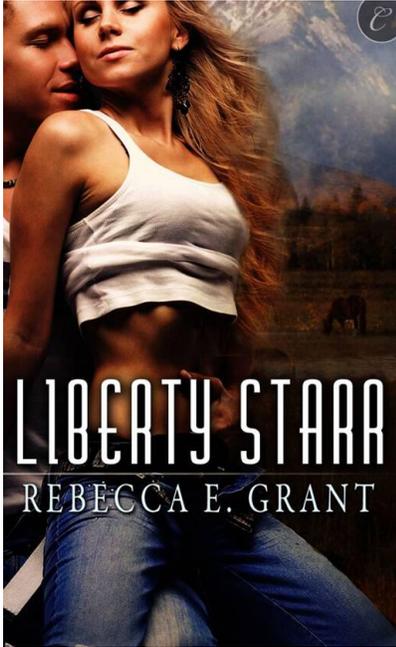


Carina Press Blog

But could she trust him? (second posting)

Rebecca_Grant | May 17th, 2010



Rafe had never met a truly irresistible woman, until he met Liberty.

Libby has the kind of beauty that comes on slow—strikes a guy the longer he looks. And Rafe sure is having a fine time looking, and touching, and loving Liberty Starr.

The only problem is that Rafe is pretending to be just another cowboy down on his luck. Working for the FBI, he's come to Stone Hill, Colorado, to investigate the man Libby loves like a father.

He was just another cowboy.

Free-spirited Libby offers him a job and a place to stay. Together they spark like wildfire, their intense passion filling their days and nights. But Rafe is only in town for the summer, and while Liberty is willing to risk her heart, secrets threaten any possibility of a future together...

How about if you try to write a sexy romance without ever mentioning a body part below the waist...

When I sat down to write LIBERTY STARR I heard the familiar whisper of my muse. She said, "How about if you try to write the entire book without ever mentioning a body part below the waist—and make it the most erotic story you've ever written?"

Well, that just sounded ridiculous to me. How do you write a story without using words, I wondered.

"Oh, you have a dictionary full of words—just don't use any purple prose—and none of those graphic-below-the-waist shockers."

"But what about—"

She cut me off. "Nope, not even that."

"But I have to at least be able to use the clinical term if not the slang."

She kept whispering, "I'm just trying to help you find your own style. Come on. What are you afraid of? Try it."



My editor, Jessica was amazing ...

And so I tried it. I think I drove my Carina Press editor, Jessica a little crazy because without certain words, at times the images were too vague. But she was endlessly patient and amazingly helpful. She'd write in the margin, "I don't understand what's going on here," or "can you help me out? What is he actually doing to her..."

Libby and Rafe, the heroine and hero in *LIBERTY STARR*, are anxious to meet you, and rather than to describe them to you, I'm going to let them speak for themselves in the following excerpts.

Excerpt from chapter two:

The late morning sun was warm against her bare skin. Libby wolfed the scone and took her coffee to the wicker rocker where she could relax and let the sun do its magic. Her thoughts kept returning to the night before. She would have sworn he would kiss her—maybe even assume he was invited into her bed. But he hadn't.

She picked up the paper, then tossed it aside. But why hadn't he kissed her? He certainly seemed attracted to her. She'd worn the white dress with the spaghetti straps just to tease him. And catching the garlic butter with her finger like that—she'd done it before she realized what she was doing. She almost regretted teasing him, but not quite. Between his kiss after her ride yesterday, and letting her know he'd seen her under the waterfall, she'd thought him just a little too pleased with himself.

Over dinner she gradually became aware that he had shared only a few personal details. At first she'd thought he was just a very good listener, always turning the conversation back to her. But after a while she realized that he was practiced at deflecting questions. In fact, she didn't even know his last name. But that would be easy enough to find out. She could look at Emma's paperwork.

Libby did a quick inventory of what she did know about him. He owned a truck, a Stetson, claimed to have done a lot of rodeoing, his mother died of a broken heart when he was fourteen, and he had a great mouth. Her body gave an involuntary flex. When she met him on the highway, he'd looked like just another temptation sent her way—another cowboy down on his luck who expected her to save him, and she'd probably try because Lord knows she always fell for the underdog. But there was something under the surface. She'd seen it in his eyes several times. Over dinner, she'd heard it in his speech. He was educated, polite and capable of depth. At least depth of thought. She didn't yet know about his character.

