read All About it**

Another book review column -The *New York Observer* is creating the "Observer Review of Books," in a section called *Pub Crawl*.

### What's in a Name?

Couldn't help it. I just *had* to include this... The winner of the Diagram Prize for Oddest Book Title of the Year, after a record-breaking 8,500 Online votes, went to an American writer named Big Boom for his self-help manual, *If You Want Closure in Your Relationship, Start With Your Legs*. (No Comment.)

### MARKET MOVES

#### Agents

McCormick and Williams adds **Pilar Queen**, recently departed from Inkwell Management. She represents narrative non-fiction, practical non-fiction, and women's commercial fiction.

The Firm (Ha! That's the name of the giant ball I exercise with.), comprised of Alan Nevins, Mindy Stone, and Anthony Mattero, add **Margaret O'Connor**, formerly at The Gersh Agency.

Another Gersh Agency defection, vice president of books and literary properties, **Amy Schiffman** joined Intellectual Property Group as a partner.

**Tina Wexler** moves up to literary agent at ICM.

#### Editors

**Angelle Haney Gullett** is now an executive editor at *McGraw-Hill Education* in Woodland Hills, CA. She was the assistant managing editor for Mazer Corporation, a textbook developer.

**Patrick Mulligan** now carries the title of editor at *Gotham Books*. (I luv their logo.)

The *Del Rey* manga team at *Random House* promotes **Tricia Narwani** to editor.

**Brigitte Weeks** climbs the ladder to editor-in-chief of *Bertelsmann Direct's Christian book club, Crossings Book Club*.

At *Sourcebooks Jabberwocky*, **Lyron Bennet** has been promoted to editor.

*Bloomsbury*: Moving up from editorial director, **Colin Dickerman's** the new publisher. Dickerman replaces Karen Rinaldi, who recently defected to Rodale. **Anton Mueller** moves up to executive editor, **Nick Trautwein** to senior editor, and **Benjamin Adams** to associate editor. (And so on....)

At *Crown*: **Suzanne O'Neill** joins as senior editor, formerly at *Atria* for eight years, and **Rachel Klayman** rises to executive editor.

*Collins* snatches **Caroline Sutton** from *Ballentine* for a position as

executive editor of their lifestyle/wellness imprint, beginning April 14.

**Kate Kennedy** snags an associate editor position at *Harmony* (non-fiction), and *Shaye Areheart Books* (fiction); and Anne Berry moves up to assistant editor. Both are lookin' for narrative nonfiction, biography, memoir, spirituality/self-help and general fiction.

*Running Press Kids* and the *Running Press Miniature Edition* imprints get a new overseer in **Kelli Chipponeri**, now associate editorial director.

*Writer's Digest Books* promotes **Kelly Nickell** to executive editor of acquisitions.

**Matthew Benjamin** returns from *Workman* to join the lifestyle/wellness imprint of the *Collins* division as Senior Editor, starting April 28.

**Joe McNeely** joins *Brilliance Audio*, acquiring nonfiction adult titles.

**Linda Raglan Cunningham** gets the appointment of vice president and editor-in-chief of *Guideposts Books* and *Inspirational Media*. **David Morris** takes the managing editor position.

*Scholastic's* trade publishing division, hires **Joanne Ruelos** as senior editor, licensed publishing.

At *Simon & Schuster Children's*: **Emily Lawrence** gets the job of associate editor at *Aladdin*, leaving her assistant editor position at *Harper's Katherine Tegen Books*.

**Karen Wojtyla** takes editorial director at *Margaret K. McElderry Books*.

### New Imprints

#### Wow, One Down My Way!

No name yet, but *Simon & Schuster* is gonna launch a new Middle Grade Fiction/Picture Book division in San Diego, California. Former Editor-In-Chief of *Harcourt Children's Books*, **Allyn Johnston** will hold the title of vice president and publisher.

