

## **ESCAPE FROM THE WRITER'S CLOSET**

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Like the mild-mannered reporter, Clark Kent, he timidly enters his booth and becomes another character; not Superman, but a writer. His booth may be an extra bedroom, a corner in the basement or garage, the kitchen table, or a closet in the house. It may even be at Starbucks. He does not need much space. He is a writer, or wannabe writer.

By day he may be a manager, policeman, truck driver, minister, teacher, lawyer, or sanitation worker. None of his friends at work suspect he has a secret identity. His true identity comes out after dinner when everyone is on another planet watching TV, or pursuing other media interests. He is alone in his world.

He religiously prepares his altar for the writing ritual. He checks out his computer, paper, and printer, or yellow pad; and last night's work. All of which is stacked neatly on his old plywood door which has been converted into a desk by placing it on top of stacked cement blocks.

On into the late hours he hunches over his computer or pad, writing words that flow from his heart. It may be a novel, poem, short story, article, or devotional piece. It may be a page in his daily journal or letter to the editor. It doesn't that it may not be read by anyone. The joy is in self-expression. Writing! Call it a hobby, or call it therapy; either way; it is what he enjoys doing.

A golfer can brag about his score, and a fisherman can talk about the one that got away. But a writer must go it alone. Few observers care about the writer's hobby. The amateur painter gets enough nerve to hang up a painting on the wall, but a writer cannot hang up an article on the wall. Who wants to read his poetry? Maybe his mother.

How about YOU? Are you hiding in the writer's closet. Are you afraid to come out? I want to encourage you to come on out. Write that article. Dare to send it to a publisher. And if you don't want to go public, keep on enjoying your writing. You have a right to write!

In order to escape from the writer's closet you must change your attitude about writers and writing. Do not be ashamed to call yourself a writer, even if you have not been published. A writer is a person who writes. Being published is merely a usage of what you have written. You cannot get published without first having written

something. Wow, that's rocket science. Make sense?

A person will quickly admit, "I am a swimmer," or "I am a singer." But for some reason a person is reluctant to say, "I am a writer." He thinks he must be professional. Almost every hobby is composed of amateurs who quickly say, "I am..."; even though they never earn a dime from their hobby.

It has been estimated, way back in the eighties, that there are about 25,000,000 amateur writers in North America. They submit 300,000 short stories, and 25,000 novels to publishers who have not asked for them. Most of the amateurs, however will not come out of the closet. When we come forward to today with the explosion with ebooks, POD (Print On Demand), computers, copy machines, affordable binding equipment, etc., these figures are very small in comparison.

Teachers and preachers need to come out of the writer's closet. You have a ready-made reading audience—your students and congregation. From passing out brief outlines, to sharing complete manuscript lessons, writing for the weekly bulletin, you have a unique opportunity to expose yourself as a writer.

Write! Write every day. Writing makes an exact teacher and speaker. Writing preserves the materials gathered in long hours of research and study. Do not keep your notes and research for yourself. Write it and give it to your students, friends, etc. Come out of the closet. Do not be embarrassed. Write something for your students, yourself, or a friend.

Honestly, writing is a struggle; especially in the early days. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "Everything in creation has its appointed painter or poet, and remains in bondage like the princess in the fairy tale until its appropriate liberator comes to set it free. The story of Sleeping Beauty is more than a fairy tale; it is an allegory of the life of every human being who fights his way through life."

As a writer you, too, must "fight" your way out of the closet, where you and your writing have been hiding for too long. The door to writing is wide open—ESCAPE TODAY!

Be sure to check out my book *Drop Your Excuses and Start Writing Today*. Go to Amazon.com and type in the name in the search space for books.