



The Writer's Workshop

from Diana Scimone

www.peapodpublishing.com

Issue #11

June 2006

Welcome to the latest issue of **The Writer's Workshop**, an e-letter designed to help you write your book.

Remember, you can find back issues of **The Writer's Workshop** at www.peapodpublishing.com. The first seven issues (along with much more information) are available as an e-book called **How to Write a Book**. Just \$14.95, it's a great investment that will help you write the book you've always dreamed of writing.

1. How to Write a Book: It's all about the characters.

In past issues of **The Writer's Workshop**, I've primarily focused on non-fiction books, so in this issue I want to cover an important aspect of fiction: character development.

Here's a quote from Scholastic.com:

"Good stories almost always feature strong, complex characters. While it is often tempting for writers to create characters who are either good or bad, the best characters are conflicted. Like most human beings, they are neither good nor bad, but both! The most memorable characters are bundles of contradictions. They are flawed individuals who have the possibility of being redeemed by their actions.

"In order to develop three-dimensional characters, writers must see their subjects from every angle. To organize your thoughts about each of your characters, answer the following questions with as many specific details as you can."

Click here to see the list of questions:

www.teacher.scholastic.com/writeit/fiction/draft/characterdevelopment.htm

Such questions are not unique to Scholastic, of course. Good fiction writers have always used this technique to learn more about their characters. In the next section, you'll find a list of websites where you can find even more questions and other information to help you develop your characters.

Whether you're writing a novel for adults, a short story, romance novel, historical fiction, YA novel, or children's book—you can have the best plot in the world, but if your characters aren't believable

(either too squeaky clean or too evil), no one will root for them (or cheer against them). It's all about the characters.

2. Links of the Month: Help for your characters

www.creativeoptions.com/Write/character_development.htm

Excellent chart to help you plan your character development and your plot. Based on the "Hero's Journey."

www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson59/characterhandout.pdf

http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/Virtualit/fiction/elements.asp?e=2_ex

www.sfwawriting.com/writing/character.htm

In the middle of this article is a great list of standard character types.

www.hollylisle.com/fm/Workshops/character%2Dworkshop.html

www.pgtc.com/~slmiller/characterexercises.htm

www.writersdigest.com/articles/wilson_hero.asp

"From Zero to Hero," by Dawn Wilson

3. Inspiration: Suddenlies

If you've already contacted publishers and magazines to try to sell your writing, you may think you have the world's largest collection of rejection letters—but I'm sorry to tell you that I claim that title.

I've been receiving rejection letters since I first started writing in 1975. I began my vast collection with a supposedly syndicated newspaper column called "Nomad At Large," which I dutifully wrote during a six-month stint traveling around Europe by train and hitchhiker's thumb. I say "supposedly" because I never sold one article in that series—but I've never shied away from thinking big.

Perhaps you think big, too, and are discouraged by the results. That's why I want to tell you about the "suddenlies" of God. If you have a computer Bible (www.biblegateway.com), do a search of the word "suddenly," and you'll be amazed by the number of times it appears in the Bible (more than the number of rejection letters in my or your collection). Suddenly God showed up, suddenly an angel appeared, suddenly this happened or that happened, and many more "suddenlies."

"I have declared the former things from the beginning; they went forth from My mouth...suddenly I did them, and they came to pass" (Isaiah 48:3 NKJ).

The "suddenlies" of God depend upon the "timing" of God. Waiting for your suddenly requires patience and perseverance, and it requires making sure you are positioned where God can in fact show up on your behalf.

God gave me the idea for **Adventures With PawPaw** 10 years before I published the first book. He gave me the idea for **PawPaw's Pals** 9 years before we gave away our first penny. Meanwhile, I prepared for that day when I would hear Him say, "Suddenly, Diana...."

Patience, perseverance, positioning. As Will Rogers said, "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there."

Keep writing. Keep researching. Keep working on your characters. Keep preparing for the day when you hear God say to you, "Suddenly...."

4. The Last Word

Do you need additional help writing your book? Diana offers personalized coaching to writers all over the world. If you've always wanted to write a book, but didn't know how, a 90-minute coaching session by phone or in person will give you the tools and direction you need. Diana's practical and encouraging style will help you finally write the book you've dreamed of writing. To set up a coaching session: diana@peapodpublishing.com.

Back issues of **The Writer's Workshop** are on www.peapodpublishing.com. The first seven issues (along with much more information) are available as an e-book called **How to Write a Book**. Just \$14.95, it's a great investment that will help you write the book you've always dreamed of writing.

The Writer's Workshop is edited by Diana Scimone, president of Peapod Publishing, Inc. Diana is a writer, editor, journalist, children's book author, and writer's coach. Her writing has taken her to more than 40 countries, including Sudan, China, India, Kenya, Singapore, Korea, Thailand, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere. Diana is author of **Adventures With PawPaw**, a series of children's books about a little dog who travels to a different country in each book, introducing young children to other countries and cultures (www.adventureswithpawpaw.com).

Diana is also founder and president of **PawPaw's Pals, Inc.**, an international relief agency helping children in disaster and crisis situations around the world. Donate to PawPaw's Pals at www.pawpawspals.org. PawPaw's Pals is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and all donations are tax deductible.

Diana recently traveled to Thailand to research what **PawPaw's Pals** can do to help end the multibillion dollar child sexual trafficking industry. Children as young as 5 are bought and sold, not just in Thailand, but all over the world. As a result of that fact-finding trip, **PawPaw's Pals** will put together an anti-trafficking awareness campaign—called "Not For Sale"—for Thai children, parents, schools, and the community. We'll write children's books, comic books, posters, curriculum, and other anti-trafficking awareness material. Once we test "Not For Sale" in Thailand, we'll make it available to other countries where child trafficking is also a crisis.

If you'd like to contribute to this ongoing effort, you may make a donation by [clicking here](#), or by sending your check payable to **PawPaw's Pals, Inc.**, PO Box 952949, Lake Mary, Florida 32795-2949. **PawPaw's Pals, Inc.** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and your donation is tax deductible. Thank you for partnering with us.

Diana's itinerary:

June 9-11: Washington, DC, Virginia, Maryland

June 15-26: Mexico

September 29-October 10: Israel

If you live in any of these areas and would like to schedule a Writer's Workshop or personalized coaching session with Diana, please contact diana@peapodpublishing.com

To subscribe or unsubscribe: www.peapodpublishing.com

© 2006 *Peapod Publishing, Inc.*

PO Box 951599

Lake Mary, Florida 32795

USA

info@peapodpublishing.com

www.peapodpublishing.com

www.adventureswithpawpaw.com

www.pawpawspals.org