*S&S Children's* trade publisher, Rubin Pfeffer, calls her "one of the most respected editors in the business," Pfeffer added "her base in San Diego assures that as she continues to discover and develop writers and illustrators, she will bring *S&S* that certain west-coast savvy that is uniquely hers." (Hey, *S&S*; I'd be happy to share some of my "West-Coast savvy" with ya-and you need to capitalize "West-Coast." Sorry.)

### Roarin' Ahead

This new imprint does have a name, but I'm glad I ain't typesetting the business cards: *David Macaulay Studio* at *Roaring Brook Press*. The imprint plans two new books written by best-selling author **Macaulay** in 2011, but will also publish, "derivative books published under his editorial direction, and for books by other authors and artists brought to the

imprint by him in his capacity as creative director." (Talk about unnecessary words...Sorry.)

In yet another quote from an esteemed industry titan, *Roaring Brook* publisher Simon Boughton said, "David Macaulay is a national treasure. He's made a unique contribution to young people's literature, and led readers of all ages to see the world around them in new ways. It's a great thrill and a great privilege to have the opportunity to work with him, and establishing an imprint under his creative direction makes perfect creative and business sense."

### In it for the Long Haul

**The Story Plant** is a venture formed by Editor, author, and publishing executive **Lou Aronica** (creator of Bantam's *Spectra*, and Avon's *Eos* imprints) and agent **Peter Miller** (heads *Millenium Lion Production Company* and *PMS Literary and Film Management, Inc*). This imprint promises to "focus on long-term relationships with commercial novelists," intending to "develop writers over multiple books." (Sounds familiar. Isn't this how things used to work? About time someone decided to go backward instead of forward.)

**The Story Plant** will publish commercial fiction, beginning with **American Quest**, a contemporary romantic fantasy by Sienna Skyy, and **Capitol Reflections** a medical thriller by Jonathan Javitt, MD.

Mr. Miller said, "When we sign a **Story Plant** title, we're specifically looking at the book's film and foreign potential. We think the books on this list are going to be successful on a number of platforms." (Buy these books. We need to get some old traditions made new again.)

### No Plain Jane

Former *Sterling* executive editor **Julie Trelstad** took the plunge and started *Plain White Press*, focusing on gift packages (boxed card decks and kits) and ... books. Janey Tannenbaum takes the reins as director of sales and marketing, distribution thru Consortium.

### HAPPENINGS

#### IS Y.A. FINALLY SITTING AT THE GROWN-UPS' TABLE?

*Publishers Weekly* presents: A PANEL DISCUSSION  
YA publishing has been undergoing many changes, some titles are increasingly attracting older readers, while others are moving from young teenagers to older teens and young adults. Then there are the true "cross-over" titles read by both teenagers *and* adults. This panel will examine how these changes are greatly impacting the way the industry acquires, develops, markets, sells, and shelves YA books in bookstores and libraries.

April 29, 2008 8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.  
Center for Independent Publishing  
20 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street

New York, NY 10036  
 \$50.00 (Payment is your RSVP)  
[www.publisher'sweekly.com/panel](http://www.publisher'sweekly.com/panel)  
 Marisol Avalos 646-746-6436  
 (PW)

**The Act One Seminar: Screenwriting and the Business of  
 Hollywood  
 is Coming to Phoenix, Arizona!**

**What:**

Act One, Inc. presents Act One Seminars - intensive, practical workshops for aspiring and professional writers and entrepreneurs who are serious about their Christian faith and who dream of creating culture that respects and enriches a global audience. These two-day seminars offer a fun, fast-paced overview of our renowned Writing and Executive Programs, taught by Hollywood professionals. Topics include -

**For Everyone:**

- o Finding Your Story
- o Film Structure
- o Pitching
- o Visual Writing
- o The Business of Hollywood/Next Steps
- o Christianity and Culture
- o Truth in Film
- o The Hollywood Mission Field

**Writing Track:**

- o Character & Dialogue
- o Outlines & Treatments
- o Industry Standard Formatting

