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Agent/Query Submission Central

~this week 12-2-16~

First Pages 101

WORKSHOP #9

Welcome everyone, including those of you in our “audience.” I’m Molli Nickell, THE Publishing Wizard with a few words about your manuscript first page . . . the last and most important portion of your submission package.

The writers whose work is being evaluated today are members of Submission Central.

You’re invited to comment, or ask questions, using the chat box

ABOUT FIRST PAGES~

At a certain stage of the submission process, your manuscript first pages are written for the agent, not for the book buyer.

This explains the need to revise your manuscript first pages, even if they’ve already been written.

Your submission manuscript first page has an audience of one. The agent who was engaged by your email SUBJECT line, and CLICK, opened your email.

They read your query first paragraph, then the second, and became interested. They wondered, “hmmm, so what happens?”

Next, they read your synopsis and enjoyed a taste of your story as it flowed from beginning to middle to end.

Finally, the agent scrolls to your first page. They're ready to read more about your story and your protagonist as they evaluate your story-telling skills.

If you're very, very smart, you've crafted a manuscript first page to "hook and hold" their interest so they'll keep reading, become even more engaged with your work.

Your audience of one has reached the crucial moment when they will decide to keep reading, keep scrolling, or *CLICK* and your entire submission will fly off to delete-ville.

You don't want that to happen.

Most writers, especially with their first novel, fall into the trap of "gotta. "Gotta tell huge amounts of the back story. Gotta set up my protagonist, gotta tell everything about them, gotta do this, gotta do that, gotta make sure the reader understands everything about my story."

Wrong approach.

Instead, keep two words to keep in mind:

TICK TOCK!

The agent, who has read your query and synopsis, has made the decision that you may have a project worthy of their attention.

Make sure your first pages prove that they're right. A project worthy of publication.

How do you do this with your first pages?

- Begin your story the moment something happens, something that demands the telling of your story.
- Set the scene.
- Anchor the story in time and place.
- Reveal your protagonist's character.
- Demonstrate your story-telling voice.
- Hint at where the story is going.
- Build anticipation and evoke curiosity, "what happens next?"

Your opening text can be simple and impactful. For example:

Last night, at sundown, I heard the cicadas.

Some people think they bring trouble when they come to town.

I don't think that's true.

I think trouble finds its way without any help at all.

These opening lines *build anticipation, evoke curiosity*, and will motivate the agent to turn the page and discover *what kind of trouble* is on its way and *who might be dead center* in its path.

Opening lines certainly be more involved to reveal the same issues.

For example, in the “Fault in our Stars” by John Green:

Late in the winter of my seventeenth year, my mother decided I was depressed, presumably because I never left the house, read the same book over and over, ate infrequently, and devoted quite a bit of my abundant free time to thinking about death.

Whenever you read a cancer booklet or website or whatever, they always list depression among the side effects of cancer. (Cancer is also a side effect of dying. Almost everything is, really.) But my mother decided I needed treatment, so she took me to see my regular Doctor Jim, who agreed I was veritably swimming in a paralyzing and totally clinical depression, and therefore my meds should be adjusted and I also should attend a weekly Support Group.

The Support Group consisted of a rotating cast of characters in various stages of tumor-driven unwellness. Why did the cast rotate? A side effect of dying.

Comment: The *situation* is obvious with the words of a dying teenager. The scene is set, and the story is *present time*. She's depressed, smart, sarcastic, and wanting to be left alone. But, she's about to join a Support Group, *which hints at* where the story may be going. This anticipation evokes the *curiosity factor*.

I kept on reading the sample pages on Amazon because I became *interested in the protagonist, her voice, her challenge*, and I wanted to know *what happens next*.

Humans are naturally curious. Build the curiosity factor into your first page and you'll be more likely to "hook and hold" the interest of the agent reading your manuscript.

And that's my open.

VIDEO OFF:

VIDEO ON:

Janet's first up on the hot seat.

NOTE: Janet's submission package is moving closer to being ready to submit. However, she would be wise to invest the time and address writing mechanic issues to revise *before* launching her agent quest.

WHO IS THE STORY ABOUT? Professor Grace Stone

WHAT DOES THE MAIN CHARACTER WANT AND WHY? She wants the love of a good man and the family she never had.

WHAT STANDS IN THE MAIN CHARACTER'S WAY? Her fear of being vulnerable and having her heart broken again by another man.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE MAIN CHARACTER DOESN'T GET WHAT SHE WANTS? She remains alone and a family outsider.

SUBJECT LINE: Glass Promises

Query:

Professor Grace Stone, yearns for a family. As the offspring of an illicit affair, Grace never knew her father. Married with an infant daughter, her husband is killed with another woman. (As written, her husband was married with an infant daughter) Grace faces life without an extended family. ~~alone~~. Four years later, the pressure of being a single mother is multiplied with Lily's demands to "find her a daddy." Grace suppresses her fear of heartbreak and begins to date. Attracted to Beau, who is scarred from a nasty divorce, they begin a steam relationship. Will they risk love again despite the landmines of pain from their first marriages? Comment: All of a sudden the query shifts to a "them" instead of a "her." May not be a problem. Just mentioning it.

At a ritzy charity event, Grace experiences her greatest nightmare. An uncanny resemblance to her dead mother causes a brawl. The humiliating incident leads to the revelation of her deceased father's

identity. Grace rejoices in having discovered living relatives, but must navigate the unfamiliar labyrinth of family dynamics, especially when a newcomer is not welcomed by everyone. Grace campaigns to secure a future with commitment-phobic Beau and win over a hostile relative. Losing the battle will mean no husband for Grace, no father for Lily, and a lonely future. NOTE: This is a declarative statement. Not a tease. Can you rephrase to leave the resolution in question?

FOR EVERYONE: Query first and 2nd paragraphs end with a question, a reference to the terrible “or else” that will occur if they don’t achieve their goal. GET THIS! A declarative statement is “ho hum.” Doesn’t build anticipation. Questions work! Ignore this at your own peril.

This 72,000 word completed romance, titled GLASS PROMISES, won third place in the 2016 Royal Palm Literary Award competition. I am a member of the Florida Writers Association, Romance Writers of America, Florida Romance Writers, Coral Springs Writers Group, and volunteer at the work-on-the-annual Coral Springs Literary Festival. Thank you for your time and consideration.

SYNOPSIS Needs review and revision for “ing” words.

