



Morgen Bailey

Author ~ Mentor ~ Speaker ~ Editor



About this month's newsletter

Welcome to my second newsletter!
This month is, of course, the month of love - Valentine's Day was only a day ago. Last month's newsletter featured a rather different Valentine's story... This month, I've written another story as part of this newsletter, 'Rusty had to be the weirdest'.

Also in the February newsletter is your monthly writing tip and a sneak peek into *The Serial Dieter*, a stand-alone novel featuring Donna from *The Serial Dater's Shopping List*!

Enjoy reading the newsletter ~ I'd love to hear what you think of it.



31 Days. 31 Dates.

The Serial Dater's Shopping List

Morgen Bailey

A laugh-out-loud comedy about the highs and lows of dating

NOW on Valentine's Offer for £ 0.99

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Morgen is looking for new characters!

Do you have the perfect name for a character in one of my stories? Suggestions are welcome ~ give me a name, who they might be and what happens to them! Be creative with your details and I'll let you know next month which name I've picked.

Email Morgen with your character's name

FEBRUARY 2020

WRITING TIP

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Morgen Bailey's Writing Tip

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The Components of Your Story: The Beginning

The beginning is one of the most important aspects of your story. If you don't grab your readers from the off, chances are they won't read on.

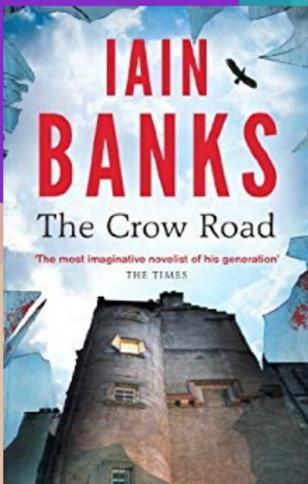
A few pointers:

- Beginnings should invariably start with 'the action'
- 'Action' doesn't necessarily have to be movement but it does have to be the conflict or dilemma
- Avoid 'information dumps' where you're giving too much to the reader too quickly

This and more writing & editing tips in my
Editing Fiction ~ A Writer's Guide

My Favourite Opening Sentence

To illustrate the above, I want to share my favourite opening sentence with you. It's from THE CROW ROAD by Iain Banks ~ love it! What is your favourite line?



Iain Banks ~
The Crow Road
First chapter, first line

"It was the day
my grandmother
exploded"



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Newsletter Exclusive Short Story



Rusty had to be the weirdest

"Look at me!"

Mable took no notice.

"Mable, look!"

Mable gritted her teeth and looked up. Rusty was staring in the mirror again, preening his shiny coat. Mable's son, John, an airline pilot, had brought back an array of presents over the years, but Rusty had to be the weirdest.

Mable recalled the gifts: the handy ailer (a foot-high tower from Pisa), the miniature multi-limbed Hindu goddess Lakshmi which housed Mable's jewellery, and the Grand Canyon fish pond.

When he'd brought the latest addition, Mable questioned her first-born's sanity.

"He's an impala, Gran," John's daughter, Daisy, explained. "Rusty," she added, stroking Rusty's back. He'd nudged her hand in appreciation.

Mable went to ask why, but Daisy pre-empted the question. "Because he's beige. Daddy said he can keep your garden tidy."

When Mable had mentioned to John of her trouble

with her lawnmower, she'd expected him to fix it, loan her his, or even buy her a new one for her birthday the following month, Rusty had not been an option on her list. But there he was.

"Be good company," John had said, strapping Daisy into the car. "Oh, but..." John paused, buckling himself in and starting the Jaguar's engine.

"But?"

"Just don't broadcast the fact that he's here. Don't take him for walks or anything. I'm not sure St. Ives would be able to handle it. A quarter of an acre should keep him busy enough."

And, as it turned out, it was plenty. He'd started with one of the borders for breakfast then come back in the house when he'd heard people speaking. Mable had been doing the washing up, listening to Woman's Hour, and had watched Rusty stare at the radio, his top lip curling into a smile.

The smile had turned into a grin when she'd turned on the television and This Morning's presenters had been interviewing one of Mable's favourite celebrities, Jack Tyler. Mable knew Jack loved himself but he could take on any role with an Errol Flynn finesse, lacking in recent years.

