



No More Waiting

Busting Paradigms – and Glass Slippers!

Applying for a Jerome Grant last November brought unexpected insight, busted an old paradigm, and opened a door I hadn't realized I was ignoring...

I had planned to submit an application requesting grant money to fund research for my next nonfiction book, *Write Anyway*, but I wasn't sure how broadly the Jerome Grant defined the nonfiction category. Were they looking exclusively for CNF (creative nonfiction)? While waiting for clarification, I thought about my novel, which certainly qualified in the fiction category, but how would grant money help me there? If I had a publisher, I could use the money to promote the book, but until I got an agent and signed a publishing contract, I couldn't see what I could do except to continue sending out query letters. I didn't need funding to do that.

Then I remembered reading an article Scott Sigler published in *The Writer* (October 2008). Sigler got tired of collecting rejections from agents and decided to give his first novel away on free podcasts, one chapter per podcast. By the time he finished the podcasts, Sigler had 10,000 listeners. This attracted the attention of an indie publisher who published Sigler's second book, which he also gave away via free podcasts. His fans were so eager to get their hands on the actual book, they sent it to the number 7 spot on Amazon.com's sales charts. Not for long, but long enough to get attention and prompt a bidding war for Scott's third book.

"I could do that," I thought. I could use grant money to buy the hardware and software I need to produce podcasts, get training on how to produce and

post them, and promote them to potential "readers." So that's what I asked for in my grant proposal. Finalists will be notified in early February, so let's all keep our fingers crossed.

Distressed at Playing Cinderella

Even if I don't get the Jerome Grant, I will record my novel and give it away. I used to think I wanted to get my novel into people's hands. I recognize that is an old paradigm born in the days when books were always physical objects. Now, I want to get my novel into people's heads, and whether my characters infiltrate people's consciousness because the audience members hold a bunch of pages as they read or hear it on their iPods is irrelevant.

The bigger paradigm buster came when I realized I was Cinderella waiting for Agent Prince Charming to invite me to the publishing ball. This was not a happy realization for me. I believe my exact words at the moment of that realization were "Yuck!" As my friends will avow, I'm not really the damsel-in-distress, "Won't some nice man rescue me?" type. I don't have a lot of patience for wallowing in victimhood; I'm more the "Okay, I don't like this situation so what am I going to do about it?" take-action, do-something kind of person.



The trouble was that I didn't think there was anything else I could do. I went through the motions of sending query letters, collecting rejections and trying to rally my sagging spirits and dwindling energy. (Strangely, I found all that rejection demotivating and actually avoided the submission process from time to time. Sound familiar to anyone?) I'd done rewrite after rewrite and I couldn't see what else I could do. Emotionally, I was waiting for the Fairy Godmother to show up and sprinkle fairy dust on my manuscript so it would magically turn into something worthy of Royal Attention (a second look from an agent or editor). I was waiting for Agent Prince Charming to rescue me from the drudgery of sending out queries.

And that – I realized with another “Yu-uck!” – is the definition of victimhood: believing there are no alternatives, that nothing can be done to change the situation. Let me say it one more time: “Yuck!”

Busting Out of the Glass Slipper

As painful as it is to recognize my Cinderella-self, it is energizing. It's liberating to see where I've played out an old fantasy archetype because now I can see it from a Jungian perspective. If I have an Inner Cinderella, I also have an Inner Prince aspect of my personality that can take action. I acknowledge that I hadn't taken effective action because I was living in the fantasy. And as I've written in other newsletters (www.rosannebane.com/newsletters/InkLinks-v9-i1.pdf), you have to kill the fantasy before you can make dreams come true.

I'm not waiting for Prince Charming anymore. And I'm so much more enthusiastic, optimistic and engaged because I'm not waiting.

Maybe I'll get an agent. Maybe I won't. I'd certainly appreciate the expertise and professional support, but I don't expect signing an agent will be the thing that makes everything work out “happily ever after.” And if I don't get an agent, I know I still can and will get my characters, my stories and ideas into the world. I'm not waiting anymore.

