

The Journey
By Lynne Marshall
November 2006

I used to worry I had a serious day dreaming problem before I discovered I was a writer. Instead of seeking psychiatric help, I began writing the story of my heart in 2000. (It is now safely tucked under my bed) I joined the Romance Writers of America, and the Los Angeles Romance Authors, LARA, in 2001, then discovered the online medical romance chapter, Heartbeat in 2003. A huge advocate for national and local conferences, workshops and any other way to hone my craft, I have stayed very active in all of the above groups both as a member and volunteer. Six years, a drawer full of rejections, and nine manuscripts later, I consider myself a writer.

The Call

I am coming up on my one-year anniversary first book sale, and I still can't believe it! After ten months of waiting to hear about my submitted manuscript in 2004-2005, I received revision suggestions on my medical romance, HER BABY'S SECRET FATHER. I quickly made the suggested changes, and returned the manuscript by the end of October 2005. Friday, November 4th 2005, I came home from work to find not one, but two messages from Kimberley Young from Harlequin Mills and Boon on my telephone asking if we could chat. I opened up my e-mail and discovered two messages from her asking if I was around. I knew something important was going on, but what? At 6 p.m. California time, I knew she wouldn't be in the office. And to make matters worse, I also knew Kim was going to be on vacation the next week. I frantically

called all of my critique partners and writer friends wondering what the heck she could want.

More revisions? A rejection? Close but not there yet?

Well, bless Kim's heart, she must have known I'd be going bonkers while she was on vacation, because Tuesday morning November 8, 2005, 7:30 a.m. my time, she called from her parent's home in the country to tell me that she loved my revisions and wanted to buy my book! My husband stood by looking perplexed as to who I could be talking to at the early hour. I gave him the thumbs up sign and tried to sound coherent while talking with Kim. He caught on that I'd made a sale and offered a quiet standing ovation while I was still on the phone. When I hung up, I screamed and danced and jumped up and down--all done in a dignified manner for a mature woman, of course. I shot off several e-mails to my friends, walked on air the rest of the day and was essentially useless at work, though I did show up.

My husband had roses, champagne, and a perfectly wonderful dinner waiting for me when I got home. My writer friends sent supportive cards and e-mails and we had a fun get-together later that month with champagne and karaoke. I loved every minute of my "call" even the torture of having to wait all weekend and then some to find out I'd finally made it! I'd sold!