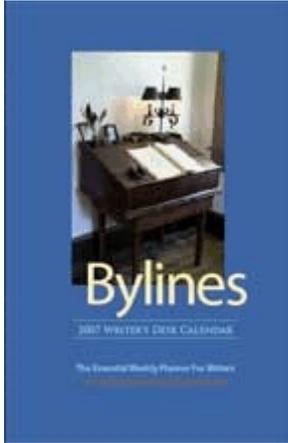


## Rejection

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"Surely you must know that the scene described herein has been written thousands of times?" an editor once scrawled, with several other scathing comments, across the first page of my story.

A writer can't take rejection personally. We treasure encouraging notes and console ourselves with tales of the many rejections suffered by now-famous authors. I deal with rejection by putting another story in the mail. Either I send the rejected story to another market, or I offer the editor who rejected it a different story, or both.

I reprinted the story mentioned above and put it back in the mail the same day with no changes. Seven weeks later I received a contract -- my first. Unfortunately, I couldn't accept the terms. I wrote a polite letter offering fewer rights for the same money, figuring I would never hear back, that I had given up the sale. I got a telephone call a few days later.

The editor offered a compromise which I accepted. Then she told me she would have to get it approved by her boss.

The same story that one editor rejected with words intended to sting, another wanted enough to ask her boss for an exception to standard contract language.

Sharing this story with other writers, remembering the thrill of my first sale, helps me keep rejection in perspective.

*In more than a quarter century as a professional writer, F.I. Goldhaber has produced news stories, feature articles, editorial columns, reviews, public relations and marketing materials, advertising copy, novels, short stories, novelettes, and poems. She has had a novelette, short stories, and poems published in magazines and anthologies and has won six awards for her fiction. A resident of Oregon, F.I. reads to elementary-school children as a SMART volunteer and is active in Lions Clubs International. [www.goldhaber.net](http://www.goldhaber.net)*