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Agent/Query Submission Central

Workshop #8 – March 3, 2017

PITCHING AND CONFERENCE REPORT from Linda

From Tammy~

Subject line: ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE AND ALL THE PLAYERS GAME.

Story Core:

Who is my main character? Dr. Olivia Greyson

What does she want? She wants to heal emotionally.

Why does she want it? Live without fear

What stands in her way? Self-forgiveness

What is the terrible or else that might occur if she doesn't get what she wants? Another wrong choice could lead to her demise and the death of another colleague

The Shakespeare Murders:

On a murky night COMMAa few years ago, COMMA former profiler, Dr. Olivia Greyson, made a wrong decision that led to her partner's death. With a friend gone and her career shattered, Olivia still can't catch her breath. GUILTY. SUFFERING. SETTLE BACK INTO HER FORMAL LIFE. OR WILL SHE EVER. ONGOING PANIC ATTACKS, TRIGGERED BY ...Her only hope of salvaging her reputation is to return to the life she left behind. ALTHOUGH RELUCTANT, OPPORTUNITY A gruesome murder occurs THAT IS eerily similar to

the Shakespeare murders from years ago. Olivia sees the chance to redeem herself but fear of another failure weighs heavy on her decision. Will anxiety cripple her progress before she can rewrite his HER/HIS/THEIRtwisted play? Or will the curtain fall on her? CURTAIN FALL IS A GOOD LINE. NOT CLEAR IN RE CONNECTION TO PLAY OF SHAKESPEARE. WHAT IS EERILY SIMILAR? FIRST TEASE MIGHT BE ABOUT HER STRUGGLE TO GET BACK IN THE GAME. HER RELUCTANCE.

A beautiful, young redhead is brutally murdered. FOUND IN COSTUME. Clutched in her lifeless-hand is a Shakespearean quote, SIMILAR TO like a series of murders that terrorized Atlanta ten years prior. Olivia steps back into the gritty world of profiling to determine if a copy-cat is at work or if the elusive Shakespeare killer has returned. The cryptic message hidden in the quotes takes her through the seedy world of politics and organized crime to an underground network that harbors a long buried secret. HINT AT WHAT THIS MAY BE TO HEIGHTEN THE TENSION. DOES IT INVOLVE THE POLICE? INVOLVES A SENATOR? SHE DISCOVERS MUCH MORE THAN SHE HAD BARGAINED FOR IN INVESTIGATING THIS CASE. Leads from one CORRECTION TO ANOTHER. OPENS UP PANDORA'S BOX FOR THE CASE AND FOR HER. CORRUPTION, COSTUMES, AND SHAKESPEARE QUOTES. As the case progresses, clues point to someone close to the investigation WHY? and when a young colleague OR HER ASSIGNED PARTNER? from the coroner's office goes missing, Olivia fears the killer is closing in. Unsure who to trust, Olivia ~~puts herself in jeopardy to~~ unravels the twists and turns that bring her EVER CLOSER face-to-face with the killer. She's forced to re-live the same peril that led to her previous failure. This time she must alter the outcome if she and her colleague are going to make it out alive. DOES SHE NEED TO BE FOUND? WHY SHOULD OLIVIA CARE ABOUT THE MISSING COLLEAGUE AND WHAT TIES THIS PERSON TO THIS CASE? But, Olivia's reentrance into the limelight

~~DIMS~~is ~~quickly dimmed~~ as unfamiliar dangers tilt the precarious balance from her emerging victorious to her tragic demise. SAME THREAT AS AT THE END OF THE FIRST PARAGRAPH. MAKE IT DIFFERENT, OR WORSE. WHO OR WHAT IS THE KILLER PROTECTING.

THE QUOTES TAKE HER DOWN INTERESTING PATHS, DIFFERENT LEADS. KILLER DRESSES THE VICTIMS.

ARE THE DANGERS UNFAMILIAR? OR ARE THEY SIMILAR IN FEELING AND XXXXX AS THOSE SHE FACED AND FAILED TO RESOLVE BEFORE?

IS IT POSSIBLE TO WRITE THIS SO THAT THE MISSING PERSON IS ALSO HER NEWLY ASSIGNED PARTNER, TO MAKE THE SITUATION PARALLEL TO WHAT IT WAS LAST TIME?

The Shakespeare Murders is a _____ word crime thriller/mystery. My background is in scientific research. I've co-authored several peer-reviewed articles. I am also an active member of a writer's critique group.