Forget the Ball – Let's Party!

This is an exciting time to be a writer. Podcasts, audio-books, e-books, self-publishing, POD (Print on Demand), DSR (Digital Short Run) and other emerging technologies offer us more alternatives than we've ever had. A younger writer might have seen this sooner, but even this Baby-Boomer gets it now. There are a lot more parties going on than the one at the royal palace of traditional publishing. And these other parties might be a lot more fun and a lot more rewarding than the one thrown by the royal stuffed shirts.

You're all invited to the parties I'll be throwing this year. I'll be recording podcasts of *The Essential Path* in the next three months and plan to post the first of the free podcasts no later than May 1. I'll be posting my own blog in the next couple of months, too. I'll send a book proposal to a few publishers I think would be a good fit for *Write Anyway*, but I'm exploring and seriously considering self-publishing as well. My website has just undergone a major redesign. We're still tweaking the last details, but the new site is live and I'm officially inviting you all to visit the new and improved www.RosanneBane.com. Let me know what you think!

Join the Plethora of Parties!

So what about you? Are you throwing your own party? I love to hear about your progress, so please let me know what you're up to.

Or are you waiting for Prince Charming to send you a gilded invitation? I had been and I didn't even know it, so don't dismiss the question too quickly. Where have you stalled out, thinking you have to wait for something or someone before you can take the next step? What stage of your creative development have you been avoiding or delaying? In what way do you think you need permission to move forward?

It's true, you can't dance the tango solo – we all need allies and mentors – but you don't need an engraved invitation to step out on the dance floor. What are you waiting for?



Come Party with Me at the Loft!

For more information or to register, contact the Loft at 612-379-8999 or www.Loft.org.



The Writing Habit (Thursdays, January 29 to March 5, 5:00 to 7:00 pm) If you have more of a waiting habit than a writing habit, this is the class for you! Talent is a gift we're all given to one degree or another. Techniques can and must be learned. But what really makes a writer is the habit of writing. In this course you will identify your writing (or nonwriting) habits and adapt them to fit your writing goals. Our weekly check-in will give you safe and supportive witnesses to help you become accountable to yourself. We'll explore the creative process, identify your priorities, generate plans, cultivate sustainable habits and develop a support network to help you maintain momentum.

The Writer's Workout (Wednesdays, January 28 to March 4, 10:00 am to 12:30 pm at Eagen Library, Wescott Branch) Why would you pay money to sit in a classroom and write for two hours when you could stay home and write for free? Maybe because you can't remember the last time you wrote for two hours straight. Maybe because you can't think of what to write or how to get started or how to keep going. We'll start with writer's warm-ups that use creative play to propel you out of waiting and into the writing. The writer's aerobics and conditioning program will encourage you to explore your own character and story ideas in response to directed exercises. Co-taught with Paula Granquist.

Writer's Resistance (Thursdays, March 12 to April 15, 5:00 to 7:00 pm) You love to write, so why is it so hard to sit down and do it? We'll explore causes of resistance and how to respond to resistance so you can stop waiting and start working to reach your goals. You'll notice when and how you resist your writing and which of the six common forms of resistance you used to avoid writing. We'll engage in playful ways to energize your writing self. You discover what resistance has to tell you and what you can do to energize and inspire yourself to keep writing.

Improv Fiction (Thursdays, April 23 to May 14, 6:00 to 8:00 pm) If you wait for inspiration to strike, you can spend more time waiting than you do writing. If you drive yourself to grind out pages anyway, you drain your creative energy and the writing is often flat. This class gives you a third alternative. We'll play improv games to engage our imaginations and inspire the writing. Don't wait – discover what you want to write as you write it!

Student Comments:

Thanks for the Writing Habit class, Rosanne! It was as much about life as it was about writing, which made it doubly valuable.

With compassion and insight Rosanne allows and encourages us to be who we are and move forward into our most authentic creative selves. The experience is priceless. The Writer's Resistance class was a wonderful complement to my Loft Master Track work.

Please contact me to talk about coaching or classes.

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