

TAYLOR'S TIPS for a productive writing career...

Dear Fellow Writer,

I'd like to share the following story with you. A real shortie at just under 400 words, I penned it and sent it in. It was published in *Chicken Soup for the Beach Lover's Soul* in 2007.



Ebb and Flow

by B.J. Taylor

“Why is this happening to me?” I shouted to the wind. Standing ankle-deep in water at the Pacific Ocean’s edge, I wanted to scream, but no one would hear me. I was alone. All alone.

I’d just divorced after a 17-year marriage. On top of that, I moved from a Midwestern state all the way to Southern California. Back there, I lived on the shores of Lake Michigan. The water was always on my right. Here, the water’s on my left. Backwards. Everything was backwards. Including my life.

I thought I’d still be married. Happily ever after, right? Instead, I was building a brand new life in a brand new state. It felt wrong, and yet so right.

I looked up at the clouds overhead. White, filled with promise.

I heard the seagulls squawking as they swooped around the cliffs behind me.

I gazed out to sea. It stretched out endlessly, seemingly beyond eternity. The water shimmered when the sun peeked out from behind the clouds.

But it was the waves, the constant and ever flowing waves, that calmed me, soothed me, and sent a message deep into my soul.

Life was all about ebb and flow. Some things come to you, some things are taken away. But then more things come to you, and more and more and more. It never stops. Life goes on.

A couple of years later I found myself sitting astride a low cement wall gazing out at that same Pacific Ocean. Only this time I wasn't alone.

"Here you go," a handsome man said. "One order of fish and chips with an ocean view."

"Thanks," I replied and placed the warm paper basket on my lap. The fish was delicious but it was whom I was with that was even more thrilling.

"I have something to ask you," he said. Then he put the remainder of our lunches aside. Kneeling in the sand, he took my hands. "Would you marry me? I know I have a lot of baggage, and I know....."

"Shhhh," I whispered. "Yes, I'll marry you."

As we rose to our feet to embrace, I was facing the ocean. The waves were cresting and reaching for shore. The sun was bright and high in the sky. The air was warm as a gentle breeze caressed my bare shoulders.

Ebb and flow. Life goes on. Sometimes even sweeter than before.

* * *

As we travel the months ahead in 2010, I like to think that we will all receive bountiful blessings. But there will be times that will be lean, causing us to reflect on whether we should continue in this business of writing and the pursuit of publication. Never give up, dear friends. For life really is all about Ebb and Flow.

Happy writing and blessings on your work.

What's Happening...

BOOK SIGNING.....Do you live in Southern California? Stop in and visit:

VALENTINE'S DAY at Martha's Bookstore - Sunday, Feb. 14, from 11:00 to 1:00. Come to 308 Marine Avenue on Balboa Island in Newport Beach. You'll find a store stocked with books and three authors signing *Chicken Soup for the Soul: True Love*. I'll be one of those three, with my good writers group friends Sallie Rodman and Jean Stewart. We all have a story in the *Chicken*

Soup: True Love anthology and will autograph any copy you purchase. Do stop in to say hello! We'd love to see you. www.marthasbookstore.net

February 10th Mission Hills Community Church has asked me to speak to the MOPS group. We'll be talking about "How to Stay Positive In a Negative World."

Mount Hermon Christian Writers Conference March 26th to 30th. This is the best conference on the west coast, bar none. You get wonderful food, a fabulous mountain setting with pine trees that touch the sky, opportunities to talk one-on-one with published authors, editors, agents, and the chance to take numerous classes to develop and hone your craft. What better place to spend Palm Sunday weekend?

Check it out. <http://mounthermon.org/adult/professionals/writers-conference>

Follow your dreams...

B.J.

Follow me on Facebook. I'm listed as B.j.Taylor (little j).

Twitter: www.twitter.com/bjtaylortweets

Author of :

“The Complete Guide to Writers Groups That Work”

Available on Amazon.com or <http://www.buybooksontheweb.com/product.aspx?ISBN=0-7414-4099-7>

*Check out my website at www.bjtayloronline.com.

P.S. Feel free to forward this newsletter to your friends. If they'd like to be added to my list, they can email me at bj.taylor@verizon.net. You can also opt out of Taylor's Tips at any time. Just send me an email with "remove" in the subject line.