**Business Track:**

- o Who Does What?: From Best Boy to Executive Producer
- o Introduction to the Marketplace & Commercial Creativity
- o Optioning a Winning Script or Other Source Material

**Dates:**

Friday and Saturday, April 11-12, 2008

**Location:**

Scottsdale Christian Church  
 7934 E Oak St  
 Scottsdale, AZ 85257

**Scheduled To Appear:**

Writer/Executive Producer Dean Batali (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*,  
*That70's Show*)  
 Writers Chris & Kathy Riley (*After The Truth*, *25 To Life*, *The Hollywood Standard*)  
 Producer/Director Monica Jimenez-Grillo (*The New Detectives*,

*FBI Files*)

Writer Leslie Kreiner Wilson (*Frankie Laine, Mississippi Son, Faking It*)

**Registration:**

\$195 - (includes study materials, Saturday lunch, and Hollywood Insider Event)

\$10 - Hollywood Insider Event only

Act One, Inc. is proud to partner with our co-sponsor, Scottsdale Christian Church and additional sponsor, Pepperdine University

SPACE IS LIMITED - Visit <http://www.actoneprogram.com/> to register Online

JessicaUrven  
ProgramsCoordinator  
Act One, Inc.  
323.464.0815

**WRITING OPPORTUNITY!**

FILM & TV CONTENT / WRITERS WANTED FOR CHILDREN'S MEDIA CO.

*Neokast Productions'* family and children's media division, *NeoKids*, is seeking film and TV projects with family and children's content.

They're accepting projects in any stage of development, and for multiple demographics. Their interests lie in producing projects with multi-cultural, multi-generational appeal, mixed media or visually enhanced content utilizing puppets or animation, and with socially progressive, issue awareness, or self-empowering messages.

Also seeking writers to assist in collaborative content development, adaptations, treatments, and pitch packaging materials.

E-mail an introductory cover letter and any project materials or writing samples to: [production\\_info@neokast.com](mailto:production_info@neokast.com)

 **Going, Going ... Gone!**

After years of perseverance, **Raz Steel's** Paranormal/Romantic Suspense manuscript, ***Love Without Blood***, sold to Chris Keeslar at Dorchester Publishing, for an early 2009 release. Way to hang in there!

**Robin Haseltine's** Urban Fantasy, ***Curse of the Dragon's Spell***, sold to Dona Parus and Margaret Esch of Tiger Publications for a 2010 release ... it's worth waiting for! (For an interview with Tiger's CEO, keep reading!)



## Feature

### **ROBIN MILLER NEEDS OUR HELP ... STILL!**

This is not an American Christian Fiction Writers (ACFW) sponsored message. I'll be posting this info every month. Thanks to all who've participated. Robin made her mortgage payment last month because of you! God bless all those who contributed. Still have eight months to go, so pledges and one-time gifts are vital.

Robin Miller w/a Robin Carroll: ACFW President, Christian author, my client, my friend, my sister; needs her mortgage paid thru Dec, 2008 (last payment due at the end of November). That's 2k a month. I'm accepting monthly pledges on her behalf in amounts from \$5.00 and up per month, for 8 months. Also, one-time donations in any amount are warmly received.

Send me an e-mail if you plan to help, and if it's a one-time gift, or a monthly pledge, so I can count your dollars in the monthly total. Make checks payable to **Kelly Mortimer**. Send checks to:

**Kelly Mortimer \* 52645 Paul Rd. \* Aguanga, CA 92536**

Or by PayPal (but they charge a fee, so avoid, if possible):

<http://www.paypal.com/> . My email is: [kelly@kellymortimer.com](mailto:kelly@kellymortimer.com)

Come on, people! Can't ya scrape up ten or twenty bucks to help her out? I'm doing all I can, but I'm only one person (albeit one person who can do the work of three people, but only three.)