Professor Grace Stone’s mother never revealed which married lover fathered her. After marrying young and giving birth to a daughter, Grace’s philandering husband dies in the tsunami of 2004. As written, her husband marries young and gives birth . . . and this is a repeat from your query., You can simply say that Grace is a young widow, and a single mother who focuses on achieving her PhD and . . . She focuses on achieving a PhD and being a good mother until four-year-old Lily lobbies hard for a daddy. Despite fears of being vulnerable to another man who makes glass promises, Grace can’t deny Lily. After all, a father was her childhood yearning harbored for years. Rephrase this sentence.

Grace tries speed dating and rejects all the possible dates, even an interesting man very unlike her deceased husband. Following a

construction accident, Grace encounters the five-minute man again. The chemistry with Beau sizzles and results in an unplanned intimacy in a rather unusual place. Not the place for any kind of a tease. Tell where it occurred or revise. Grace is appalled by her the loss of control and shuts off a chance for a relationship. Beau wins her back with persistence and genuine feelings for Lily.

At a premier Boca Raton fundraiser, Grace is mistaken for her mother and accosted by one of her the woman's former lovers. The frightening incident results in the identity of her dead father being revealed as well as a biological connection to Beau's stepmother. Grace is welcomed into the family by everyone except Beau's sister, Gen, who views her as an illegitimate interloper. Worried about the lack of commitment in their relationship, Grace pressures Beau who professes a reluctance to being hurt again and plagued by doubts he can love another woman. Grace finds herself an outsider in a man's heart and family, much like her mother. was (Finds herself is a trite saying. Was she lost? Be specific, what exactly does she mean? She pushes for a commitment and to set boundaries with Gen. The ultimatum causes a breakup when Beau is unwilling to meet her the demands.

At the family's Thanksgiving dinner, Grace and Beau meet again. Although awkward with each other, the get-together goes well until Lily is terrorized by Gen's daughter. Grace questions her long-held desire for an extended family. Are Were she and Lily better off alone? After reflection, Grace decides Beau and the newfound relatives are too important to not fight for them. Revise this sentence. She decides the potential for a real family, warts and all, is too important to lose.

Grace initiates a campaign using intelligence and intuition, womanly tricks-of-the-trade, and even Lily's child-like ingenuity. Beau's masculine desires are appealed to with sexuality and food. His sister is another woman reeling from the hurts of an unfaithful husband. As written, this is a declarative sentence. Tie it to Grace. Show it. Grace helps Gen improve her self-esteem and confidence with a surprise

makeover. **Is lipstick all it takes to heal a broken heart?** Nothing is left to chance to achieve Grace's dream of a place in Beau's heart and in a forever family. **So, does she get this or not. End your story.**

FIRST 350 WORDS:

This is crazy! I don't want to speed date.

As Grace Stone drove to the casino in Hallandale, Florida, she glanced at her passenger whose expression mimicked a bounty hunter closing in on an elusive bond jumper. Alice, a friend and colleague at work, had speed dated three times in the last year. In a moment of weakness, Grace agreed to get this a try.

RaceDate.com promised they would meet a minimum of ten local singles of the opposite sex who were professionals between the ages of twenty-six and thirty-four. Grace registered as Gigi Black. It was her nickname as a child and maiden name. The alias would keep her professional identity private to anyone she met tonight.

Alice was going by Ali for the same reason. "Tell them you're a teacher, not a professor. A lot of men are put off by women with PhD's."

"What about being a single mother?"

"If a guy doesn't appreciate that you pay your own bills, take care of your kid while working full-time, and deal with all the other crap in your life then you don't want someone who just fell off the stupid truck."

Upon arrival at the Mardi Gras casino, they were greeted by a man dressed as a court jester. Without asking, he slipped a strand of plastic beads over their heads. "Are you ladies here for the corn hole competition?"

Grace stopped and jerked her head toward Alice. Corn hole?

Alice brushed past the jester and waved her hand. "I know where we're going."

Grace followed her friend through a small casino with bad lighting and a stale smell. She shivered in the chilly air conditioning and pulled her white denim jacket tighter. Old folks milled around the garish setting forcing her and Alice to walk in wide berths around them.

When they reached the bar, a perky blonde at a table with a RaceDate check-in sign marked their names off a list. She handed them adhesive name tags. “Please put these where they’re easy to read.” Next, she gave them a rectangle of printed card stock. “Here is your Race Card. There are some helpful hints on the back. Gigi, you’re at table six and, Ali, you’re at ten. We’ll be starting in a few minutes. You two were the last to check in. Have fun and I hope you find your Mr. Right tonight.”

Manuscript first 350 word check list:

- Did this story open the exact moment something happens?
- Is the scene set?
- Is the story anchored in time and place?
- Does it reveal the character of the protagonist?
- Does it serve to demonstrate the writer’s story-telling voice?
- Is there a hint of where the story is going?
- Does the following build anticipation and evoke curiosity, “what happens next?”

COMMENTS:

These opening lines give information and background, and nothing compelling. Grace’s character (smart/funny/fearful) is somewhat revealed.

Where is the story going? Impossible to tell.

Will the agent keep reading? Maybe.

Remember, the story begins when something happens. No back story is necessary.

Jump right in to keep the agent engaged.

Curiosity factor is low at this point.

Question: What is the defining moment when this story begins? With her decision to try speed dating? Or when she meets Beau at RaceDate.com and feels a flicker of interest, much to her surprise.

What will keep the agent reading to discover if you have the ability to tell this story and keep them engaged/motivated.

XX

From Vicki

Subject line: It followed her to school one day, breaking all the rules.
Who wants what and why? Sadie wants to be a normal teenager.
What stands in her way? Lack of self-esteem
What is the terrible or else? Suicide

Query for “Crooked”

COMMENTS: This query needs to be made clear as to the problem and the potentials for Sadie.

No telling. Showing only.

Highlighted phrases can become the core of your query with tease endings for your first and second paragraphs.

Before revising your synopsis, you need to craft an effective query to engage the agent and keep them reading.

Your query is the only portion of today’s submission to be discussed since the rest will change as you revise.

