

Where is it written that it's too late

Phyllis Humby - November 2020

I poured a glass of cabernet shiraz and hubby raised his vodka and gingerale to toast my achievement. It was a joyous happy-hour and we were in a giddy mood. Okay, maybe Marv wasn't exactly giddy, but he was happy for me. I'd just received a call from my book publisher. My debut novel 'Old Broad Road' was en route to the printers in Montreal!

Between sips of wine, I told Marv that becoming a published author at my stage of life offers encouragement to all the old fogies out there that think they're washed up. So hear this: The wrinklies are still in the running. Hang in there! Age is just a number. You're only as old as you feel. You'll never be younger than you are today. Yada yada yada... Don't gag over my inspirational idioms. I just want to point out the obvious: Retirement can be a new lease on life. Aging is not the end...it could be the beginning.

To be rewarded for doing something you love to do is success in my books (pardon the pun) and the beginning of a whole new chapter of life (sorry). It wouldn't matter if only a handful of books sell (hah! don't be crazy, of course it matters), I'd still consider it a success story (oops).

But it's not all smiles and happy dances. Even though I have two books released within six months of each other, I'm more than a little irked that my fairy godmother stood by as I signed my contract – mere months before a global pandemic – and didn't give one nudge of warning.

We were already into the countdown for the release of my memoir when it was goodbye launch party. And goodbye reading tour. Goodbye congratulatory hugs and handshakes. Goodbye huge dinner gala with an open bar for all my family and friends. Just kidding about that last one; I hadn't really considered it. But, seriously, it's sad that I'm observing my literary milestone in my bedroom slippers and jeans, clinking cocktail glasses with hubby, instead of celebrating with all the people who offered me so much encouragement over the years. I know, I know, there are worse things.

And, hey, it's disappointing for the publisher, too. All the marketing plans and anticipated distribution were dashed faster than you can say: Mask Up. I'm lucky to be affiliated with a small Canadian press that refused to alter their publishing schedule and trudged forward despite the complications. Cheers to all Canadian small business! I digress. Where was I?

When my publisher asked what I would write as a personal message for the readers of my novel, the first thing I thought of was – It's never too late. Ain't that the truth... Each person reading my signature line will interpret it to suit their own circumstances. Maybe there's something they wanted to do but feel they've waited too long. Maybe they thought it was too late to change careers, or that they were too old to re-direct the course of their life. That simple message might encourage them to make it happen, whatever 'it' is. That's right, anything is possible. At any age or stage.

'It's never too late' also references the storyline of my debut novel 'Old Broad Road'. Sylvia Kramer is a survivor who proves to the readers (and herself) that it's never too late to become the person she was always meant to be. That sounds like a perfect little story, doesn't it? Well, grab a copy, fasten your seat belts, and get ready for a psychological roller coaster. Life isn't always perfect.