If all the ACFW members stepped up with ten or twenty bucks a month, we'd be there. Be a blessing to Robin, and be blessed in return. The Bible tells us to take care of fellow Christians BEFORE we take care of anyone else. And if you aren't a Christian, I appeal to you as a writer. Help another writer! Gotta tell y'all, I'm underwhelmed with the response I've gotten thus far. Yep, ya forced me to play the guilt card. For those who've given, of course, you're exempt from my disappointment. The rest of y'all--SURPRISE ME!

### **EDITOR AND AGENT EDITS THIS MONTH at MY eBay AUCTION!**

Exciting news! I got word from **HARVEST HOUSE** editor **NICK HARRISON** who kindly offered to do an auction for the Robin Miller Mortgage Fund. Nick will read the winner's first three chapters and short synopsis, followed by a phone consultation, or written opinion. As usual, if he wants to buy your manuscript, I'll be representing you, so you'll be stuck with both of us.

Nick only reads inspirational manuscripts.

Nick needs approximately 4 weeks to evaluate the winning submission. The minimum opening bid is \$24.99. Auction starts ... NOW! Go to <http://www.ebay.com/> (after you finish reading this incredible newsletter I worked my tail off to write...). To bid, type: Harvest House Editor 3 Chapter Edit in the search box. All proceeds (minus fees) go the Robin Miller Mortgage Fund. God bless you, Nick!  
But that's not all...

Fellow agent and all-around great gal, **TAMELA HANCOCK MURRAY** of the **HARTLINE AGENCY** will edit the first chapter of your

manuscript via e-mail. ABA or CBA. Anything but Erotica or Romantica. She'll need two weeks to read the winning bidder's submission. Proceeds will go to Robin's mortgage fund, minus the fees. The minimum opening bid is \$24.99. Auction starts ... NOW! Go to <http://www.ebay.com/> (after you finish reading this incredible newsletter I worked my tail off to write...). To bid, type: Literary Agent Tamela Hancock Murray 1st Chapter Edit in the search box. God bless you, Tamela!

Any editor or agent who wishes to help Robin by editing a chapter, or an author willing to raffle an autographed book, etc., through an eBay auction, please contact me. (Sorry, need to be a big-name author, or the auction might not be successful.)

Please distribute this info to every loop you're on. Thanks!



**Kelly Ann Riley** scored a double! Her inspirational novel, *Kitty's Fire*, finaled in RWA's Golden Heart Contest in the Contemporary Series Romantic Suspense/Adventure Category. **Kelly Ann** has also finaled in ACFW's Genesis Contest in the Romantic Suspense category!

**Robin Haseltine** will be teaching a fantasy workshop this weekend for the Northwest Houston RWA chapter. Go, Robin!

More Great Reviews for Robin Miller w/a Robin Carroll!

**4 Stars - Cataromance:**

*Bayou Judgment* is an amazing "who done it" with the right amount of murder, mystery, intrigue, and romance to keep readers engaged. The author, **Robin Carroll** is a wonderful author; she knows what works in a suspense novel. *Bayou Judgment* is the third book in the Bayou series.

**4 Stars - Romantic Times Magazine:**

Yet another story where the heroine finds a dead body, *Bayou Judgment* by **Robin Carroll**, is sure to grab your attention. When crisis hotline counselor Felicia Trahan finds her roommate's body, tough-guy pastor Spencer Bertrand, who runs the center, vows to protect her. Spencer feels he doesn't deserve the beautiful Felicia's attentions, but he's quickly losing his heart. Suspense and romance mix nicely in this compelling story.

**Kelly Mortimer** will be teaching a class based on her non-fiction proposal *Perils of Publishing* at RWA San Diego Chapter's Spring Conference on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>!

**Bob Sullivan w/s R.J. Sullivan** has a new Web site up! Take a look at: <http://www.rjsullivanfiction.com/>



E-publishing:  
Stumbling Block, Stepping Stone, or a Viable Alternative?  
 By: Anonymous

E-books are becoming more and more popular, as evidenced by the immediate sell-out of Amazon's pricey new e-book reader, the Kindle. But is e-publishing right for you?