Born with cerebral palsy, Sadie's tangled walk attracts attention with every step she takes. The real Sadie hides from the world, **believing others** only see a cripple when she slithers by. Sadie’s only friend is **Finn, an exchange student who has returned home to London**. Sadie’s convinced she'll never see him again. Sent to her grandmother’s isolated Catskill Mountain home for the summer, **Sadie decides the solitude of the forest offers the perfect refuge to end her life**. sees a perfect refuge to end her life. But in the forest, as at school, Sadie wonders, is she being watched. **This works.**

After swallowing enough sleeping pills to kill Godzilla, Sadie wakes with strange crystals in her lap and faces Devilia, 7-inches of winged

fairy with a malevolent grin. Someone still stalks her, and Sadie comes face to face with the culprit. A fairy, Devilia, glares a malevolent grin, ready to attack her. Sadie stumbles away as fast as she can, then falls. As her panic subsides, she realizes the possible magic of this moment, and decides to stay in life a bit longer than planned. runs faster than she ever knew she could. Knees knock together, she falls, and lands out of breath. Once Sadie's panic subsides, she realizes she might have a reason to stay on this earth. As time passes, Sadie learns more about Devilia, and her loneliness begins to wane. They come to know each other, and Sadie learns that like herself, Devilia, the only one of her kind, suffers with loneliness, not sure if or where she truly belongs. Against her better judgment, Sadie invites Devilia to Manhattan to live with her during the school year. She instigates a strict set of behavior rules that Devilia follows for a while as they become friends. Tell about the field trip, the butterflies who lift up Sadie's skirt, revealing her twisted legs. But the volatile fairy complicates Sadie's life to the fullest. Devilia follows Sadie to Manhattan. While on a school field trip, people stare in awe at Sadie who becomes the centerpiece of a miracle instigated by Devilia. Cell phones flash and Sadie becomes an internet sensation. Finn, about to be inducted in a special freshman class club, emails that Sadie looks like a butterfly princess, magical and radiant. Sadie doesn't see it that way. She feels more like a freak than ever before. She videos send images of Sadie's bare legs and her dress covered with butterflies. bent body around the world. Sadie wishes, like Devilia, to be invisible. Instead Sadie becomes a viral Internet sensation, a freak show. Perhaps she should rid herself of Devilia for good. When she learns that Finn's life is in danger, Devilia is the only one who can fly to his rescue. In a critical race against time, Sadie learns the true meaning of love and loss, and wonders if she will ever escape her own fears.

Sadie reads between the lines of Finn's emails and believes he's about to be initiated into a gang of boys seeped in the drug culture. He's set for a field trip of his own, one he won't ever forget. Sadie convinces Devilia to travel to England and stop Finn from destroying his future. Even though Devilia fears the energy of the internet, Sadie insists

they must electronically transfer Devilia's molecules to Finn's computer. But, Finn already has left for the initiation. Devilia diffuses into the ethers. The two beings who have come to mean everything to Sadie are gone. She feels responsible. In despair, will she follow Finn into drugged-out oblivion/or no deal at all. Does she Devilia into death? Or is there another option?

My YA novel, "Crooked" is complete at 75,000 words. I have been an active member-part of a writers' group since 2004, attended conferences and workshops, and am a member of SCBWI. I am the mother of a "sometimes" crooked young adult and live in Manhattan with a wirehair dachshund, Clancy,

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Synopsis for Crooked

NOTE: Clean up the query before putting effort into coordinating it with your synopsis.

Scrutinized all her life, Sadie hides her palsied walk under long skirts and her soul behind long muppy hair. Something changes when Finn, an exchange student from London, bonds with Sadie. Long talks draw them close, and their lonely hearts open to a deep friendship. When he returns to London, Sadie breaks inside.

Sent to the Catskills for her summer, the setting is perfect for ending her life. But watching her every move, a malevolent fairy, Devilia, accidentally thwarts Sadie's suicide attempt. Lost and jealous, Devilia wanders, and unlike Sadie, she longs to be noticed in this world in which she has no place. As their lives intertwine, Sadie begins to escape the darkness that had consumed her and finds she has an impassioned desire to help Devilia. As the infantile Devilia overcomes her jealous nature and starts to trust Sadie, a cautious alliance eventually leads to a companionship.

Sadie emails Finn about her new companion. Yet Sadie senses something is not right with him. Finn feels lost without Sadie, and hangs out with a drug dealer. If Sadie knew, he could never face her

again. Alone with Devilia, Sadie tries to adjust to her life as a caretaker. She tells Devilia she can live in Manhattan if she promises two things: no magic and remains invisible in public. These promises are quickly broken. In school, the fairy protects Sadie. Filled with a new sense of power, Sadie hesitates to celebrate.

Despair visits once again when Devilia causes a small miracle in which Sadie's palsied self becomes plastered on the front page of newspapers around the world. Television stations clamor to hear Sadie's story. Her grades fail, peers are envious of the attention she receives, and Finn sinks further into trouble. Sadie wonders if Devilia could survive without her. And even more troubling, could Sadie survive without Devilia. A much-needed sanity break forces Sadie to convince Devilia to fly to London and check on Finn. In fear of being abandoned for good, Devilia obeys. Once there, Devilia battles to save Finn from danger and suffers a critical injury. In a hurry to save Devilia, and worried about disappointing Sadie, Finn uses drug money to fly to New York. With Devilia in his pocket, three fragile lives are deeply connected to one another.

But Sadie and Finn cannot revive Devilia. If only Sadie had handled responsibility, instead of thinking of herself Devilia would still be alive. When Sadie appears on national television she talks of a little fairy that caused her miracle, and for the first time she accepts her own existence. A near death experience brings Devilia back. On a Manhattan rooftop, Sadie and Finn kiss. Devilia lights the sky with shooting stars, ready for her own journey. Finn returns to London to attend a therapeutic boarding school. Sadie plans to visit him for the holidays. Proudly, Sadie tells Finn she has to wear tights in a play, and her whole self shines. **She pulls up her skirt to flash bright red tights she'll wear in a school play. THE END!**

COMMENT: A story begins the moment something happens. Something that involves your protagonist. Focus on Sadie. The Devilia info is probably for your second book. It doesn't work to interject her into the story now. Your story begins when Sadie goes into the forest to die.

She might have chosen a mountain closer to a cell tower and Wi-Fi connection. She might email Finn to say goodbye.

As written, Sadie seems intent on connecting with Finn.

Shows she has hope and the desire to stay connected, is not necessarily filled with despair.

BTW: Interesting descriptions of what Devilia sees, interpreted by a different type of being who is unfamiliar with humans. This will make an interesting voice

Chapter One

** I call myself Devilia. I am young and old and wise. A mortal has come to stay up the road at the house of Ida. What I see I do not like.

**

A large rat scattered for food on infested subway tracks, easing its body over and under the rails. As Sadie stared down at it, hypnotized, she stood inches away from the subway's platform edge. An oncoming train grew louder, closer, and its vibrations rippled through her body. "Please step away from the platform edge," shouted a voice recording. Sadie, do not step away from the platform edge, just lean forward a little too much. But what if she botched it? What if she stayed alive, left with no legs at all, her mangled self a bloody mess? A train whizzed into the station, and a stranger pulled her back from within an inch of her possible death.