By the end of the night, he hadn't seemed so much like a cowboy down on his luck as he did a man who valued his freedom. He was also well-informed about the whole Haley's Ranch fiasco, which proved nothing, really, since the story had been all over the national news. A nudist colony, three women and misappropriated trust funds made for a great headline.

This morning she had learned that Rafe was interested enough to impress her. Why else would he rise early and get all the chores done before noon? Yet, last night he had not kissed her. Instead, he'd walked her to her room. The moment hung suspended. He'd stood so close she could feel his heat.

"Thanks for dinner." His eyes burned.

"You'll work it off." She could feel her own eyes burning.

He reached out and brushed a tendril from the side of her face. It was all she could do to keep from chasing his fingers with her lips. His hand rested briefly on the side of her shoulder. His fingers massaged gently as if he couldn't keep from touching her. He took both of her hands in his, squeezed them lightly, then drew his hands up the sides of her arms. His thumbs hooked the fallen straps of her dress and slid them into place.

"Good night, Elle."

And that's how he left her.

Excerpt from chapter four:

She was half-blinded by a new round of tears as she left the house and headed for the stables. She didn't even see Rafe until he caught her. She buried her face in his chest. She didn't care whether he was Rafe the playful, ardent lover or Rafe the dark and sulky version. All she cared was that he was there. That his arms wrapped around her as if she belonged in them. That he held every part of her body against every part of his. She wept into his chest until she had nothing left. Her soul ached for that lonely man who had never really learned how to connect with another human being. After a while, she grew silent, and still Rafe held her.

When at last she was breathing normally, he said, "I don't know what happened in there, but if he hurt you in any way..."

"He didn't hurt me. Quite the opposite."

"Well something he did made you cry."

"Yes." She brought her mouth to the soft place between his jaw and his neck. "Yes. I am crying because of him."

Rafe held her even more firmly but said nothing. She could feel the tic of his jaw. Instinctively, she brought her lips to the tick. "It's not like that. It's not what you think. He didn't do anything to me."

"I've heard enough around town to know he's an unfeeling bastard."

"No, no. That's just what people say about him." She kissed his neck, aware that he was supporting the full weight of her body. She kissed the underside of his chin and the hollow between his shoulder and collarbone, aware that his jaw was still ticking.

Rafe swung her into his arms. She closed her eyes and turned in to him. She would have crawled into his skin if she could have. “Open your eyes, Elle.”

“No, no,” she murmured, kissing his ear.

“Elle, open your eyes. There’s something you need to see.”

The last thing Libby wanted to do was open her eyes. She brought her lips over his. She hadn’t meant to. There just wasn’t any way not to. At first, he didn’t respond but she knew it was just a matter of moments. She felt his arms tighten, his back grow taut. She heard his breath quicken and felt the beat of his heart against hers. When his mouth opened she drank him in. His lips captured hers, pulling at them until she was breathless. He moved to her neck. The gentle suction caused her to cry out and then he was back, moving his lips over hers until she was nearly limp from the pleasure of it.

He set her on her feet. “There’s something you should see.” He slid his hand into hers and drew her into the stable where Jared had worked so diligently on the injured mare, earlier. “Look.”

Libby looked and saw that the mare was no longer down, but back on her feet. Marengo was in the same stall. He stood very close, as if guarding the mare.

“I think you’ve lost him to another woman.”

Libby whirled into Rafe’s chest and cried again. This time he laughed. “I can’t figure out if you’re happy or sad. But one thing’s for sure. I’m going to need a new shirt.”

“Oh take the damn thing off.” She peeled his shirt away from his skin, and leaned into him. He chuckled even as his arms slid back around her.

Excerpt from chapter eight:

“You wonder if you can trust me.”

Something about the way he said it made her shiver. He held her more tightly. “I want to tell you that you can. I will do anything to keep you safe. But I can’t promise that I won’t break your heart. I won’t want to, but we are headed on a collision course. You sense it, don’t you?”