First, there are many e-publishers, and they come and go. Before considering a publisher, print or digital, it behooves the authors to do their homework. Make sure the publisher has a good reputation before considering submitting. Read some of their books. Would your work fit? Also, check the quality of the writing and editing.

It's also impossible to generalize across all e-publishers. There are good ones and bad ones. The information presented here comes from e-book authors who volunteered to answer a series of questions about their experiences with both print and electronic publishers.

Misconceptions

E-books are self-published--

Not true. In self-publishing, money flows from author to publisher. E-publishers pay authors, not the other way around. Most don't pay advances, but they pay a much higher royalty rate (30-40%), and pay monthly or quarterly.

Anyone can be e-published--

Not true. The rejection rate at Ellora's Cave, one of the biggest e-publishers, is over 90% for first-time submissions.

E-books are inferior--

Not true. Many print authors also choose to write for e-publishers. E-books, and e-book authors, can be found in the rankings of contests along with print counterparts. However, in general, e-books don't have as many eyes on the manuscript through the editing process. This varies with the publisher.

E-book authors aren't good enough to have their books picked up by a NY house--

Not true. Often it's genre or length, not quality that keeps a NY house from picking up a book. They're investing a lot of money in a print book and if they don't see the market for the manuscript, regardless of quality, they'll reject it.

Should you consider e-publishing?

Some of the 'pros'--

You write outside the NY box. E-publishers tend to be willing to look

outside the envelope because they're not investing the same dollars to bring in new authors. They also often publish short stories and novellas.

You don't want to wait as long as it takes to get a book in print. The turnaround from submission to publication is faster for e-books. This also allows subjects to be more "timely."

It's cheaper to submit. Almost everything is done electronically. No printing or postage costs.

You get experience with the publishing process, from submission, through editing, cover art, to seeing sales of a book.

You don't need an agent. Although there's no reason not to have an agent, e-publishers accept submissions directly from authors, most often bypassing the query letter step, which also streamlines the submission process.

Your book won't go out of print. Since there's no warehouse to deal with, readers can pick up your backlist for years.

If you write erotica, you'll probably make good money. The industry got its start because print publishers weren't accepting erotica. In addition, e-books provide readers with anonymity, so even if the books are available in print, readers might not be willing to step up to the bookstore counter and buy them.

Some of the 'cons'--

If you want to see books in print, e-publishing might not get you there. The publisher makes its money on the digital version and most don't put books in print right away. Some may not have print options at all.

You won't make a lot of money (unless you write erotica).

Distribution is limited. Even if your book is in print, it might be hard to come by outside of the publisher's site. Unlike erotica, mainstream e-books are in direct competition with print books, and readers won't see your books on the shelves. Most chain bookstores don't order copies of print e-books except as special order. Often, they can't get them in time for signings. Some stores will allow authors to provide their own books, but in some cases, the payback to the author will be less than the author's cost to provide the books.

Even digitally, distribution can be limited. Many e-publishers sell only through their own sites. You'll spend a lot of time on promotion.

You'll deal with the "tell me when you write a *real* book" syndrome from people who don't understand the industry.

Bottom line: most authors have positive feelings about e-books and being e-authors. Most are also targeting traditional NY houses, although some are with both. Each has something different to offer. And many of these big NY houses offer electronic versions of their books, and some

even have digital-only lines, such as Harlequin Spice. Most authors feel e-publishing is helping them meet their career goals. A major acquiring editor at Harlequin reports that she looks to e-books as publishing credits when considering a debut author.

This is the ground-floor of the industry, and the major drawbacks are the lack of affordable e-book readers and the proprietary formats of the device manufacturers. When someone comes up with the iPod of e-books, the industry should skyrocket.

### Kelly's Take:

I'm on the fence. I believe if you write a "niche" book, it'll be hard to get it published traditionally, and so may turn to an e-pub. But, I've seen numerous writers show their impatience and go this route because they wanna see their name on the cover of a book and say, "I'm a published author."