That was yesterday. Now, in an attempt to erase her failed suicide from her mind's eye, Sadie shook her head so violently she banged it against the headboard on her grandmother's old four-poster bed. She missed her chance. Shouldn't she be grateful to be in a secluded place? No one could stare, or catch flies with open-mouthed beyond rude gawking. A flash of lightening brightened the room and jolted her further into reality. A clear blue sky outside tall bedroom windows showed no signs of an impending storm. Weird. Sadie opened her laptop, an unpacked duffel pressed at her feet. A faint tinge of electricity stung her fingertips, forcing them off of the keyboard.

** Devilia cannot tear my eyes from her. Her legs shuffleslide in su

ch an odd broken way. Her stick arms lift an electric white book. It burns me. I will keep my distance from such a nasty thing. **

From: Sadie@Bestfriend.net To: Finn@Bestfriend.net Subject: nature and mountains and trees oh nooooo...

Finally! I've been searching for a Wi-Fi signal for hours. Mom has sent me to purgatory. Not a soul in sight except my grandmother. I'm stuck in an ancient house with no cable, no cell signal, and NO Internet access. So how come I can connect to you? It seems Wi-Fi ghost chose you and no one else. Shiver shiver!

XX

Doree Anderson/ YA/ One Eighty

Story Core

Who: Levi Yokum

Why: Afraid to grow up and survive on his own

What does he want: His mom to live?

The or what else: Death/suicide

Core: Mortality

Subject: Opioids . . . can you hear me now?

Seventeen-year-old Levi Yokum's academic grades are perfect, he's popular, and plays on his high school's football team. Home life, however is steering Levi down a different path. The worlds greatest mom has been diagnosed and is dying of a rare disease. The doctors say there's no cure. His mother excepts it, Levi doesn't. Levi's horrified that his only 'family' is willing to simply leave, with no security or provisions. He steals a bottle of narcotics and squirrels it away. Fighting the responsibility to mature and the realism that Levi must survive alone, Levi prepares to make an irrational decision. What kind of mind set would a smart teenager need to let a handful of opioids settle his problems?

Levi Yokum and his mother are a tight family of two. When he learns that she's fallen ill with cancer, he believes that **working** as a team, they'll get through it. They'd battled breast cancer when Levi was younger, and won. There's no doubt that, with medical intervention, the results would be the same. She disagrees. Levi accuses her of **surrendering**, to leave him destitute and alone. The tension turns their home into a war zone, and Levi into an odious young man. Pressure and anxiety fights him from inside. A bottle of OxyContin, left beside his mother's bedside table calls. Levi hides it in his closet, for later use. The closer to death she arrives, he watches the pain intensify and wonders if the pills could comfort her. She slips into death without assistance. The feelings of abandonment pour over him. Levi's left alone except for the OxyContin sitting in his closet. Will Levi use the narcotics as a fix to his problems?

Completed at 54,500 words, "One Eighty" will appeal to readers of "Fault in our Stars" and "Thirteen." My background includes three years as a reporter for the Salt Lake Valley Journal. For seven years, I've been an active member (and past vice president and president) of the Utah RWA (Romance Writers of America) and participate in Society of Children's Books Writers and Illustrators, the Utah League of Writers and Absolutely Writers as well as two critique groups. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Doree Anderson
doree.anderson.com

SYNOPSIS: Young Adult - One Eighty

High School juniors, Levi Yokum and his best friend are discussing a girl's choice upcoming dance and how to stay under the radar, when Levi's cell phone rings. His mother, Camelia Josephine (CJ) is leaving work early and driving home sick. An unusual occurrence, especially for her. Levi hurries home to find her suffering with a severe migraine. A test reveals a small tumor against her carotid artery. The surgery goes well.

CJ's post-op appointment uncovers a rare form of liver cancer. Levi believes with Chemo and radiology; life can return to normal. CJ and the doctor try to explain to Levi that her diagnosis is terminal. Fear of abandonment plays havoc with Levi. College is coming up and her sickness is throwing a monkey wrench into things. Mother and son's close relationship slides into a roller-coaster of arguments and heartbreak. Instead of offering her comfort, he uses her pain to feed his anger.

Chronic heart palpitations and damp hands hound him after constant reoccurring nightmares. Terror gut-punches him, and fights escalate. A concerned friend convinces him to mend the rift with his mother. Not easily, but they patch their tattered relationship up, and Levi takes over her care. He notices an overlooked bottle of narcotics by her bedside; steals them and hides them in his room. Too soon, CJ's health declines. Levi's blessed to be present, holding her when she dies. **Show this, don't tell it.**

With the pills and a bottle of alcohol, he fails his first attempt at suicide at the base of his mother's grave. His stress stacks higher when his estrange father returns demanding Levi go with him. To a different state. Not as a son, but as an unpaid employee on the man's pig farm. **This doesn't belong in your synopsis, since dad hasn't been a part of the story before. Instead, use this space to show more of Levi's shifting attitudes.** The courts deny the man that hasn't seen Levi since he was three. Then Levi's childhood home sells. After Levi moves into his best friend's house, the friend interferes during another suicide attempt.

Levi realizes that his life isn't as bad as he'd envisioned. He's not destitute or alone. When he decides to stop taking the pills, it's like an alien has climbed into his brain. He's hearing voices telling him things to do. It's driving him insane. Not only isn't he sleeping, but he's also snapping at his coach, tuning out his friends. He realizes that to live; he must get help. He asks his legal guardian who sends him to a therapist. With long hours of severe therapy, friends, and

conviction, he learns control. Its not long that he's molding a new life of his own.

FIRST PAGE: ONE EIGHTY Chapter ONE (this has not been sent to an editor for line edits. Critique checks only)

Levi Yokum slammed the locker door shut and cringed at the noise. "Dude, you plan on leaving it on its hinges?" A student called out. Levi shot the kid a half grin. "Considering it." Hey, it's not like it's his problem that the sound vibrates down the almost deserted hallways of the high school. He lifted his book bag over his shoulder and turned to Ryan Holt. "You want to hit the gym with me and Brent?" "Sure. I'm giving Kieron a . . . Well hello! Check this out."

Ryan's attention had shifted to a group of girls walking down the juniors' assigned hall toward them. He released a sick wolf whistle.

Levi's curiosity peaked as five girls tapped down the acid stained concrete hall, two decked out in casual loose, sweats and makeup free, and two in short shorts, tank tops, and heavily painted faces. One, Levi knew from elementary school, but these days, with the razor clean head, camos and scowl, he'd let her decide which box to check next to 'sex.'

