

This Writer's Journey: Why Did I Push Send?

By Larry Timm

My finger retreats from the keypad. I raise the paper sack in my quivering hand and inhale a few quick breaths while I stare at the taunting words—*Your message has been sent*.

“What did I just do?” I feel vulnerable. I just pushed *Send*.

My book proposal is traveling toward an agent's in-box—is probably already there—and I can't stop it. Images of the Hindenburg drift across my mind. A couple more quick breaths.

“What do I do now?”

My palms are sweaty. My mouth is dry. I'm talking to myself.

The Jig Is Up

I glance toward the front door, certain the FBI will soon burst through, guns blazing, and arrest me for impersonating a writer. Oh, my poor family. I see the street lined with news crews and yellow crime tape flapping in the breeze. I am wearing an orange jumpsuit and flip-flops. I *hate* flip-flops.

“Is it hot in here?”

It won't be long before Oprah comes out of retirement and has my wife sitting on the couch next to her for one of those emotional tear-soaked interviews. She'll turn to my wife, a concerned look on her face. “Have you heard from your husband, the imposter, since he's been sentenced to life without publishing?”

“No...” My wife will dab her eyes with a crumpled tissue. “They won't let him write.”

Shame stares me in the face—and it has bad breath. I discard the paper sack. How could I send such garbage to an agent?

“Why didn't anyone stop me?”

Did I undangle all the participles? Catch all the floating body parts? The agent will read it and laugh, but in the wrong places. Suddenly I'm back in second grade, waiting for the teacher to decide between my picture of the purple stick elephant and Johnny's dumb sunset painting. How many times do you see purple stick elephants? Sunsets are so daily!

“I'm glad I sent my story out,” I say while banging my head on the table. “But why did I send *that* story?”