Do I see e-book publishing as a "positive" when you list it as a publishing credit? It depends. I've turned down some of these writers, as their manuscripts needed work. I can tell the difference by sales. Bring me the numbers, or I might not be impressed.

I'd rather see an author who's self-published. They took the initiative and risk. They put their money out there--do or die. If they sell 5,000+ copies on their own, traditional publishers take notice.

Either way, the quality of the writing needs to be there. Just my thoughts; everyone is different.



### Interview With Tiger Publications CEO: Dona Parus

by Kelly Mortimer

I said last month I'd tell you about a small press I highly recommend:  
TIGER PUBLICATIONS

These guys truly care about their writers and editors. And they stand behind them. I asked CEO Dona Parus a few questions, then I'll comment below.

Q: Hey Dona. You told me you don't routinely drop an author with low sales figures. Can you tell my readers how you can run a healthy publishing house without taking into account an author's low sales figures?

A: We've come to the industry with a Japanese attitude toward business. We don't expect to make money for the first 10 years. American's business sense is strong, but American's have the "I want it yesterday" idea. If something is right it might take a little while for the cream to rise to the top. What any business needs to do is to wait for that to happen. Tiger is strong enough to stay steadfast to that position for 10

years. After that, we'll make the decision on a yearly basis.

Q: Do you offer a contract for a second book before you see numbers from the first?

A: Yes. Here's our reasoning behind that. At the present time, both Tiger and most of our authors are new. We're all working hard to get readers. If we don't give that author another opportunity to step into the publishing field, how can we justify the amount of time, effort, and money we've both put into getting readers? Giving the authors another contract is telling them we have faith in their work. We won't take on an author unless we have faith in them.

I know I keep saying "we" and that is done deliberately. This is not said as the "we" of the staff of Tiger Publications, but the "we" of both staff and authors. So many publishing houses throw their authors out into the arena like the Christians to the lions. They're told to sell their books, but not how. That sets the author up for total failure. That to Tiger is total lunacy. We want our authors to succeed not only for our bottom line, but for them also.

Q: Does an author with Tiger have to write their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, etc., book in the same genre as the 1<sup>st</sup> book? If not, what about that new buzzword, "branding"

A: Absolutely not. "Branding" is done from a seller's point of view. Of course, a reader will expect a certain type of book from an author, but why should publishers stifle such creativity by telling a writer "I only want one type of book from you." Why not give the writer an opportunity to stretch their wings.

Q: Your advances go from \$500-\$5,000. What can a new author expect their advance to be? Thanks again; you're a peach!

A: We have given \$500.00 advances, but when Romance Writers of America changed their requirements to earn a \$1,000 advance to qualify for their Published Author Network, we jumped at the chance to give our authors the opportunity to become members. So, most new authors receive a \$1,000 advance. We'll keep the \$500.00 advance statement on our Web site just in case we're not sure about an author, but from the looks of all the contracts coming across my desk, \$500.00 advance hasn't been used in a while.

Q: Anything you'd like to add?

A: Thank you for giving Tiger the opportunity to reach your readers. What we're hoping to do with Tiger Publications is to have the industry realize that respect for the author has been lacking for quite a while. We want to put it back in the industry, just like Mortimer Literary Agency does.

It's hard to find anything negative to say about Tiger. Buuut, as an agent, there's always something I'd like changed in a contract.

- Tiger's contract is boilerplate, meaning it's unchangeable.

- While most small presses that give a small advance pay it all upon signing, Tiger doesn't. They have up to 30-days after they feel the manuscript is acceptable, to pay the author.
- They have a long lead-time. Right now, they're booking for 2010.
- They only give the author ten free copies of the book, and none for the agent.

Let's end on a positive note:

- Tiger has in-house publicity.
- They offer a decent percentage for royalties, and it goes up after the first 10,000 copies sold.
- They care about their authors and treat them with respect.
- They're loyal. To me, that overshadows any negative.

I consider any author who signs with them fortunate, and I'm glad I represent one such author.

Thanks so much, Dona. I applaud you and Tiger. Grrr!

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