Jewels Tate led the entourage. Determination sharpening her thick, purple lined features the closer the brunette loomed. She stopped in front of Brent and dramatically dropped down onto a bended knee. Oh wow! Levi's eyes popped open. With the dip in that dress, Brent appeared to be taking in a show full. Wait a minute. Is she for real? He scanned the area again. Someone had to be holding a camera and this had to be a joke.

One of Jewels loosely wound friends gave off a jazzy rendition of a drum roll as Jewels removed a tiny box from her overnight bag-sized purse and presented it to him.

The rest of her troupe burst out in high-octane levels of chanting. "Jewels! Jewels! Jewels!" "You go, girl! Sweeeeet." One screech caused glass shattering, nerve damage to Levi's ears. Chill?

"Is this some form of a frickin' drama department marriage proposal?" Levi asked Ryan from the side of his mouth. Man, that dude's is in some deep crap.

Manuscript first 350 word check list:

- Did this story open the exact moment something happens?
- Is the scene set?
- Is the story anchored in time and place?
- Does it reveal the character of the protagonist?
- Does it serve to demonstrate the writer's story-telling voice?
- Is there a hint of where the story is going?
- Does the following build anticipation and evoke curiosity, "what happens next?"

COMMENTS: The story begins the moment something happens. It changes everything and causes the story to be told. Back story in re Levi's life, his friends, etc., can be woven into the story. You can use flashbacks to happier times. All stories that begin with back story are destined not to be read by agents. They lack the necessary time to wade through information that doesn't lead them to the guts/core of the story.

After reading Chapter six, I feel that this is the moment that Levi's story begins. If there are 40 pages of back story about Levi, his life, girls, football, and stuff with mom, you won't retain reader interest. The agent has read this far because they are interested in your story, to this point.

It's vital to jump into that place where the core of your story begins. See the highlighted passages at the end of Chapter Six.

Pgs 40 – 43 Chapter Six. The moment Levi learns his mother is terminal and doesn't want to fight to survive.

This is the moment your story begins.

Levi paced the small space as he waited for his mother to be escorted into her new hospital room. His mind played a game of ping pong in his head. The surgeon had assured him that the surgery was successful, and his mom would be out of recovery soon. Everything had gone well. Clean extraction against the carotid. A textbook operation.

Celebration time?

Before Levi could pump a fist in the air, Dr. Stempson, his mom's previous oncologist stepped into the tiny twelve by twelve sized prison chamber.

"Levi, hello. I see that your mother's not returned." He turned to leave but paused, "I have a couple of results I need to go over with your mother. I believe it would be best if the whole family were present. I'll be back shortly."

Levi laughed out into the room. "Not longly, but shortly." So by family, did he mean mom's fiance?

Levi, the doofus he struggled to control, called Stryker without thought. It wasn't as if they'd set a date. Hell, his mom hadn't even started gawking at wedding magazines. Googly, giggly, lovey, dovey garbage appeared to be the extent of yuck that Stryker's relationship with his mom stood.

Stryker stayed over night periodically. And sure, Levi and his mother, once in a blue moon, bunked at Stryker's. Nobody actually lived with anyone else, yet. Therefore, no family conference included Stryker, Levi decided.

The business at hand is for the family now, not the future. So, how could he take the phone call back?

"Levi? Where's your mom?"

Too late! "Hey. She's on her way back from recovery. It'll be a minute."

Stryker looked around the room before acknowledging Levi. "Is that the only chair?"

Levi shrugged. "Seems like."

"Well, you're a kid, get out of it and give to me."

"Yeah, no. Get your own. I'm already sitting here."

Stryker looked ready to explode but must have thought better of it. He shook his head and stormed back toward the doorway, "Whatever. It's obvious you're mother neglected teaching you manners."

Levi didn't bother answering. It would have taken caring, and he didn't.

Stryker returned, pushing a large recliner that Levi figured he'd stolen from another patient's room. Missing your own manner's much, moron. Levi glared at the man as Stryker placed his chair so that it would be on the other side of Levi's mother's bed.

A few minutes of see me, ignore me the Levi conducted with Stryker, he was happy to see CJ's bed returned swiftly into the room by... Are you kidding me? Don't they have any other orderlies?

The blue-clad guy stopped in front of Levi and winked. "Fancy seeing you again. Hang around here much or just looking for me?" He chuckled.

Levi felt the horror slap his face. His color fled. He clenched his jaw and fought his eye balls from taking permanent refuge in his sockets. He drew blood when he bit his lip from holding back a rude comment.

"No way, dude. You need to leave."

"I'll be back before you know it." The guy tossed over his shoulder as he left the room.

Levi's stomach took another tilt when his mother turned her head toward Stryker, and he caught a glimpse of the band-aid around her neck. The stark white against her yellowish skin seemed strange. Had it always been that color? Skin shouldn't be . . .

"Oh good, I see the family is all here." Dr. Stempson's words shook Levi out of his thoughts. "I have your blood results, and the markers from your biopsy, Camille."

"Is it what I expected? Has it returned?" She asked.

Levi felt his mouth drop. "No!" He swept his eyes to everyone, ending on his mother. "Markers? Wait. You—you expected?"

"Let's review her results and then work on a course of action, son."

The doctor offered in a soothing tone.

A voice that skittered up Levi's back like a spider and jumped down his throat, silky strings of webbing wrapping around his innards.

Son? Levi's blood boiled. "Fine, please. I apologize for my intrusion, not!"

Dr. Stempson cleared his throat. Levi rolled his eyes. "We'd like to do another liver biopsy. I know that we've gone with a double mastectomy as well as chemo and radiation before. Although attacking it with both methods might lengthen your quantity of life, it's not a guarantee." Dr. Stempson nodded.

His words were disheartening. Levi felt like he'd been dropped into a tub of hot tar and he needed to figure out what was going on. What in the hell were they talking about?

His mom sighed. A long and deep sigh that caught the full attention of everyone. "I'm not going to do anything this time."

"What?" The question came from both men. Levi's voice, being the loudest.

"First, can I get this spelled out in English? I'm new at this." Stryker demanded before he performed a concerned pacing routine.

"I apologize." Dr. Stempson gave CJ a peculiar glance. Levi smirked. Aah doc, he wanted to throw a finger up in the air. Me too.

"They've found cancer on my liver." CJ said.

"And you're not going to do anything about it?" Levi snapped his mouth shut only to keep the nausea from breaking loose.

