

*Expert
Advice*

*Get
Inspired!*

New Voices

MILLS & BOON[®]

romanceisnotdead.com

*Celebrity
Love*

**BLOGGER
GUIDE**

Join the search for new writing talent



In September 2010, we launch a global search for fresh writing talent to join Mills & Boon's galaxy of romantic fiction stars.

A celebration of romantic fiction and romance, *New Voices* will put entrants through their romantic fiction paces – and we want romantic fiction readers to have their say every step of the way!

The winner of the competition will win some fantastic prizes, including publication by Mills & Boon, a Mills & Boon editor for a year and an iPad!

We're really proud of the fact that our hugely talented authors are often women who have read and loved Mills & Boon for years – and we're hoping to find some more writing stars among our readers!

Entering the Competition

You can enter the competition by uploading the first chapter of your Mills & Boon novel to the competition website, www.romanceisnotdead.com (see for full terms and conditions). All of the entries will be available to read on the site, and visitors will be able to comment on every one of them!

The Mills & Boon editorial team will whittle down all the entries to just ten finalists, who'll be asked to write the second chapter of their Mills & Boon novel. Once they do, we'll ask the public to vote for their favourite one. Along with the judges, these votes will decide who goes through to the next round, where the finalists will write the 'pivotal moment' of their Mills & Boon novel. Then, with the judges, the public will decide the winner by voting for their favourite

Get Involved

The hub of this search will be a fantastic website – www.romanceisnotdead.com. This is where you'll be able to enter the competition and find fantastic insights from our editors – we'll be updating it with daily items, ranging from writing masterclasses, to free eBooks, free short stories, and blogs from your favourite authors. With enticing prize draws for every visitor and brilliant articles, there will be a reason to come back daily!

You're the romance experts, so tell us what you think! Let us know which of the entries you like, what you'd like to see more of – or less! We hope you'll stop by the site from 6th September and get involved. We can't wait to hear from you!

Top Writing Tips from Mills & Boon Editors

Could you be the next new Mills & Boon® writing star? We're looking for talented new authors, and if you've got a romance bubbling away in your head we want to hear from you! But before you put pen to paper, here are some top tips from the Mills & Boon editors.

Understand what our readers want: To do this you need to research, and love the books our readers are reading – right now! The best way to get to know the different series is to read our guidelines found on our website www.millsandboon.co.uk

Love your characters: Readers follow their emotional journey to falling in love. Focus on this, not elaborate, weird and wonderful plots.

Make the reader want to walk in your heroine's shoes: She should be believable and empathetic, someone your reader can identify with. Explore her life, her triumphs, hopes, dreams. She doesn't need to be perfect – just perfect for your hero... She can have flaws just like the rest of us! These are 21st Century heroines every woman can relate to, root for, a friend you can laugh and cry with. Think Rachel in *Friends*, Carrie from *Sex and the City* and of course Bridget Jones!

The reader should fall in love with your hero! Mr Darcy from *Pride and Prejudice*, Russell Crowe in *Gladiator* or Daniel Craig as *James Bond* are all Alpha males – they are successful, in control, get what they want – and are dangerously attractive to women. They have risen to the top because of their strength of character, their sheer determination and passion. And they will do anything to get their heroine...

Emotional Conflict: You can't have a satisfying romance without one! Just as real-life relationships have ups and downs, so do the heroes and heroines in novels. Conflict between the two main characters generates emotional and sensual tension. Characters are driven by internal conflict – and they, in turn – will drive your story.

Our very last tip is remember that the best research you can do is to read as many of the current titles as you can – now isn't that the best homework you've ever had to do?!

Good luck with your writing – and we look forward to meeting your fabulous heroines and drop-dead gorgeous heroes!

How To Make Your Romance Stand Out From The Crowd

Avoiding the dreaded cliché





We all have our pet hate cliché, the ones we've all seen before and make us say, 'Here we go again!' or 'Haven't I seen this before?!'

Instead, open your story book with a bang - hook your reader in on the first page and show them instantly that this story is unique, something they won't have seen many times before.

A successful writer can use a conventional theme and twist it, turning it on its head to deliver something with real wow factor!

Once you've established the direction of your story, make sure you bring fresh takes and new twists to these traditional storylines - carve your own unique niche.

So when sitting down to start writing your own romance, there are four things you must never forget!

-  Stretch your imagination
-  Stay true to the genre
-  It's all about the characters - start with them, not the plot!
-  Mills & Boon is about creating fantasy out of reality. Surprise us with your characters' stories and ideas

So whether it's a marriage of convenience story, a secret baby theme, a traumatic past or a blackmail story, make sure you add your own unique sparkle which will make your readers come back for more!

for more expert writing tips, check out

www.romanceisnotdead.com

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Grey's Anatomy of a Hero

(or The Bits I'd Borrow to Make the Perfect Man)
by Mills & Boon® author India Grey

Jonathan Rhys Meyers' mouth?