She nodded. Whether she’d realized it or not, she had to have known. There were too many questions for which there appeared no answers.

“Is it any comfort to know that it will break my heart, too?”

Libby turned her body into him and sought his mouth, begging him with her eyes to help her change their destiny. But she knew he couldn’t. Just as she couldn’t. They lay as lovers until the water cooled, but their bodies cried out for more. Libby took him by the hand and led him to the bed. “Then let’s make this last.”

I so hope you enjoyed the excerpts, and that you've already fallen a little bit in love with Libby and Rafe. I'll be blogging one more time today with more about how LIBERTY STARR and Carina Press found one another. Join me!

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I'm also on Facebook and Twitter as Rebecca E Grant



reminder: Commenting on an author's blog entry/entries for the day will enter you to win a digital copy of their Carina Press title. One winner daily. Commenting on any of the Countdown entries will enter you into the big giveaway for a Carina Press promo prize pack. One winner at end of Countdown.

Tags: [Carina Press](#), [contemporary cowboy romance](#), [contemporary erotic romance](#), [contemporary romances](#), [Liberty Starr](#)

This entry was posted on Monday, May 17th, 2010 at 1:00 pm and is filed under [Authors](#), [Books](#), [Carina Press](#), [Countdown](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

16 Responses to “But could she trust him?”

1. [Kathy B](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 1:29 pm](#)

I don't read excerpts (I like to be surprised when I read the book), but I do read blurbs, and this one looks really good! Can't wait for June!

2. [Fedora](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 2:18 pm](#)

Oh wow, Rebecca! I LOVED these excerpts—and hats off to you and to your editor for pushing you! How beautifully you've captured Rafe and Libby!

3. [Phyllis Smith](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 2:33 pm](#)

Yes, do “make this last,” Libby & Rafe {sigh}, because fictional characters that you are, you’re making this last for real people who need this!

4. [Pearl](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 3:06 pm](#)

Wow!

Contemporary Romance? *check*

Enticing cover? *check*

Cowboy? *check*

FBI? *check*

Excerpts that reeled me in? *check*

Sign me up for this one! I’m totally sold

5. [Estella](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 4:54 pm](#)

Great excerpts!

6. [Joyce](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:01 pm](#)

How do you do it? I was in stitches reading about the connection with your editor and how at some point in time she had to just ask — what is happening here?!!

Appreciate your window into this process and I do like to hold off to enjoy the entire story rather than sections as another blogger wrote – however, when I’m looking into a new author that has series or books available, it is helpful to see the style and I can tell I will enjoy your writing style!

Joyce

7. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:22 pm](#)

Thanks Kathy B! I try not to watch movie/tv previews but am not always strong enough to resist... I don’t know how Carina manages to distill an entire book down to a few short sentences, but they do!

8. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:22 pm](#)

Libby and Rafe thank you, Fedora! Whoooooeeeeeee but this author thing is some kind of fun 😊!!

9. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:23 pm](#)

Phyllis—there are 16 love/sex/love/and more love scenes in the book... just trying to make it last 😊 Thanks for your wonderful comments!

10. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:24 pm](#)

A checklist! I love it! Thanks so much for the thumbs up, Pearl!

11. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:24 pm](#)

Thanks for giving them a read, Estella!

12. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 5:27 pm](#)

Joyce—as a new romance author, I had no idea what the editing process would be like. But, from the moment Angela James said Jessica (editor) fell in love with the book, I immediately fell in love with Jessica 😊 She is a dream come true! Thanks Joyce, for all your kind comments!

13. *Jennifer M*

[May 17, 2010 at 9:46 pm](#)

Now I'm really curious and slightly confused about this book. I can't quite imagine how you'd write a romance that doesn't mention any body parts below the waist (what about feet? legs? knees?) but I'd love to read it and find out.

14. [Rebecca E. Grant](#)

[May 17, 2010 at 10:46 pm](#)

Jennifer... you caught me... absolutely nailed me 😊 So—ummmmm—what I meant was ahem, no specific mention of what we used to call (back in the day) unmentionables... but there's lots of description about what it feels like...