His mother sat. Her hands folded, one on top of the other in her lap. A small smile on her lips. "If you remember, Levi, I was so sick the last time that I prayed that I could die. I lived in hell. You worried yourself to damn near nothing. The surgery first, then the radiation. chemo, it all zapped me. It left me drained. I couldn't work. I couldn't do a damn thing. I had to rely on you for everything. Honey, I've been through this twice. And both times, I'd been assured that it was clear, only to be told that, 'Oops, sorry, those little buggers hid and turned up elsewhere.' This time there is no easy fix. Besides spreading, liver cancer has a poor survival rate no matter what type of treatment is administered. I'm not leaving this world in poverty and you, living out on the streets because the medical team thinks that trial and error at a horrific cost is the right way to go."

Listening to her describe her time with breast cancer took him back. Moments worse than others. He also recalled crying behind his bedroom door so she wouldn't hear. So, at that moment, he feared that he did **understand her.** And **the horrible part was, he agreed.** But, there's also when she got stronger. "Mom, we're older now, wouldn't medicine and technology have developed since then?"

"They are doing some excellent things these days," Dr. Stempson jumped in. "That is true, Levi. But your mother has a rare and rapid form of liver cancer that has attached itself to several areas. Although there is a chance that if Levi's a match, we can take some of his liver and implant it in you. The liver is a fantastic organ and can replace itself. If we were then, to concentrate on radiation for the other areas, there may be a chance that you could survive."

"Take it. Take whatever you need. It's yours." Levi injected, looking from one to the other.

"Levi, you wouldn't be able to play football this coming year. No practice." his mother stopped him.

"So?" He snapped.

"She's right, Levi. No strenuous activity. I wouldn't be able to released you." Dr. Stempson agreed.

"Mom, football is a game. You're my mother."

"Levi, you're not a match, besides he can't guarantee it would be successful, and football is your chance at a scholarship. Your future."

"Mom, nothing is more important to me than saving your life." Tears welled up in his eyes. Why wasn't she listening. What the hell?

"Levi, honey, the money would drain us. Besides, you're . . ."

"Levi?" This time, the doctor's voice had carried over everyone's. "I'm sorry I brought it up, You and your mother aren't a match. I should have read further into her chart."

"Why not?" Levi hiccuped.

"Because, your mother has AB Negative blood. You, son, are a B positive."

An unstoppable trail of tears raced down his cheeks, Levi turned to Stryker. "We haven't heard anything from you."

XX

From Linda

Note: Linda, like Janet, is moving closer to a submission that ready for writing mechanics evaluation before the agent quest is launched. She'd be wise to use comments made in re writing mechanics and the tendency to overwrite into consideration and review her entire manuscript before submission. Tightening this manuscript will reduce the word count which is a bit high for a first novel.

Who wants what? Wu Meichen wants freedom to control her own future.

Why does she want it? Eldest Uncle tells everyone what to do.

What stands in the way? Chinese cultural traditions

What will happen if Meichen doesn't get what she wants? Her husband will go to America, and they may be separated for years.

Query

First Paragraph –Newlywed Wu Meichen hates the Chinese traditions that dictate her actions and thoughts. A thirteen year old bride in an arranged marriage, Meichen falls deeply in love with her husband, Chao Chung. Meichen yearns for a marriage partnership and a voice in their future. But when Eldest Uncle sends Chung to work in America, Meichen fears he'll be gone for many years while she faces a lifetime alone.

Second Paragraph – Meichen's father-in-law sends her to a missionary school where Meichen excels in learning. Yet she longs for Chung. Her only comfort: the few letters he sends and the photograph he left behind. After five years, Meichen's sorrow turns into anger and then rebellion. If Chung can't return to China, she'll travel to America. When Meichen arrives in San Francisco, Eldest Uncle demands she obey him and return home. Meichen rebels again and disguises herself as a boy. Crossing America by train, she rejoices to be reunited with Chung. However, her hopes for a life together are dashed when she learns Chung has been ordered to divorce her. Meichen must convince him of the joys of love and creation of a family with her. But

Meichen fears his love will die if Eldest Uncle disowns them both. Can she find a way to make peace with the family and remain with her husband?

Third paragraph- Complete at 80,000 words, Unbound Woman won first place in an ethnic novel contest sponsored by Romantic Times Magazine. I belong to the Central Savannah River Area Writers and am an active member of RWA (Romance Writers of America) and Georgia Romance Writers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Fifth Draft of Synopsis

First Paragraph: On her wedding day, Wu Meichen becomes a member of the Chao family. They are all strangers, even her husband, Chao Chung. She struggles to win Chung's affection and the approval of his relatives, but she cannot please her hyper-critical mother-in-law, especially when Meichen fails to conceive a child after a year of marriage.

Second Paragraph: Meichen panics when Chung leaves for America, but he must obey. Her father-in-law sends her to a missionary school which provides mental challenge and safety from her mother-in-law. Li Biyu, a mission teacher, befriends Meichen, but even Biyu can't cure Meichen's impatience. After five years without Chung, Meichen decides to go to America and convinces Biyu to accompany her. ~~go, too.~~ This is an example of maturing the writing. "Accompany her" is more descriptive than "go too."

Third Paragraph: Outraged by Meichen's disobedience, Eldest Uncle stops her in San Francisco and arranges her return to China. Meichen escapes and boards an east-bound train. Eldest Uncle telegraphs an ultimatum: Chung must divorce Meichen, or the family will disown him. Four weeks later, Meichen reaches Chung. He can't bear to end the marriage after her courageous journey. Chung struggles with guilt over his decision. Meichen understands his depression and tolerates his irritability. During an argument, Chung crushes Meichen's heart with a confession that he ~~He confesses he kept her only for sexual~~

pleasure. ~~He failed in his duty to the Chao family for a selfish reason.~~ Meichen agrees to a divorce so Chung can win forgiveness **from his family.**

Fourth paragraph: ~~Disillusioned with love,~~ **Heartbroken,** Meichen joins Biyu, who speaks at churches to raise money for Chinese girls' schools. Meichen discovers her power as a speaker brings in impressive contributions. But an unexpected pregnancy cuts her career short. Biyu insists she return to her husband. When Meichen arrives home, she learns Chung **has** left to remarry in China.

Fifth paragraph: Chung abandons his journey and returns home after he secretly watches Meichen speak. Her ability to inspire the audience amazes him. He admits he loves her. Chung and Meichen remind First Uncle that American immigration policies often change. **(Place Meichen first, give her the power of leadership in this issue.)** Chung might be unable to re-enter America if he leaves. This will end financial support for his family. First Uncle desires money more than revenge and restores Chung and Meichen to the family.