Thank you for your consideration

From Janet~ (submitted Feb 17)

TITLE AND SUBJECT LINE: Glass Promises

Professor Grace Stone was a new mother and happily married (or so she thought) when her husband and his mistress were killed in a CAR ACCIDENT ~~natural disaster~~. The pressures of single motherhood are multiplied for Grace when LILY, HER FOUR-YEAR-OLD, BEGINS TO DEMAND THAT MOMMY "FIND HER A DADDY." ~~her four-year-old daughter, Lily, demands she "find her a daddy."~~ As an

orphan and the offspring of an illicit affair, Grace knows the heartbreak of rejection all too well. Is the possibility of love worth the cutting pain of glass promises?

Despite a persistent fear of being vulnerable again, Grace begins to date. She meets Beau, another victim of a cheating spouse, but is reluctant to pursue a relationship with him. **HOWEVER, SPURRED BY A STRONG ATTRACTION, Without intending to,** she falls into Beau's passionate embrace ~~spurred by a strong attraction~~. At a ritzy charity event, Grace's uncanny resemblance to her dead mother causes an incident which reveals relatives she didn't know existed. She believes her days of longing for a family are over, but complications arise **BECAUSE/SINCE/NOW THAT BEAU, (OR BEAU'S STATUS IS CHANGED. HE NOW IS HER STEP-COUSIN) HER LOVER, IS NOW HER STEP-COUSIN. MAKE SURE THIS IS CLEAR SO THE READER DOESN'T HAVE TO STOP AND WONDER, "SAY WHAT?"** when her lover is now a step-cousin. **PLUS,** ~~Also~~ Beau's sister refuses to accept Grace and sees her as an unwanted bastard. ~~She is forced to reassess the value of a family when Lily is terrorized by another child during a holiday gathering.~~ **ALTHOUGH** Mounting pressures **FROM BEAU'S FAMILY** trigger an estrangement from Beau, ~~but~~ Grace is determined to secure a place in his love-scarred heart. Will her efforts succeed or will she and Lily be forced to soldier on as a lonely family of two? **QUESTION: IS IT HIS FAMILY OR JUST HIS SISTER?**

My 68,200 word completed romance, **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, Coral Springs Writers Group, a board member of the Florida Romance Writers, and assistant chairperson for the annual Coral Springs Literary Festival.

Synopsis:

Two years into her marriage, Grace Stone is left a widow with a newborn daughter. She obtains her PhD, secures a tenured university position, creates close friendships, and pays off the mortgage on her home. Life is good except for Lily's persistent preschooler demands for a daddy. Despite her vulnerability and fear of rejection, Grace cannot deny her child the love of a father.

She reenters the complicated world of relationships with speed dating. Weeks later, when her car is totaled in a freak construction accident, Grace encounters Beau, one of her rejected five minute speed dates. After he assists Grace with the purchase of a new vehicle, they become intimate...in her garage...on the trunk of his car. Appalled by her loss of control, she shuts down the relationship. However, Beau's patience and genuine feelings for Grace and Lily compel CONVINCE her to give him another chance.

When Grace ACCIDENTALLY discovers a family connection to Beau's stepmother, she's thrilled to have finally found living relatives. But tensions flare when Beau's sister, Gen, views GRACE her as an illegitimate interloper. This strife drives Grace to press Beau for a commitment. BUT, Instead of a vow of love, he reveals the emotional scars inflicted by his ex-wife and admits he fears risking his heart again. With no hope of a future together, Grace is heartbroken and ends their relationship

HMMM. I FEEL YOU NEED A SENTENCE THAT TELLS HOW/WHY SHE ATTENDS A FAMILY THANKSGIVING PARTY. IS SHE WELCOME? DO SHE AND BEAU AMICABLY PART AND HE

INVITES TO REMAIN AS A PART OF THEIR FAMILY? WHY WOULD HE?

When she and Lily are invited to the family's Thanksgiving dinner, Grace is concerned about awkwardness between her and Beau. The get-together goes well until Lily, DURING A GAME OF HIDE 'N SEEK, is traumatized WHEN GEN'S DAUGHTER LOCKS HER IN A CLOSET. from being locked in a dark cabinet by Gen's daughter. CLARIFY DURING HIDE AND SEEK GAME Grace wonders if an extended family is worth all the drama. However, her deep feelings for Beau and a growing attachment to her warts-and-all relatives confirms their value to her. To win Beau's love and his sister's acceptance, Grace maps out a campaign.

