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Egocentric Interview Edition

For months I've been head down creating my new book, *Write & Sell a Well-Seasoned Romance*. I'm writing this newsletter on the day that Advance Review Copies dropped. Naturally I'm chuffed.

So what else could I possibly write for this newsletter except an interview with my very own self?

And without further ado...

STELLA INTERVIEWS STELLA

Stella: Thanks for joining us today.

Also Stella: Where else would I be?

Stella: True that. Now tell us, what's the new book? And when is it out?

Also Stella: Great question! The new book is *Write & Sell a Well-Seasoned Romance*. We're just now sending out Advance Review Copies. The book launches August 29th.

Stella: A summer launch! Is it a beach read?

Also Stella: It's more of a beach write. *Well-Seasoned Romance* takes you step by step through the entire process of creating, editing, publishing and marketing a great love story about characters after midlife.

Stella: I was just reading that the number of books being published is going through the roof. Why encourage people to write even more?

Also Stella: A lot of books are being published, true. But the books being published don't always match the demand. Romance is the most popular genre, and most Romance readers are women after midlife. Many of them want to read about characters their own age, not their children's ages. That's where Seasoned Romance comes in.

Stella: Speaking of Seasoned Romance, why is your book called "Well-Seasoned Romance?"

Also Stella: Publishers realized that older Romance readers are underserved. So they came up with this category, "Seasoned Romance." They even classify books with characters in their thirties as "Seasoned." Thirty! Good grief. That's lightly seasoned, at best. Let's write about people in their fifties, sixties on up. That's Well-Seasoned Romance.

Stella: So who will find this book useful?

Also Stella: First off, I'm thinking of all those Romance readers after midlife who want to read about characters who have been around the block. It's DIY time! Even novice writers will find all the information and encouragement they need.

And then there are Romance authors who want to expand into the Seasoned sub-genre. Lots of great info for them.

Stella: What about authors in other genres, like Women's Fiction?

Also Stella: Bring 'em! Expanding the number of Romance novels with vibrant older characters is a win/win for authors and readers.

Stella: So you say novice writers will be able to craft a finished, published Romance novel by using your book. How do you teach novel writing from a book? What's your method?

Also Stella: The book takes you through all the steps of creating a Romance, from premise to creating characters to structuring a Romance plot. At each stage there are exercises to practice. And the craft of writing is covered, too, including elements like creating dialogue and integrating backstory. Later in the book there are step-by-step instructions for editing, publishing and marketing, with plenty of resources and exercises.

Stella: Sounds great, but next question: No offense, but isn't Romance a bit formulaic? I mean--

Also Stella: Sorry, I have to stop you right there. Have you ever read a sonnet?

Stella: Sure.

Also Stella: Totally structured, right? Fixed number of lines, particular number of syllables per line, predetermined rhyming pattern.

Stella: Yeah, so--

Also Stella: Ever hear a critic call a sonnet "formulaic?"

Stella: No, but--

Also Stella: That's because there's a bias against Romance, which not coincidentally was the first literary form dominated by women authors and women readers. And over time the Romance novel has evolved to embrace characters and authors of color, as well as queer characters, fat characters, characters with disabilities--

Stella: And vivid older characters.

Also Stella: Bingo.

Stella: But what about "bodice rippers?" Isn't Romance reactionary?

Also Stella: There was a phase years ago when Romance played with nonconsensual sex. But the Romance being written now is much more aware of consent as an issue. You even see that reflected in the covers, which these days tend to be upbeat and affirming. And by the way, cover design is one of the topics in the Publishing part of *Well-Seasoned Romance*.

Stella: I've been reading that loneliness is an issue for older adults. Isn't writing a lonely business?

Also Stella: The book includes lots of suggestions about forming a Romance writing group, as well as connecting with other writers through writing organizations and via social media. There are plenty of ideas about launch events, too. While we certainly do some of our best writing solo, a writer's life is all about networking and forming connections--especially in the publishing and marketing.

Stella: What would you say to someone who is, for example, newly retired and thinking about writing Romance?

Also Stella: This is a great time to be a writer, because there are so many publishing options open to us, including indie publishing as well as working with women-run publishing houses.

And it's a great time of life to be a writer. If you are a Woman of a Certain Age, and you'd like to push back on all those misleading stereotypes about women after age fifty or sixty, try your hand at writing *Seasoned Romance*. Claim your voice! It's great creative fun.

Stella: Thanks, Stella.

Also Stella: You're most welcome, Stella.



Please keep the pen moving (or the keys clicking) and keep thinking about getting your words in front of readers.

All the best,
Stella,
stella@stellafosse.com

Please Share this Newsletter!



WRITE & SELL A
*Well-Seasoned
Romance*



STELLA FOSSE

Ships August 29th

Pre-Order NOW!

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From the blog this month



3 Ways to Report an Adverse Medication Reaction

Stella Fosse

I recently spoke with a woman over 65 who was recovering from a serious adverse reaction to a prescription drug. She notified her doctor and stopped taking the medication, but she wanted to do more. She was concerned that in the future, others might experience similar reactions. There are several reasons why [women over 65](#) may be more likely to experience an adverse event, but the good news is we can help protect each other by alerting FDA.

As we age, drugs clear from our systems more slowly, meaning their effects on us may be different. Nevertheless, the clinical trials for many medicines currently on the market excluded older adults. On top of that, many drugs still being prescribed were developed at a time when women and persons of color were underrepresented in clinical trials—or excluded altogether.

And, as I've written about [previously](#), the Food and Drug Administration typically mandates combination testing for new prescription drugs with just a few other medications that are likeliest to be co-prescribed. Those are pair tests; there is typically no testing of a new drug in combination with two or more approved medications. Yet the average American over 65 reports taking four or more prescription medications, which may interact in ways that have not been studied.

All this means that reports to FDA are the best way for the agency to learn about safety problems with an approved drug. If you or someone you care about has an adverse reaction to a medication, here are three ways you can escalate your concerns to FDA.

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Our Flower Blooms Power!

billie best

Do you use a vibrator? Is it connected to an app on your phone? Does the app have controls that personalize the experience and make your pleasure feel like a game? Or maybe you went to one of those websites that let you design a digital lover, your dream companion, someone who looks like your idea of sexy and speaks tenderly to you, says the things you want to hear. If you're not doing these things, maybe your daughter is, or your granddaughter. Healthy liberated women explore their [bodies and enjoy intimacy](#). But when it comes to sex tech, we need to be smart about the risks.

An orgasm is the perfect pleasure. It burns calories, refreshes our blood and brain, relaxes our muscles and moisturizes to our skin. It opens our mind to positive thoughts and allows us to focus on our inner being. Orgasms are part of wellness. No surprise then that feminism is influencing healthcare to pay more attention to the clitoris. But it's an ironic moment. The clitoris has been denied and ignored by doctors for centuries. Ignorance abounds. Purity culture still dominates social

values. And yet, our lady bits are a magnet for money. A woman's sex life has become the focus of biotech brands. Pills, surgery, and gadgets are being developed to address every imaginable female trouble from the shape of our labia to hot flashes and low libido. Orgasms are being monetized. The clitoris has become a profit center. It's a gold rush.

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