

## THE WRITING LIFE

by Bobbi Linkemer

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### The Books That Got Away

When I teach a class, I always start out by saying two things no one believes.

The first is I will probably fall in love with your book topic long before you do and stay in love with it long after you have abandoned the idea of writing about it.

The second is I know you only paid (whatever the fee was), for this class, but one of the benefits is you have me for life.

I sincerely mean both of those statements. I walk around with a head full of forsaken topics that should have written, but were not. And I stay in touch with all of my students until I'm sure some of them wish I would go away. I prod, push, encourage, and coach — whatever it takes to keep them writing.

But what really gets to me are the books that got away — the ones I knew in my bones had the potential to succeed. Here are a few examples:

§ Fifty-two sensible tips for men on how to improve their relationships with women by a psychologist who uses them.

§ One woman's experience with Bipolar disorder (it used to be called manic-depression) and how it led her to become a spokesperson for people with mental illness.

§ How to completely redecorate your house using only what you already own.

§ A description of the ideal long-term care facility (nursing home) by someone who has worked in less-than-ideal situations.

§ What it's really like to become a first-time parent at 40 by a woman who did it more than 20 years ago.

§ Why so many kids are misdiagnosed with ADHD when their problem is something else entirely by the parent of one such child.

