

Katy Terrega provides the only resource you need to learn how to write and sell erotica.

**It's A Dirty Job...Writing Porn For Fun And Profit!
Includes Paying Markets!**

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Tools Of The Trade

So, what does it actually take to be a practicing porn writer? Aside from the relatively obvious; good writing skills, an open and imaginative mind, and a low embarrassment threshold?

Do you need editorial connections, a state of the art computer with accompanying designer software, and the latest copier and fax machine?

Nah.

The actual physical props you need to get started, the tools of this trade, are amazingly few.

For all those of you who might be tempted to give excuses as to why you can't possibly be a writer *until* (insert excuse here), you're out of luck. Technically, (and especially if you're a really good typist or just have plenty of time on your hands) you could get by with just a typewriter and access to a decent-quality neighborhood copy machine.

Years ago I sold my very first letters, for a whopping \$5.00 each, using only a manual typewriter and plenty of correction tape. I won't pretend it was easy and I've tried to erase from my memory the agony of trying so hard to get it right that my fingers would sweat on the keys, only to have to redo an entire page because of one stupid un-fixable mistake. And I also am extremely aware of how easy I have it now with my computer in terms of text manipulation and rewrites. But, even in these technological times, it is possible to actually put out stories with very minimal equipment.

Of course, for ease of manuscript preparation and record keeping, the following two items can be worth their weight in gold.

- Computer
- Laser Printer

But that's it. No, really, that's all you absolutely have to have.

At least in the beginning. After you begin to sell, or even when you're just putting out a fair number of manuscripts, there are a few items that can make your life a little easier. A **phone line** and a **modem**, along with an **e-mail account**, come in handy for those editors who accept communication that way. I've found e-mail to be a fantastic way to communicate with editors that I already have a relationship with. Be careful of this mode

of communication, though, save it until you've already been introduced to an editor through more traditional means.

I've forged several strong working relationships with editors via e-mail, mostly owing to it's speedy and personal nature. E-mail has been a life (or at least job) saver in several instances, sparing both editors and I catastrophic late deadlines by a timely transmission of last minute information. (And of course, for those editors who prefer their submissions by e-mail, freeing me from the tedious process of sending out manuscripts via snail-mail, I reserve my undying gratitude.)

Some sort of **fax machine** capabilities may prove to be of benefit, since many editors prefer to fax contracts and guidelines rather than send them via snail-mail or e-mail. Also, when you're on the phone with a hurried editor, it's awkward and hardly professional to be fumbling through the phone book trying to look up the number for the nearest accept-a-fax store. Then there's the wasted time and money spent driving to retrieve or send said fax to consider.

Luckily I've found an alternative to the traditional fax machine, one that's worked fine for my limited needs. There are companies that, for free, will allow you to receive faxes via e-mail. The faxes are sent to you in the normal way, that is, the sender dials up your personal fax number, but you receive them as an e-mail document. For a very reasonable fee, these companies will also give you other options, such as a local number, or a toll-free number and can also be configured to send faxes from your e-mail. All in all a truly viable alternative to an expensive and bulky fax machine.

One thing I don't have yet – but that is quite high on my wish list - is a **scanner**. There's no better way to send photos and, lacking a copier, a scanner can also come in handy for emailing documents and contracts and such. While I haven't encountered too many editors who have expected or asked for this kind of communication, there have been a few. And, while my last experience at the neighborhood copy store - scanning and storing dozens of photos to send to an editor as aids to his illustrator - was relatively hassle free, it would have been easier to do all that work from the comfort of my own desk.

Of course, there are basic office supplies, some optional, some required: A **filing cabinet** or two and a **comfortable chair** are helpful. A box of **9 x 12 clasp envelopes** and a ream or two of **decent quality paper** are more or less necessary. Also you'll need plenty of **#10 envelopes, paper clips, and labels**. Along with the requisite hundred or so **stamps** at the ready.

Other than that, to successfully write porn, you don't need an office, you don't need a business account, you don't even need letterhead or business cards.

For years I wrote in a tiny little corner of my mostly-finished basement. Sure, it was cold, somewhat stifling, and of course fairly dark. The dimness finally drove me to distraction, especially on beautiful spring days. So I relocated, now I write upstairs in a slightly larger corner of my living room instead. Yeah, I'd love a bigger and better space. I have dreams about an addition that would house not only a master bedroom and laundry room, but a bright corner office next to the lilac bushes where I could fantasize in relative and well-lit peace. In the meantime, however, I'm fairly content in my living room, at least it's *close* to a window, not to mention the refrigerator and the coffee maker. While I'd certainly like a change of venue, to successfully write porn, I don't need one. And neither do you.