FIRST PAGES: Unbound Woman – first 350 words

Heart pounding, Wu Meichen crouched beneath the stairs that led to the upper story of the house. Outside, fire crackers and gongs silenced the din of neighbors who stood at the Wu's front gate. The bride stealers had come.

13-year old Meichen shrank into the narrow space, **concealed behind her aunt's broad body.** ~~. Her aunt's broad body concealed the alcove.~~

A stern voice spoke in the courtyard. "Bring out the bride."

"No. You can't have her," the neighborhood girls **shrilled back.** ~~shouted back in their shrill voices.~~

"Don't take my niece away from me." **Her** Meichen's uncle blocked the front door.

Meichen heard the girls shriek and laugh, and her uncle's helpless bleats. Feet pounded on wood as the strangers entered the house. They shouted to each other as they searched the ground floor, shoving

the furniture aside. The stairs over Meichen's head shook as one **thundered** ~~went~~ upstairs.

Two invaders ordered her aunt to move aside. Meu Yuk wailed, but gave way. **Four**, ~~and four~~ arms reached into the alcove to seize Meichen. With the game over, she should accompany them without protest, but her feet refused to move.

"Come out, Meichen." Meu Yuk's cries turned into laughter. "Go to your husband."

The bride stealers led Meichen over the threshold as the crowd laughed and applauded. Mei Yuk smoothed Meichen's red silk tunic and skirt, richly embroidered with gold flowers. A "Lucky Woman" who'd borne many sons, led Meichen to the courtyard gate where an enclosed sedan chair waited. **Unclear as to who this person is. Her aunt? If so, why is this important to this passage which is about Meichen?** ~~Beside the poles~~ four servants dressed in bright yellow stood ready to lift the chair. ~~when Meichen sat down.~~

Lacquered red, the lucky color, with silk fringe and red streamers along its curved roof, the palanquin gleamed under the morning sun. Gold symbols for happiness decorated three panels, with one side open. As soon as Meichen sat, her aunt pulled a red silk curtain shut ~~so no one could see inside.~~ The bearers **picked up** ~~took up~~ the poles and jogged forward, followed by her aunt, ~~and uncle,~~ and the three "kidnappers," including ~~one of whom~~ was the groom, Chao Chung.

Delete? He and Meichen had never seen each other, but they were connected through Meichen's brother, ~~who was~~ Chung's best friend. (Information only, make it personal. She cursed her brother, whose influence had brought about this day.)

Manuscript first 350 word check list:

- Did this story open the exact moment something happens?
- Is the scene set?
- Is the story anchored in time and place?
- Does it reveal the character of the protagonist?

- Does it serve to demonstrate the writer’s story-telling voice?
- Is there a hint of where the story is going?
- Does the following build anticipation and evoke curiosity, “what happens next?”

From Carol:

Story Core: Georgie must get her sick little brother home amid a snowstorm.

WHO is this story about? Georgie

WHAT does she want? To get her little brother, Luke, home and out of the elements.

WHAT stands in their way? The weather

What is the terrible OR ELSE that might occur if she doesn’t get what she wants? She and/or her little brother could suffer from hypothermia and never make it home.

Query

Georgie and her frail brother, ~~who always seems to get sick~~, are downtown for the Armistice Day Parade. Their uncle **is** part **(??)** of the parade and **is** to give them a ride home when the parade **is** over. A sudden snow storm comes up and the department store where they are to meet closes. On top **of this, Luke says he doesn’t feel well. How will she find her uncle and if she doesn’t, how will she get her sick brother home? Show about him being ill instead of telling it. Is he coughing, sneezing, throwing up?.**

The day had started out warm, so Georgie and her brother, Luke, are not prepared for cold weather. **Does Georgie wish they’d worn heavy sweaters? Show that it’s cold, that they are cold. Shivering, hugs Luke to her body. Wraps him in her sweater?** They have no money, and since they can’t find their uncle, they must make a long walk home to an empty house as their parents are at the hospital awaiting the birth of a new baby. After a long ordeal fighting the elements, **show it to**

prove you can show a story as well as tell about it they manage to get a free ride home on a streetcar only to find the electricity out in their cold home. Can Georgie figure out how to get the house warm, and what about Luke who becomes sicker by the minute? Show how Georgie lies to snag rides on the streetcar, how she has to carry her brother several blocks to the house. Instead of telling about your story, incorporate more of the tension into showing it, instead of telling.

“Georgie and the Armistice Day Blizzard” is a chapter book of 10,000 words. I have sold more than two dozen stories and articles to a variety of magazines including Highlights for Children, Girl’s Life, the Writer Magazine and am the author of seven children’s books. I was a writing mentor for, and have given presentations and speeches for the Minnesota chapter of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators and taught classes at the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis. I belong to two critique groups, one in person and one on-line.

Synopsis

Armistice Day, 1940, starts out unseasonably warm. Georgie plans to take the streetcar downtown with her friend Rose to watch Uncle George march in the Armistice Day parade, but Rose has a cold and stays home. Georgie’s mother goes into early labor and Georgie’s father takes her to the hospital. They leave Luke in Georgie’s care and if he doesn’t feel well when he awakens, she is not to take him downtown. She is not happy about this. She has never missed a parade and is not about to miss this one.

Question: How did they get downtown?

Downtown, they watch the parade and wait inside a department store for the parade to end and meet their uncle who is to give them a ride home. The store suddenly closes due to a surprise snowstorm. On the way down an escalator, Georgie sees her uncle leaving the store. When they get outside, she yells at him as he turns a corner but her

voice gets lost in the blowing wind and snow. She runs ahead of Luke only to find that their uncle is nowhere to be seen.

The little (is the money actually small? Or did she have a small amount?) money that Georgie had was spent on a small lunch and some candy from the candy counter leaving nothing for streetcar fare. Snow starts falling harder and temperatures do likewise. Luke tells her that he doesn't feel well. How would she get him home and out of the elements?

She sees their streetcar and stops it and explains to the driver that she will give him the money when they get to her stop. She hates lying, but feels she doesn't have a choice. They board, and in their seats, Luke puts his head on her lap and falls asleep. Many passengers stomp their feet and rub their hands together trying to warm up. As she strokes Luke's hair, she is thankful for the wool sweater she wore and Luke's light jacket, which helped protect them a little. At one stop, a mother and father with a baby get on the streetcar. Georgie wonders if their new baby had been born yet. She had already lost a sister. She didn't want to lose her brother too. She makes a promise to herself to take as good care of him as she possible can.

