

My NaNoWriMo Adventure: How to miss the goal and still write a novel

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I didn't grow up wanting to be a writer. I fell into it. Since the tender age of 8 when I wrote my first story, "An Elf in the Fruit Bowl," I've been scribbling and writing on paper of all shapes and sizes. I have thoughts, adventures, conversations and amazing characters constantly dancing around in my head.

I only began to consider writing a novel for publication after I moved from Virginia to Florida in 2004 and joined the Writer's Workshop group at the Lakes Region Library. With their help and guidance, I began exploring my writing talent. And then, in 2006, one of the writers in the group handed me a flyer on NaNoWriMo. It looked like fun and so I attended the kick-off party. I was all geared up and ready to write but had a little distraction along the way, namely the birth of my second daughter on November 1.



Undeterred I decided to try again in 2007 but once again, because of chaos in my personal life I didn't participate, although I did set the goal of finish a chapter in a novel I was working on.

Finally, in 2008, I felt that it was my year. I made definite plans to participate. I was scared but excited. Would I be able to get those 50,000 words in 30 days? I was determined to find out. I attended the NaNoWriMo kick-off party and had decided on what I wanted to write. November 1 came and I shot out of the gate full steam ahead.

My little adventure was full of plot twists, road bumps, tense moments and villains. No, not my story but once again, my personal life tried to interfere. Everything from being a single parent, to illness (both myself and my two kids), to writer's block, even my online courses that I had started taking to get my bachelor degree, provided chaos. Through it all, I preserved. And when the last minute came and I had to submit my story, I was on pins and needles. Had I done enough? Would I finally be able to say that I reached a writing goal?

The word counter on NaNoWriMo.org spit out my results and I was devastated. My final word count was 40,496. My first reaction was tears. I cried for a solid fifteen minutes. So close! Then I called one of my online writing buddies and sobbed. She put it into perspective for me. Reminded me that though I thought I was superwoman, I should be

proud to hit that mark because of the stress and chaos during that month. I started feeling better about myself then.

But my adventure didn't stop there. I discovered that the characters of my story, "Werelove," demanded that I finish what I started. I was amazed and humbled. I buckled down and kept writing. I never wavered, I continued and on July 31, 2009, I wrote the last word of that first draft. I was speechless. I did it! I actually wrote a novel.

I have to thank NaNo for the help. Without that frantic 30 days and those 40,496 words, I wouldn't have in front of me a 320-page, 85,767 word filled first draft of my novel "Werelove: Dusk Conspiracy." So thank you NaNo and thank you Citrus County Libraries for promoting this very helpful event.

If you'd like to read some of my NaNo story, you can find it on my website:
www.kishazworld.com

My next adventure: getting my story published. And hey, see you during NaNo 2009.

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