There's lots of leg action 😊

15. *Diane M.*

[May 19, 2010 at 9:07 pm](#)

I'll can't wait to read the book.

16. *MaryK*

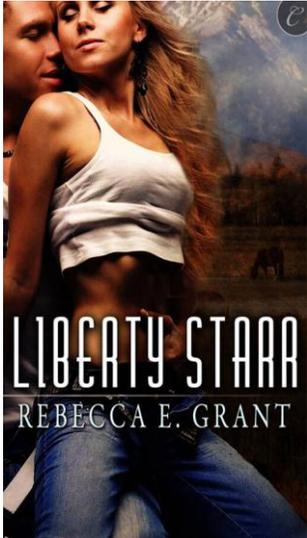
[May 22, 2010 at 12:56 am](#)

Wow, hot! And an undercover hero!

Leg action, huh? I can't wait to try this one.

Love is Unstoppable!

Rebecca_Grant | May 17th, 2010 (third posting)



When I was scouting out places to send LIBERTY STARR, Romance Writers of America emailed an update announcing Harlequin's newest imprint, Carina Press. So, I submitted the manuscript to Carina. I typically mark my calendar with the timeframe each publisher indicates for a response so that I know when to expect a response. It helps me to just trust the process and write the next book instead of obsessing over when I'm going to hear from the publisher.



One day a reminder popped up indicating I should be hearing from Carina Press any day. I remember so clearly that it was a Wednesday. The next day my phone rang. I was on a conference call, saw the number pop up, didn't recognize it, and clicked 'ignore'. My conference call ran about another 15-20 minutes and during that time I was

distracted by little buzzers and strobe lights were going off in my head—what if that was a call from Carina Press?

Sure enough, I dialed into my voice mail and heard a woman's voice say, "Rebecca, this is Angela James from Carina Press. I'm sorry I'm not getting you by phone. Instead, I'll send you an email. I'd like to talk with you about LIBERTY STARR."

I leaped out of my chair shrieking and then wondered... wait... she didn't actually say she wanted to offer me a contract... she just said she wanted to talk about it.

As an unpublished writer in the romance genre, I wasn't sure what the protocol was. Do I call her back or wait for her email? I checked my email. Nothing. I clicked the 'check mail' so many times over the next 10 minutes, I practically wore it out. Finally I couldn't stand it and I hit the redial... and suddenly I was talking with Angela James.

When she said she was interested in publishing LIBERTY STARR, I lost all my verbal skills. I babbled incoherently, tried to stop, babbled some more, and was supremely relieved that after making me feel wonderful about my book, and very special as an author, Angela said she'd follow up with a detailed email. No talking necessary.

The celebrating began, and it's still going on. I'm so thrilled to be a part of the Carina Press launch—to transition from romance writer (in secret) to romance author in the company of Carina Press and their impressive cadre of accomplished, focused, professional authors who love to create wonderful worlds for their readers. And to Jessica Schulte, my infinitely patient editor... the word "longboat" will forever have a new meaning for us, won't it!

**We each have something extraordinary to contribute to this world—something no one else can do—and if we don't do it, the world will never have it.
It will be lost forever.**

Before I leave you I want to say a little more about why I write romance novels. It's my personal belief that every human being is authentically unique. I also believe that we each have something extraordinary to contribute to this world—something no one else can do—and that if we don't do it, the world will never have it. It will be lost forever. I've had any number of philosophical discussions with people about this and know many believe that if one person doesn't do X, someone else will.

Very likely so. But it will be someone else who does it... and so *it* will be different.

For so much of my life, I've thought one of the most important things—perhaps the most important thing—is to be taken seriously—and that no matter how called I felt to write romances, it was not a serious undertaking.

I thought that, right up until one of my test readers sent me an email. In it she wrote:

“Your writing opened my mind and heart to new possibilities and opportunities. Your story delivered personal life messages to me. It reminded me to stop being so stubborn, to allow myself to be loved, to live with passion, and that it's ok to open up my heart. You never know where it might take you.”