The streetcar stalls in deep snowdrifts and the driver calls for a bus, which arrives a little while later. Finally, at their stop, a relieved Georgie wakes Luke up and they get off the bus only to land in knee-deep snow. She tries to carry Luke, but her arms give out and she pulls him with much effort across the top of the snow. Only one block to go, but it may as well be one mile. She is so tired she just wants to lay down and go to sleep. She remembers something from Girl Scouts about hypo-something-or-other and musters up enough strength and courage to get home. Both Georgie and Luke perk up when they get to their house, only to find snow piled up against the front door. They dig with their hands to clear the door and enter a cold house with no electricity. Coal for the furnace is to be delivered the following day.

Once inside, Luke plops down on the sofa and Georgie covers him with a blanket. She rounds up newspapers, some left-over coal and an old broken-down wooden chair from the basement to start a fire in the fireplace. Once the fire is going she pushes the sofa closer to the warmth. Luke throws up and is feverish. She goes to call her friend Rose whose mother is a nurse, but there is no phone service either. She cleans up Luke as best as she can and throws the nasty blanket down the basement stairs to be washed later. She rounds up all the blankets and pillows she can find to keep him warm since the house is still cold. In the kitchen she finds a can of soup, puts it in a bowl and adds water and takes it to Luke along with some crackers. Luke takes only a small sip off the spoon and complains about this throat when he takes a bite of a cracker and won't eat any more.

Georgie monitors Luke's fever by placing her hand on his forehead. She gets an aspirin and breaks it up with two spoons like she'd seen her mother do and adds some sugar to it. Luke swallows it with a sip of water and Georgie gets his woods toy train set to play with while she reads his favorite book. He falls asleep and she focuses on keeping the fire in the fireplace going. She pulls a card table to the fireplace and throws the jigsaw puzzle pieces into the fire. In the attic she sees her parents' belongings and thinks better of burning them. Back downstairs she looks around the living room and the only thing she wanted to burn was an ugly old chair. This was her chance to get rid of it and shoved it down the basement stairs hoping it would break into a thousand pieces. It didn't, but it broke enough for her to use some of it.

She wakes up in the morning to the sound of snowplows. The snow has subsided and everything is covered in a thick white blanket. Uncle George gets to the house to find a relieved Georgie. He had desperately looked for them to no avail and was glad to see them home and safe. A short while later, her father comes home with the news of a new healthy baby sister. (I'M SORRY I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO FINISH WORKING ON THE SYNOPSIS, BUT DID GET THE FIRST PAGE OF 350 WORDS, WHICH IS BELOW.)

First page

If Georgie had known what was going to happen, she might have done things differently. She woke early in the morning and heard her six-year-old brother, Luke, coughing. Then she heard the thud of the newspaper thrown onto the front porch. She got up to read the funnies until it was time to go to the parade.

Writing style comment: Your audience is younger readers. Write in a style that is less adult and more kidlike: For example

Luke's coughing woke Georgie up, again.

"Thud," the newspaper hit the front porch.

Georgie pulled on her robe. Maybe she could read the funnies before they left for the parade.

She walked by the door to a small bedroom. A crib and rocking chair waited for the baby that was due in a few weeks. That same crib had held her baby sister, Alice, three years earlier. She shut the door to the nursery but couldn't shut out memories of rocking her sweet baby sister, holding her after her bath wrapped in a thick warm towel. The nursery door had been closed for three years. Now mother was about to have another baby. Another baby to love, and another baby to maybe lose. How could she do that? There was nothing to do but wait and hope the new baby would be okay. (revise this in a kid-like tone)

Out on the porch, Georgie noticed a soft mist falling from the grey early morning sky. She picked up the paper and joined her father in the dining room where he sat sipping his coffee, listening to the radio. The radio announcer said, "It's a grand day for a parade."

Her father added, "It will be if the weather is anything like it has been lately. November doesn't often have temperatures in the 50s."

Georgie read the "Mickey Mouse" comic strip and drank the orange juice her father put in front

of her. He joined her, pulled out the sports page and sat down to read. She heard a noise and looked up to see her mother standing in the doorway holding her stomach.

Her father put down the paper. “Helen, what is it? Is it time?” He slapped the newspaper on the table, startling Georgie. More showing, less telling.

The newspaper in Georgie’s hand crumpled as her grip tightened. Traces of orange juice in her mouth turned bitter. She wanted everything to be okay with her new sibling. But she knew things don’t always work out the way you’d like them to.

Comment: Carol, you have the gist of an interesting story, and it matters that you mature your writing. Eliminate weak verbs (get) unclear descriptions (little money), and keep in mind your reading audience.

Synopsis is 958 words. Needs to be cut to 350.

Linda suggests asking a kid in your market group to read your story. Are they interested? All kids like stories. In their words.

NEXT WEEK:

- 1) First page revisions**
- 2) More writing mechanics**
- 3) Revisions as necessary for query and synopsis.**

Note: December workshops continue to share query and synopsis evaluations.

If you want a jump on self-editing tips and first page revision, both are covered in these tutorials available at [MolliMart](#):



In closing~

To those of you in our “audience,” thank you for joining us.

If you’d like to receive the full transcript and video of every Friday workshop, delivered to your inbox within 24 hours after the webinar, you can subscribe for automatic delivery, at a super low rate of \$17.

Information about this new subscription program is posted on posted on the “on-demand” page of my website.

Would you benefit from receive weekly evaluations of your submission documents in our Friday workshop? Or access to Q & A, and discussions between Submission Central members on our private Facebook group?

These benefits (and others) will help you learn what you need to know in order to land an agent who will help you navigate the publishing maze. Join us! [CLICK HERE](#) to read more about the AgentQuery Submission Central program.

Regardless of when you join Submission Central, if we’re working on the synopsis, but you haven’t written a query, no problem. Begin with the query. Use my query template and jump right in. Move through the query, week by week, until you’re comfortable with the format. Regardless, if the workshops are focusing on synopsis, first pages, or submission protocol, etc., join in regardless of where your focus is placed.

The query is the document that *must be written first* because it forms the basis for the synopsis and structure of your manuscript first pages.

I'll help you, as will members of the group who have progressed beyond where you may be at the moment.

(Due to POPULAR requests, I'll be launching Query Bootcamps in 2017. This intensive 30-day, four (4) workshop program is helps writers craft effective query letters to serve as the foundation of their entire submission package. It also can be customized for writers' groups to participate together.)

Thanks to all of you for being here today. Join us next week.

Write on! May the words be with you!

Molli