Tapping into her intellect and femininity, Grace appeals to Beau's masculine desires with flirtations and food. She provides support to Gen who ALSO HAS BEEN ~~has also been~~ wounded by marital infidelity. On Christmas Day, Lily ~~SOBSsobs becomes upset~~ when she receives A BICYCLE FROM BEAU. ~~Beau's gift.~~ She tells him "only daddies should give bikes to little girls." TOUCHED BY LILY'S TEARS, BEAU REALIZES HOW MUCH HE LOVES LILY AND GRACE. HE PROFESSES HIS LOVE AND GRACE ~~Grace's strategy with Beau is rewarded when he professes his love. She encourages~~ him to commit to their relationship so they can build a future together. Six months later their promises (QUESTION: what promises?) are finalized on their wedding day. THIS LAST SENTENCE STILL DOESN'T WORK . . . NOT SURE WHY.

BRIA: SUBJECT LINE: The girl who saves the king. Epic fantasy.

Who is the story about? Chloe, the chantress.

Telling about: Show it, don't tell about it.

Tell as a story. Do NOT DESCRIBE IT.

Start with Chloe. Hiding her race in a human country. Thought to be a witch if she revealed herself. Lady in waiting for the princess. She is to prevent the king from being killed.

From Vicki

It followed her to school one day, breaking all the rules.

Who is the story about: Sadie

What does she want: to fit in like a normal teenager

What stands in her way: lack of self-esteem

What is the terrible or else: Suicide

Query

Born with cerebral palsy Sadie hides her disability behind long skirts. Her peers taunt the “cripple geek” whenever she wobbles by, and Sadie endures a painful life of loneliness. Until Finn, a British exchange student arrives. He sees beyond Sadie’s walk and insecurities. Sadie finds laughter, learns to cheat at poker, and harmonizes with Finn, on her original songs. When the school year ends, Finn returns home. He vows to visit, but Sadie’s convinced she’ll never see him again. Sent to her grandmother’s Catskill Mountain house for the summer, the isolated setting is the perfect refuge to end her life. Yet in the forest, as at school, Sadie senses someone watches.

MENTION THAT SEVERAL SUICIDE ATTEMPTS ARE THWARTED, AS IF CONTROLLED BY SOMEONE ELSE. FINALLY SADIE MEETS THE BEING WHO HAS BEEN PREVENTING HER FROM KILLING HERSELF. DEVILIA, A HAND-SIZED FAIRY

A tentative friendship evolves. When school begins, Sadie allows Devilia to live with her in the city. Although Devilia promises not to leave Sadie’s room, she disobeys **CURIOUS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SADIE’S WORLD**. On a field trip to the Natural History Museum, Devilia lures hundreds of butterflies to land on Sadie. They lift her skirt, revealing Sadie’s crooked legs. The event goes viral. Humiliated, Sadie feels even more like a freak. Finn IMs “How cool! Wish I’d been there.” He reveals that he’s helping a mate sell “merchandise” so he can buy a plane ticket to visit her. Intuition tells Sadie that Finn’s dealing drugs. Sadie convinces Devilia to stop Finn in person. **ASAP**. Devilia, terrified she’ll die in the cyber world, conjures fairy magic and disappears in a flash of energy, emailing herself to Finn. Sadie waits and waits, messaging Finn frantically. No response. Finn is gone. Devilia is gone. And without them in her life, Sadie also wants to be gone.

My YA (and possibly MG) novel “Crooked” is complete at 75,000 words. I’m a member of SCBWI, attend writers’ conferences and workshops, and have participated with a Writer’s Group and writing partners since 2004. Thank you for your time and consideration.
(371 WORDS)

Synopsis:

SUGGEST YOU DO NOT BEGIN SYNOPSIS WITH BACK STORY ABOUT GRANDMA’S HOUSE ETC. GOING MAD. YOUR STORY BEGINS WHEN SHE FAILS AT SUICIDE. SHE AND DEVILIA MEET AND THIS LAUNCHES THE ADVENTURE FOR THEM BOTH.

DELETE THIS: When Sadie arrives at her grandmother’s house in the Catskills, her plan of suicide is thwarted. Something she can’t see haunts her. At first, Sadie believes she must be going mad, which would be far worse than being dead. Or perhaps it is a ghost. Whatever it is, it seems to know a lot about her. When her tormenter finally shows its face, Sadie runs, terrified. A fairy just attacked her.

CONSIDER SHIFTING SOME OF THE INFO FROM YOUR QUERY TO BEGIN YOUR SYNOPSIS.

After swallowing a handful of pills, Sadie wakes, dazed from a failed suicide. An unseen entity follows her every move. Her computer sends out electrical flashes and her iPod turns itself on, playing Beate’s songs. Sadie finally discovers her culprit, Devilia, a mischievous hand-sized fairy. Devilia, lost in the human world, and Sadie, alone in a cruel teenage world, both yearn to belong.