I burst into tears because in that moment, I knew that not only did I want to write romances, it was a *very* serious undertaking, and I was finally able to say out loud to others, **“I. Write. Romances. They're intimate, hot, tender, and where appropriate, not so tender. They're filled with intrigue, laughter, hope and provide an opportunity to disappear into the sheer fantasy of the moment. To marvel at the miracle of love, and the way one human body folds into another.”**

Every day I write about the human body and the human heart—how they respond to love, to desire, to joy, to pleasure, to sadness, to hope. It's my belief that in today's world where fear and obligation so often define our priorities, we ache to remember love—to remember what it felt like the first time the object of our desire reached out to brush the hair from our face—what it feels like to be so wholly in the moment, nothing else matters except the transcendental, extrasensory experience romance evokes. There's nothing like it.

That's what I try to give my readers. And each day I believe more firmly that ***love is unstoppable!***

Love, love, love,
Rebecca E. Grant

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reminder: Commenting on an author's blog entry/entries for the day will enter you to win a digital copy of their Carina Press title. One winner daily. Commenting on any of the Countdown entries will enter you into the big giveaway for a Carina Press promo prize pack. One winner at end of Countdown.

Tags: [Carina Press](#), [contemporary cowboy romance](#), [contemporary erotic romance](#), [contemporary romances](#), [Liberty Starr](#)

This entry was posted on Monday, May 17th, 2010 at 4:00 pm and is filed under [Authors](#), [Books](#), [Carina Press](#), [Countdown](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.

26 Responses to “Love is Unstoppable!”

1. *Fedora*

[May 17, 2010 at 4:13 pm](#)

Thank you for sharing your call story and your motivation with us, Rebecca! Congrats on Liberty Starr, and may we readers be blessed to enjoy many MANY more stories from you!

2. *Kristin*

[May 17, 2010 at 4:38 pm](#)

Rebecca:

Your telling tale of Liberty Starr and how you have liberated yourself from the bonds of “secrecy” are so encouraging to those of us who are still mustering up the courage to break free of our own fears. I look forward to delving into your book, meeting the characters imbued with your fierce spirit! Can’t wait!

3. *Pearl*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:00 pm](#)

Thank you for sharing all this! I hope that Liberty Starr is just the beginning and that we get to enjoy much more of your work!

4. *J. Sealine*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:07 pm](#)

Thank you thank you thank you for caring enough about the readers to publish something that has meaning and depth. I want to be swept away with a story – but I also want to be on a constant journey to bring joy & love & happiness into my life. Liberty will bring a smile to my world. You are so correct when you say — hey, if I don’t bring this into the world – the next author will contribute but it will never be exactly the gift I am sending. Wow!

Thank you for sharing the Carina site – so impressive what they are doing. This will be my first e-book purchase but it sounds as easy as click and download right?

J. Sealine

5. *Janni Nell*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:19 pm](#)

I got a little bit teary at your test reader's comment! How wonderful to connect with someone so deeply. I love your philosophy on contributing to the world and your thoughts about writing romance. I'm smiling as I write this.

6. *Estella*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:21 pm](#)

Thank you for sharing your call story. I'm looking forward to reading Liberty Starr.

7. *MJ*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:28 pm](#)

I LOVE your call story! Gorgeous cover–can't wait to read!

8. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:34 pm](#)

Thanks Janni. Sometimes it's hard to know where to draw the line between too much information and friendly sharing. The email story is so personal to me. I'm so glad if it touched you. I honestly think that romance authors are some of the most serious, hard-working people in the business and I'm so grateful that Carina has provide this platform to be able to express my appreciation for romance authors everywhere!

9. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 5:39 pm](#)

MJ-thanks! I love the cover, too. Quick story... I'm not fond of the color orange. Maybe it was all those Holiday Inns I stayed in during the 70s... because there are only 3 places I believe orange should ever be:

- 1) orange juice
- 2) sunrise
- 3) sunset

I kept saying to myself... "This will be my first romance cover. Please-oh-please don't let it be orange. Forever after, they can all be orange, but please-oh-please don't let this first one be orange.

