



NEWS RELEASE

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Phoenix Romance Author Beats the Odds—

Turns Her First-ever Manuscript into Three-book Contract with Major Publisher

For Immediate Release

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(Phoenix, Ariz.) -- A lifelong desire to write a book within her favorite genre—and a little luck—have combined to launch the writing career of one of the newest additions to the lineup of accomplished authors producing books for Signet Regency Romance.

For Phoenix resident Rhonda Woodward, 38, the national release of her first book, ***A Spinster's Luck***, in December is the culmination of an unlikely series of events for an aspiring author who had no expectation of getting published when she submitted a simple query letter to the nation's largest Regency Romance publisher more than two years ago.

Her inquiry about the possibility of having her first-ever manuscript receive a critique resulted in an unexpected three-book contract. The publisher bought the book Woodward had written for her own amusement, and wanted two more.

A Lifelong Interest

Woodward developed a love for the Regency romance genre as a teen, while growing up in Phoenix. Recovery from an illness throughout her adolescence caused her to be home-schooled, and it was then that she began reading several English history-based Regency romance novels every month along with her other studies.

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“For some reason, I found the stories about the people living in England during the Regency era from 1800 to 1820 absolutely fascinating,” Woodward said. “The Regency period was one of advancement in the arts and culture—and the aristocracy lived lives of unimaginable wealth and elegance. ”After nearly two decades of reading hundreds of romance novels and thinking that she’d like to try to write one herself, she sat down and put her ideas on paper. Upon completing the manuscript, she boxed it up and put it in a drawer.

“I just always wanted to write a book, so I did,” Woodward said. “I really had no intention of getting it published because I wasn’t sure that it was any good.”

Patience Paid Off

It was the constant badgering of a friend, who asked repeatedly for the chance to read the manuscript, that brought the book draft out of hiding. Upon reading the text, her friend urged Woodward to see if it was saleable.

A heartfelt query letter sent off to the publisher in the summer of 2000 resulted in a request to review the manuscript. It was more than a year later, after someone in the publisher’s office had misplaced her manuscript, that Woodward received a call from New York.

“It was the publisher asking if I had any ideas for other books,” Woodward said. “My initial reaction was that they didn’t like the one I had sent them, but they thought I might have some potential.”

Potential, indeed. Signet asked if she would be willing to sell her first book and sign a contract to write two more within the year.

“I was shocked,” Woodward said. “I’ve never even gotten a rejection letter, and here I am being offered a three-book deal!”

An Author’s Good Fortune

A Spinster’s Luck is the first in a series of three Regency Romance titles by Woodward to be published by Signet in 2002-03. The work will be on bookstore shelves in

December. Her second release, ***A Hint of Scandal***, will debut in May 2003, and her third book is in the final stages of completion, with release scheduled for late 2003.

"Intelligent women like romance," Woodward said. "A good romance novel and a bit of rich chocolate can be a temporary escape from just about any problem. I'm always amazed at how much good romantic fiction is published every month, and I'm thrilled to contribute to the field."

She lives in Phoenix with her occasionally romantic husband, William, and their little Pomeranian, Vivian.

Sharing her Joy

To celebrate the release of ***A Spinster's Luck***, Woodward is conducting an **Escape to Romance Contest** that is accepting entries from her romance-oriented website, www.rhondawoodward.com.

"The winner will receive a gift basket, bountifully packed with body-pampering products, delicious teas, autographed copies of ***A Spinster's Luck*** and other Signet Regency Romance novels from some of my favorite authors," Woodward said. "And, of course, a bit of chocolate!"

The deadline for entering the **Escape to Romance Contest** is Saturday, Feb. 1, 2003 and the winner will be announced on her website on Wednesday, Feb. 5, 2003.

"You don't have to know anything about English history to win," Woodward said. "You just need to want to be pampered."

Life Imitates Art

Just as the lead character in her first novel finds herself in an unexpected position of good fortune, Woodward now has no doubt that good things can happen to those who believe in their dreams.

"Telling stories about strong women whose dreams come true is something I've always wanted to share," Woodward said. "I hope everyone has a dream to pursue, because it really can come true."

More Information

For more information, to enter the **Escape to Romance Contest** or to order ***A Spinster's Luck***, log on to Woodward's website at **www.rhondawoodward.com**.

EDITORS NOTE: A photograph of Woodward and book cover artwork of *A Spinster's Luck* are available on the Internet at: www.rhondawoodward.com. Click on "Press Kit" to download. Interviews with Woodward may be arranged by calling 602.230.0909.