LEAD INTO NEXT PARAGRAPH WITH COMMENT ABOUT HOW CAUTIOUSLY THEY APPROACH A FRIENDSHIP. ABOUT HOW BOTH ARE OUTSIDERS. ~~Once Sadie's fear subsides, she anticipates their next meeting. Soon their lives intertwine, and~~ Sadie develops a fondness for Devilia. Their cautious alliance leads to companionship. At summer's end, Sadie allows Devilia to live in her room in the city. Devilia demands to attend school. Sadie sets forth strict rules; stay invisible in public and no magic. Devilia agrees. But when a group of girls tease Sadie, Devilia uses her invisibility to disgrace them in front of their peers. They take their anger out on Sadie, pushing and shoving her. Sadie's rage, ~~from years of scrutiny~~, explodes. She fights back, with the assistance of the unseen Devilia. Sadie's shocked at the fairy's strength, and worries the girls may plan revenge. IS THIS NECESSARY? ABOUT REVENGE. DOES IT PLAY OUT IN THIS STORY AS TOLD SO FAR?

Then, during a field trip, Devilia is the cause of a small miracle WITH THE BUTTERFLIES AND Sadie becomes a YouTube sensation. Television stations clamor for Sadie's story but she avoids them. Her "girl torturers" create a Facebook page calling Sadie a witch. Sadie blames Devilia and wants her gone. But could Devilia survive in the city without Sadie? And could Sadie release this small being who fills her life with adventure as well as complications, and joy?

NEED TO CLARIFY IN RE THE TIME LINE BETWEEN BUTTERFLY EVENT, DEVILIA TO ENGLAND, BACK TO NY, AND THEN TO TV. SPREAD OUT OR IN A SPACE OF A FEW DAYS?

Sadie has NEED A STRONGER VERB further anxiety when she learns Finn hangs out with a DUBIOUS CHARACTER AND IS DITCHING SCHOOL TO SCORE DRUG DEALS. guy named Grocer. Under his influence, Finn ditches school for drug deals. Finn doesn't

tell Sadie he's dealing, but she figures it out. SHE CONFRONTS HIM AND FINN BRAGS ABOUT THE BIG SCORE GOING DOWN. HE'LL USE HIS SHARE TO FLY TO NY. ~~Just as a big score is going down,~~ Sadie begs Devilia to fly through the Internet and convince Finn to STOP. SHE ARRIVES WHILE THE DEAL IS GOING DOWN AND INTERRUPTS THE TRANSACTION BY STARTING A FIGHT. DEVILIA IS CRITICALLY INJURED. ~~straighten out.~~ Devilia follows Finn to the deal and interrupts the transaction by starting a fight. She is critically injured.

~~Determined to save Devilia,~~ Finn USES THE DRUG MONEY TO FLY grabs Grocer's drug money and flies to New York, AND MEETS meeting Sadie in the Catskills. They carry Devilia to her magical garden with a healing stream and try to revive her, but Devilia fades away ~~into the afterlife.~~

Although mourning the loss of her little friend, Sadie can no longer evade reporters. On an evening talk show on national television, Sadie ~~speaks with confidence.~~ She blurts out "It was a fairy that caused my miracle." At that moment, Devilia flies out of Sadie's pocket, ~~fully rejuvenated from the healing stream.~~ DESCRIBE THE CHAOS SHE CREATES; CAUSING LIGHTS TO FLASH AND EXPLODE, CAMERAS TO STOP WORKING, EVERYTHING ELECTRICAL IN THE STUDIO TO GO BESERK. ~~A frenzy of confusion ensues while staff and crew chase Devilia, trying to catch her.~~ SADIE AND FINN ESCAPE TO THE APARTMENT AND ROOFTOP WHERE THEY KISS. Sadie, Finn, and Devilia escape back to Sadie's apartment. That evening on the rooftop, Sadie and Finn kiss. THE SKY FILLS WITH SHOOTING STARS AS DEVILIA BIDS THEM GOODBYE AND FLIES OFF ON HER OWN ~~Devilia fills the sky with shooting stars,~~ ~~ready for a new journey of discovery into the world.~~ Finn returns home ~~and is off to the discipline of boarding school.~~ Weeks later,

Sadie Skypes Finn to share ~~some good~~ news, ~~telling him~~ she's won a role in the school play. She reveals her costume: a body hugging t-shirt and red tights.

ZARA:

SUBJECT: OK

Discuss the future.