Or Gael Garcia Bernal's?
James Franco's?
Don't make me choose!

Hugh Jackman's chest.

It's like Michelangelo's David,
digitally remastered.

Taylor Lautner's six pack.

(He's so young... is this wrong?)

Mr Darcy's thighs.

(I think it's the breeches.)

Daniel Craig's eyes.

So piercing you almost believe he
can see right through your clothes.

Johnny Depp's cheekbones.

Duh... who else's?

Robert Pattinson's hands.

Simply because of *that* piano scene.

Beckham's butt, in Armani.

Or not in Armani. Whatever.

Plus a combination of **Stephen Fry's** brain for help with the crossword, **Barack Obama's** awesome charisma and **Will Smith's** sexy sense of humour...

I'm laughing all the way to the bedroom!

About India Grey

India Grey loves writing her own 'romantic versions of reality'. She is an award winning writer, who has always loved story-telling. India lives in Cheshire with her husband and three children. Visit www.millsandboon.co.uk for more details on this rising star of romantic fiction.



Mills & Boon's Guide to Celebrity Marriages

From 24-hour whirlwind weddings to the Golden couples of Hollywood - Mills & Boon presents the longest and shortest celebrity marriages!

Celebrity marriages are fascinating! They invite endless speculation from who will marry who, and when they'll tie the knot...to which couture designer will create The Dress and which guests the happy couple invite – or perhaps more interestingly, who didn't make the cut!

Til Death do us part?

But most fascinating of all, are those whirlwind, shot gun marriages, which amongst all the glitz and glamour ended before the ink dried on their marriage certificate.

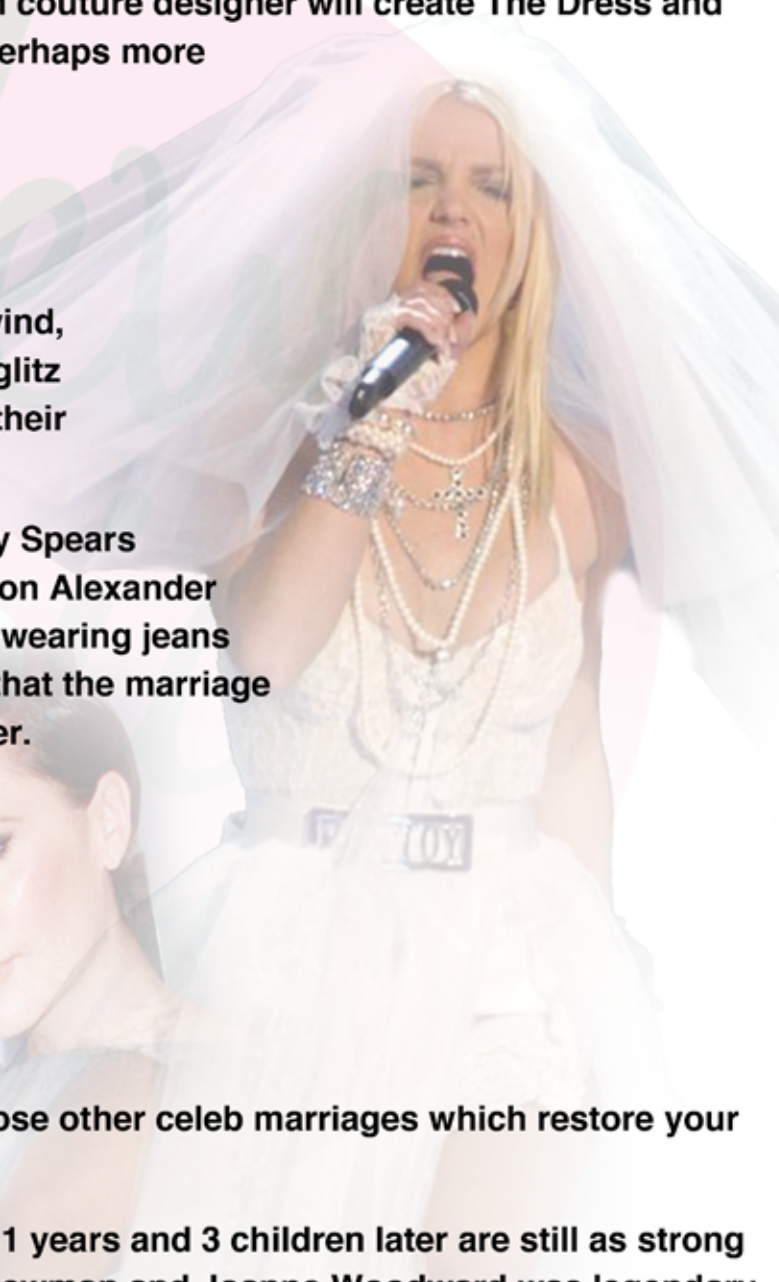
We all gasped in shock that pop-star Britney Spears secretly got hitched to childhood friend Jason Alexander in Vegas one wild and reckless night, whilst wearing jeans and a baseball cap!. But it was no surprise that the marriage was quickly annulled less than 55 hours later.