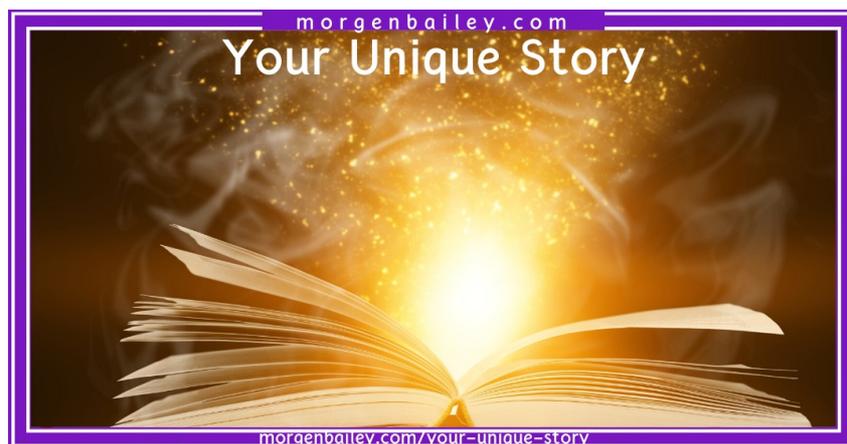
Rusty stared at Jack, tilted his head, then clopped into the hallway to look into the mirror. The rest of the day had been spent between the television and the mirror, only venturing outside when his stomach rumbled.

Rusty had then started mimicking the television. Words had turned into conversations and Mable had enjoyed it, but then Rusty had grown more arrogant, and the novelty had worn off.

Mable went to the kitchen, stared in the fridge to decide what to cook for dinner, looked back at the hall, then opened the cutlery drawer and took out the largest, sharpest knife she could find.

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Sneak Peek
THE SERIAL DIETER
~
the next book in THE SERIAL SERIES



The Serial Dieter ~ Part of Chapter 1

I look up and there's Izzy. My BFF. She looks happy. "Donna?"

I shake my head to snap myself out of it.

"Oh, nothing. Just my brain, you know."

Izzy goes all serious. "Yes, I do."

She's one of the few people who know that I'm smart. I may come across as a dizzy (bottle) blonde but she knows better. Knows all about my semi-photographic memory. Normally Izzy's my colleague, best mate (in reverse order).

She does the technology column (this time last year, a dating column!) and I do health and beauty. So you see that's why I have to be the way they expect me: healthy and beautiful. It's hard though. "Busy?" Izzy repeats and I laugh again.

"Sorry. I have so many balls in the air, it's like being at David Beckham's training camp."

"Golden Balls." Izzy smirks. I blush.

"Someone said that," I say. "About David Beckham's training camp. Can't remember who. Funny though." And if I can't remember maybe no one did.

Izzy nods. "Too busy for a drink?"

I look down at my empty mug, sitting on my desk next to my empty Coke glass, and shake my head. I think of the brain cells I'm killing with all this shaking but reckon I've got plenty to spare.

I did some research on this fact some months ago when I was doing an article on brains vs. beauty (using celebrities as examples mostly) and remember that the BBC, amongst others, quashed the only-use-ten-per-cent myth.

"Quash," I say, then lisp a 'myth', only to realise that Izzy's gone... probably to the kitchen.

"Keeping brain tissue alive consumes twenty per cent of the oxygen we breathe, according to cognitive neuroscientist Sergio Della Sala," I quote under my breath as I walk, with mug and glass, to the kitchen.

Sure enough, Izzy's there, kettle rumbling, two mugs, probably with hot chocolate powder covering their bottoms. I smirk.

Izzy smiles. It's almost a beam. "It's so lovely to see you happy," she says as she pours water into the mugs. "After..."

I shake my head, put my previous mug and glass in the dishwasher, and take the new mug she offers me. I go to wrap my hands around it but know it will scald me so I change my mind.

Soon, my books will be available through Kobo, Barnes&Noble, Apple Books, Scribd, and more platforms! I'm very excited about this and

will reveal more in next month's newsletter.

What's Next...

Thank you for reading my newsletter, I appreciate your support and hope to see you again next month.

In the **March** newsletter, I will have another **Newsletter Exclusive Short Story** for you plus a spring surprise. Stay tuned!

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