

Mouthing off

I can't speak for all writers – well, I suppose I can...it's not as if they all wait anxiously for each blog and then dissect it for any possible chance to unleash the legions of howling lawyers on me. Hold on, I've got an email.

Uh...let me start again.

Speaking for myself, I...hold on, another email.

Ok, that's allowed.

Speaking for myself, only one thing makes me happier about my writing than someone telling me they enjoyed it and that's someone telling someone else they enjoyed it.

Over the weekend, I had a pleasant call from a friend. She had purchased my book a while back (out of loyalty, I'm sure) and had not gotten to read it. She passed it over to a friend of hers last week and the friend had just called her recently to say how much she enjoyed it and wanted to buy three copies, one for each grandson and another for herself for an inscription. Both the enjoyment and the sales are interchangeable to me in their delight.

Being a tadpole in the great lily-pad pond of writing (nothing like jumping right into a strained metaphor), word-of-mouth is my most valuable ally. I've posted before how critical it is for my readers to occasionally post their enjoyment on the sales websites where they purchased their books (Amazon, Barnes & Noble, etc.). That's "virtual" word-of-mouth, because its reach is limited only by the number of computer terminals in the world (outer space aliens, too, I suppose, if they purchase off Amazon and, really, why wouldn't they?).

As much as I love the idea of having a couple dozen (favorable, c'mon now, you can email directly if you want to

complain!) reviews out on the web, there is something deliciously satisfying in knowing my book is being “talked about”. Granted, it’s not beating out American Idol at the water cooler. Still, baby steps.

I am also pleased that the book is appealing to more than just young adults. This was always my intention (see my FAQ). While I have had some comments about the cover of the book looking like it’s meant for kids, I’m sure people would have said the same thing if they saw Shrek or The Incredibles on a book cover as opposed to simply enjoying the movies. (Note: I am sparing you the tired cliché that fits here.)

My friend called me with the expectation that the news would “cheer me up”, which it did (even though I was not “down” at the time). As an added bonus, she now has more motivation to read the book herself (is that a left-handed compliment of my writing?) and she is deciding which other people she knows she should next offer a “test drive” of the book. That also is invaluable to me at this stage of my career (and just another reason why I value her highly as a friend).

So if you’ve bought the book, go ahead and talk about it with a friend or two. As my friend has so well illustrated for you, reading is optional.