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### How Not to Launch Your Book Or, Do As I Say, Not As I Do.

August 11 was publication day for my newest book, [Rock On: Power, Sex and Money after 60](#). This one-stop guide to a badass seventh decade addresses ten essential topics including creativity, purpose, and

healthcare (and, naturally, power, sex and money). Advance readers loved it. [Joan Price](#), author of *Naked at Our Age*, called it my best book ever. Invitations to appear on podcasts came rolling in.

Sounds like the setup for a great launch, yes? Not quite. If you want to know how not to launch your book, the short answer is: *Don't get a breast cancer diagnosis just as your book is about to publish.*

The medium answer is: *Don't get a breast cancer diagnosis and then leave for a month in Europe just as your book is about to publish* (Yeah, that second part is on me.).

The long answer involves catching the flu on the way home from Europe.

You may have read the detailed explanation of best practices for a book launch in my 2024 release, [Write & Sell a Well-Seasoned Romance](#). Now, some of my prescriptions for a smooth launch are already baked in: I have an author website, I maintain a mailing list, I post regularly on social media come hell or high water. And the foundations for a book launch, like well-designed book landing pages and a great cover, were taken care of by my terrific publisher Graham Bird and my equally terrific designer [Diana Rosinus](#).

But the next big steps in the marketing plan—things like scheduling podcast interviews, reaching out to book clubs, holding launch events, writing guest articles—are just not happening right now. Between being sick and getting ready for surgery, that stuff is on the back burner. Such a bummer. I was kvetching about this to my designer and she said, "Think of it as a book rollout. A launch season." In other words, calm down. There will be plenty of ways to connect with women in their fifties and sixties after I recover from surgery. A wise person who does more than design great book covers, that [Diana](#).

Meanwhile, readers are finding the book, despite my lack of hype. One reader review says,

"Stella Fosse speaks honestly and plainly about the very things we are taught must never be discussed in polite company, and I'm so grateful! I'm not interested in "aging gracefully". Instead, I'm aging powerfully with Stella's encouragement."

Another reader had this to say:

*"Rock On: Power, Sex, and Money After 60* by Stella Fosse is an amazing roadmap for women turning or already in their 60s. Let's be honest. There are guidebooks for raising kids, finding a job, writing a resume, discovering your career, and more. But what about growing older without growing old—especially as a woman? How can we navigate the empty nest, retirement, freedom, creativity, sexual desires, hormone replacement therapy, feeling invisible, and more? *Rock On* is the perfect tool to help you steer in the right direction."

And not content to leave it there, she added:

"What I love most about the book is that Stella is forthright and honest. There is no topic too big, too small, too outlandish, or too taboo. And when I finished reading, I felt heard and understood, as well as informed and empowered. Instead of trying to see 60 as the new 40, I now feel like I can embrace my age and stage. And you will, too. Check it out and see what you think!"

Balm for the writer's soul. Yet another reader said,

"Stella beautifully highlights the upsides of getting older with characteristically frank, clear stories and explanations. She spells out what women who are in, approaching, or even beyond their 60's need to know to get the most out of their later decades. Pick up a copy for yourself or a woman you care about, the sooner the better; you won't regret it!"

They're making the case for me. Rock On, Readers!

According to the received wisdom in the publishing business, the first 90 days after the publication of a book is the sweet spot to get the word out. If I bought into that, I'd be pretty much out of luck on this launch. But as with so much that we hear about publishing, the conventional wisdom has not caught up with the new reality that includes books staying in print basically forever, and the ability to reach readers directly through Substack, social media, and online magazines. The situation in which I find myself forces me to take the long view, and that may not be a bad thing.

So I will keep my list of podcast invitations handy and look forward to publicizing the heck out of this book after I convalesce from surgery.

And in the meantime, let me tell you about Europe. It was terrific.

PS *Rock On* is available on order from your local bookstore or at all the online places—check it out [here](#). And if you read *Rock On*, please oh please post your honest review on [Goodreads](#), [Amazon](#), [BookBub](#), and wherever else your heart desires. Thank you!

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Keep the pen moving, or the keys clicking.

All the best,

Stella,

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# From the blog this month

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## Vampire as Crone Metaphor

**Stella Fosse**

ive years ago I had terrific fun writing my first novel. [Brilliant Charming Bastard](#) is the story of three women scientists in their sixties who join forces for smart [revenge](#) when they discover they are dating the same lying dilettante (who is stealing their ideas). I loved pushing back on social stereotypes by writing those vivid older women characters.

But then I thought:

*How can I take this to the max?*

And then: *What if a sexy love story starred a 500-year-old woman?*

That was the genesis of my first paranormal romance, [Vampires of a Certain Age](#). The main character, Marion, is a medieval

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## What You Don't Know

**Cassidy Carson**

Life slows down, just a little. Family and work aren't as demanding. More time, more space, and you mig

Do you remember your childhood dreams?

Not the ones you pursued because society expected you to work a good-paying job while marrying and raising a family. The ones that came before, back in the days when your backyard landscaping served as the depths of a jungle for your wildest explorations. What did you imagine doing in those early days? Did you want to walk on the moon, dance Swan Lake with a famous ballet company, teach, or even become a best-selling author?

English healer. As a new vampire, she is welcomed by a circle of badass immortalized women.

With their help, Marion eventually runs a Chicago blood bank. Women who read that book asked for stories about the other women in the novel. Those readers inspired **The Vampire Matriarchs**, my series that is now in the works.

While writing the prequel (*The Vampire Vivienne*), I've been pondering why vampires make such great metaphors for badass older women. Vibrant older [sexuality](#) is one reason. That's how this series started, after all. But there's much more to this metaphor (and to the series) than Elderotica.

For example, when "**The Change**" arrives for mortal women, no one explains to us all the ways our bodies become different. Same thing when a human woman becomes a vampire: It's pretty much trial and error, and heaven help the new vampire who walks outside on a sunny day.

Let's not forget that old bugaboo, **looking older**. There's a cool twist on this one for vampires: The appearance of immortalized women never

Those might not have been your dreams but they were some of mine.

Real life soon took over. Early on, I was discouraged from taking ballet because I was too big. Becoming an astronaut wasn't an option due to my low grades in math and science. The teaching idea was squashed when my family suggested I become a lawyer instead. The one dream I tried to keep alive was becoming a best-selling author. Early in my marriage, I fit writing around my children's naps, household chores, doctor's appointments, and all the other responsibilities of parenting. When traditional publishing didn't happen and my youngest started school, I got a "real" job to help make ends meet, and my last dream went on the back burner for the next twenty-something years.

None of this means I haven't enjoyed life. I've been married to a wonderful man for more than forty years, and we have three great kids, a terrific son-in-law, and amazing grandkids. I stumbled upon a career that turned out to be perfect for me, though I hadn't known the field existed for most of my life. The

changes, so if they want to stay in one place for decades, they end up doing things like dying their hair grey to try to look older. Either way, it's all about [disguising our age](#).

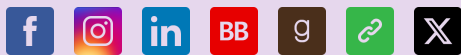
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time I spent working as an archivist also ended up fulfilling one of my early dreams, teaching, just not in the way I'd expected.

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Stella Fosse



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