Forever and Ever...

But for every broken heart there are also those other celeb marriages which restore your faith in everlasting Mills & Boon romance!

Posh and Becks have defied the odds and 11 years and 3 children later are still as strong as ever. The long-lasting marriage of Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward was legendary - they celebrated their Golden Anniversary in January 2008. Joanne said on her relationship with Paul, "Sexiness wears thin after a while and beauty fades, but to be married to a man who makes you laugh every day, ah, now that's a real treat."

So it seems that Hollywood's magic can end in the ultimate happy-ever-after... Now that's what we here at Romance HQ call true love!



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New Voices
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To Love, Honour and Disobey

by Natalie Anderson

Get inspired with this exclusive Mills & Boon® extract

'Ana.' He didn't sound breathless. But he did sound quiet. He nodded at the empty seat next to her. 'Mind if I sit here?'

Her smile became that little bit fixed. 'Not at all. Please.' She shifted on her own, moving that imperceptible half-inch nearer the side of the truck and away from him. Her heart thudded harder, all senses on acute alert as she clamped on the muscles.

No way, no way, no way. Seb couldn't be here. And she couldn't be thinking about...what she'd been thinking about. Not about him. 'Fancy seeing you here,' she said. 'Africa. Of all places.'

He sat and the devilishness showed in his grin. 'Quite some coincidence, isn't it?'

'Quite.' As if it really were. 'Who told you I was here?'

'No one,' he said innocently. 'It really is a coincidence.'

Yeah right.

He turned, watching her too close, sitting too close. 'Oh, I got the divorce papers.'

Oh, so he was just going to throw that in casually, huh? Ana made her smile even sweeter. 'Did you sign them?'

Please, please, please. Then this really would be over.

'Not yet.'

Her heart skidded.

'I wanted to see you first.'

*For more inspiring reads, download a Mills & Boon eBook for free!
Find out more at www.everyonesreading.com*

*Know
the facts*

New Voices
MILLS & BOON




Things you never knew about Mills & Boon

Established in 1908, Mills & Boon is the world's favourite publisher of romantic fiction. Millions of readers across the globe love indulging in the glamour and romantic escapism of Mills & Boon.

Mills & Boon in numbers:

-  A Mills & Boon book is bought every 4 seconds in the UK
-  Over 130 million Mills & Boon books are bought worldwide every year
-  Mills & Boon publish over 50 titles every month
-  Mills & Boon books are available in 26 languages and 109 countries

Mills & Boon is the online home of Romance:

-  Romance HQ on Twitter has over 1600 followers
-  Over 150,000 Mills & Boon eBooks were downloaded last year
-  71% of Mills & Boon Facebook fan group members are under 35

For more details, visit www.millsandboon.co.uk

Enter New Voices now at www.romanceisnotdead.com

Become a fan on Facebook at www.facebook.com/romancehq

Follow Romance HQ on Twitter @millsandboonuk

If you'd like to run a competition, extract, or interview with a Mills & Boon author on your blog or website, contact Ann Bissell or Alexander Martin at Midas PR on 020 7361 7860 or e-mail

ann.bissell@midaspr.co.uk / alexander.martin@midaspr.co.uk

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER. Contest opens on September 6, 2010 at 12:01 GMT and closes on October 31, 2010 at 11:59 GMT. All Submissions must be received by September 22, 2010 at 11:59 GMT. Open to legal residents of U.K, US, Canada (excluding Quebec), Republic of Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa who have reached the age of majority at time of entry. Void where prohibited by law. One (1) Grand Prize is available to be won, consisting of the services of a Mills & Boon editor for one (1) year, one (1) Apple iPad 32 G, and thirty-six (36) Mills & Boon books (ARV of Grand Prize: £754.00); three (3) Second Prizes are available to be won, consisting of an editorial consultation with a Mills & Boon editor, one (1) Sony Reader in pink, and thirty-six (36) Mills & Boon books (ARV of Second Prize: £334.00); and six (6) Third Prizes are available to be won, consisting of a letter of editorial advice from a Mills & Boon editor and thirty-six (36) Mills & Boon books (ARV of Second Prize: £155.00). Official Rules and prize details available online at www.romanceisnotdead.com. Sponsor: Harlequin Mills & Boon Limited.