And then I saw the beautiful blues (because we're all looking at the blues, not the smokin' hot M/F embrace 😊)

I think all the Carina Press covers are fabulous! Way to go, Carina!

10. *Joyce*

[May 17, 2010 at 6:15 pm](#)

Rebecca & Corina Press — Love, love, love the cover! I did a double take the minute I saw this on pre-release email. A cover can really entice me as a reader to look inside & it did the trick.

Fun, fun, fun.

Joyce

11. *Phyllis Smith*

[May 17, 2010 at 7:56 pm](#)

Layers upon layers of stories in stories. How well you entertain, Rebecca. Thank you for setting free the unstoppable love in this story. My right hand whomps over my heart each time I think or speak those words Liberty Starr!

12. *Leanne Dyck*

[May 17, 2010 at 9:21 pm](#)

What you wrote is so beautiful and you should be very proud. I grew up in a house full of men. The lessons I learnt from them were good — suck it up, tote your own load. However, I paid more heed to their voices than my mother's. I think what romance authors do is celebrate what it is like to be female. They (You) give voice to our passion. Long may you write.

13. *Ann*

[May 17, 2010 at 9:30 pm](#)

Hey Rebecca, What does M/F embrace stand for (earlier posting)?

If I don't have a Kindle will I be able to read this book?

I read your first chapter on your website, I always have loved waterfalls!!!

Ann

14. *Nora Weston*

[May 17, 2010 at 9:35 pm](#)

Rebecca:

Hi! Congrats on Liberty Starr. 😊 Your enthusiasm for your work and for Carina Press shows. Best of luck to you!

15. *Jennifer M*

[May 17, 2010 at 9:53 pm](#)

I absolutely love your description of romances. I'm always a bit ashamed to admit that I read them because so many people have teased me about it, but this helps me be proud of what I choose to read. You have a great way with words and I'm looking forward to reading your book.

16. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 9:57 pm](#)

Hi Joyce: When I wrote M/F I was talking about a Male/Female embrace. Thanks for asking for clarification!

More information will be posted on the Carina site later, but you can be assured, you don't need anything more than your computer to download eBooks from Carina's website.

About waterfalls, I hope that now you love them even more 😊

17. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 10:38 pm](#)

Hi Jennifer—yes, I know what you mean. So glad if anything I wrote today helps all the wonderful readers out there who love to to love romance. I would be PROUD to have you read Liberty Starr!

18. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 10:40 pm](#)

Leanne, OMG but you make my eyes sting with tears. Bless you!

19. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 10:41 pm](#)

WHOMPS! I love the visual. Can't wait to use it in one of my stories! Thank you thank you thank you for your kind, loving words!

20. *Rebecca E. Grant*

[May 17, 2010 at 10:42 pm](#)

Thank you so much, Nora!

21. *Mary G*

[May 17, 2010 at 10:59 pm](#)

What a wonderful post. You gave me goosebumps. Best of luck to you.

22. *Sarah G.*

[May 17, 2010 at 11:23 pm](#)

Thank you for sharing the story of the call from Carina! I love especially this: “I leaped out of my chair shrieking and then wondered... wait... she didn’t actually say she wanted to offer me a contract... she just said she wanted to talk about it.” Totally made my giggle out loud... I can’t imagine my dear Rebecca ever second guessing her instincts... so silly! OF COURSE they would want to publish! I can’t wait to get my hands on it... sizzlin’. I know you’re not SUPPOSED to judge a book by its cover, but I am... and I’m excited about it! 😊

23. *Bethanne*

[May 18, 2010 at 12:46 pm](#)

Aw. reading your post made me teary-eyed. Wonderful story. THanks for sharing it. Lovely COVER, too!!!

24. *ms bookjunkie*

[May 18, 2010 at 2:03 pm](#)

I’ll ditto Mary G on the goosebumps. Is it June yet?

25. *Diane M.*

[May 19, 2010 at 9:09 pm](#)

I love hearing how a author got the call for a book.

26. *MaryK*

[May 22, 2010 at 1:12 am](#)

Now I have tears in my eyes. I don’t understand how people can justify looking down on Romance. What would real life be without relationships?