

20. More on Inspiration

The last couple of articles have had little to do with writing, and more to do with marketing and publishing. At this point it is easy to become weary of the entire project and after one or two rejections, which are as good as inevitable, the danger is that you stop thinking about yourself as a writer. You have finished one novel, and have not had time or mental space to think of the next. And yet, this is the moment when remembering you are a writer is of extreme importance. It is all too easy to take the rejections as being your worth as a writer and if the need for external success overcomes you, you might decide not to write another novel. But remember, you started writing because you had something to say, felt the urge to say it, and felt incomplete without it.

I have reached that point too, have wanted to give up and ignore the whispers of new ideas that tried to be heard.

And not long ago I had that feeling again. Around that time I had received an invitation to participate in a writers weekend in Amsterdam, an invitation I ignored. Then the organiser, a wonderful woman called Jonette Stabbert who is invaluable to the English language writing community here in the Netherlands, phoned me, and asked why I had not added my name to the list. She invited me again, only now as a panelist as well as participant. This time I said 'yes'.

What a wonderful weekend it turned out to be. Imagine spending a weekend with a group of people, all with the same quirky view of the world, the same desire for originality, the same need to make their opinions known. It is the greatest source of inspiration I know. These were all talented, dedicated people. These had all gone through the rejection process in one way or another. And all of them were renewing their promise to themselves to have faith, and to continue to regard themselves as writers. By attending that weekend, I too was rejuvenated.

Nothing in the world beats spending time with creative souls. There is a level of truth in the communication, a sense of trust and sensitivity that sometimes gets lost in the workplace. When writers get together something extra happens. Something new creeps in, something bigger and more vibrant.

So when inspiration fails you, when you doubt your position as a writer, find a creative environment or organise a gathering of creative people, and be reborn as a writer.

I would recommend anyone to check out

<http://www.treehouse.abc.nl> to see some of the work Jonette does for the creative ex-pat community here.