You do, however, need drive, some basic common sense, and good, solid business skills.

Characterization

Characterization can make the difference between a completely boring piece with some sex thrown in and a stimulating story that leaves your reader caring about what he or she read. Of course, there are other more base ways to look at it, such as the fact that well-rounded characters will put money into your pocket more quickly and efficiently than boring ones. If you want your stories to sell they must stand out from all the rest. They need a strong point of view, and that almost always means strong characterization.

Sure, most people looking at a sex story in a magazine want to get turned on. But they also want to connect with the characters. They want to think that the narrator or main character could be their boss, their neighbor, the stranger at the bus stop. They like to fantasize that this sort of thing might actually happen to them. It's your job to give them characters that are believable enough to let them think it really could.

Your characters don't just define your story, they *are* your story. For example, consider that perennial favorite, the Boy meets Girl at the Laundromat story. By taking this one scenario and changing the characters, you can completely redefine this story and it's market.

For the "younger woman/older man" market, your male character could be a recently divorced businessman in a Laundromat for the first time. The sweet college coed he recruits to help him learn how to wash his clothes could be oh-so-knowledgeable about laundry but sorely lacking in sexual skills. He would, of course, be glad to thank her for her help by teaching her some of the finer points of love-making.

For a more hard-edged market your guy could be a biker on his way through town. Looking just to wash his clothes he could also find some quick and exciting sex with the tough talking biker chick who runs the place.

For the "older woman" market your heroine might be a sexy 40 something woman who's a bit of an exhibitionist and likes to seduce the young male college coeds that come wandering in.

Or there's the woman with great legs who likes to torment her secret admirer, the peeping tom. Or the couple who's secret lust for each other overpowers their better judgment as far as caring about who might be watching.

In each of these scenarios the setting, that rather boring and over-used Laundromat, didn't change. But the characters sure did. And in each case, switching characters and personalities completely changed the angle of the story.

Quite a heavy burden for a character, eh? Don't make it hard on them or on yourself, let them get their job done. In order to do this, they're going to need a little substance. Give them plenty of depth and personality, get to know them, become them, and your stories will often write themselves.

For me, characters are almost always the starting point to my stories. If I can come up with an intriguing personality, maybe someone I've seen or heard about or just made up, often the story idea will form itself in my mind. And just as often, trying to start without a character can be an exercise in futility. Until I have a strong feeling for at least one of them, I find that there's not much to write about.

One of the most interesting things about characters is that they can come from the strangest places, or from the most confusing of emotions, even. For example, my husband and I had a conversation about an old girlfriend of his who had flaming red hair, something that he'd found quite attractive. First I was just a little bit annoyed at the fact that he could still find flaming red hair attractive even though I don't happen to have it. Then of course I was a little more annoyed because I personally have always coveted flaming red hair and wasn't, in this lifetime anyway, ever going to achieve it. Fine, then. What to with my tiny little fit of jealousy? But of course, turn it into a story.

I let the idea percolate a while and, over time and with much thought, my character slowly appeared.

Originally I named her Penny, but that seemed a little coppery, nice but not quite flaming red. So I changed her name to Cherry, allowing me to give her a little more depth by saying that she was nicknamed Cherry because she loved that particular flavor of Kool-Aid. Later, the *smell* of Cherry Kool-Aid could even figure as a small but sensory part of the story. I made her rather plump (since I was targeting a fuller-figured market) and pale in a porcelain sort of way, and I added lots of freckles. I fashioned her a little on the young side and very sweet, but not too naïve. Kind of free spirited, of the easy to laugh and hug variety. I got to know Cherry, to like her.

In order to fully explore Cherry's beauty, I figured I needed to tell the story from a male point of view. That of course, changed my narrator's voice so I needed to now get into *his* head, too. I wanted a character that would enjoy Cherry's spontaneity and charm and, of course, the freckles that covered most of her body. I decided that I liked the idea of a narrator worshipping her just a little bit, falling in love/lust from afar, and then having his

dreams realized. So I put myself into his brain and watched Cherry in my head for a day or two or three.

He was just as nice as she was, kind of in awe of Cherry but still a well-rounded and fairly responsible sort. He lived in an apartment complex who's occupants included his best buddy and, course, the flaming red-headed woman he was about to meet.

Only after I'd lived with Cherry and her admirer for a while, felt like I understood their motivations, did I feel ready to start on the plot...

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