

ADDICTED TO LOVE

by Lori Foster

You know what the song says: *Go ahead and face it, you're addicted to love.* Well, I freely admit it. I am addicted, along with a huge portion of society. How do I know this? By looking at facts.

Right now, Romance represents 46% of mass-market paperbacks. Over 50 million women in North America read romances. Harlequin, my publisher, sells 200 million books worldwide each year, or 6.6 books per second. Astounding data? Nah. We need romance, because when you think about it, some of the nicest things in this world start with a little romance.

Can you still remember your first high school crush? The way it made you feel as if the world began and ended with one special person? And what about the sweetness and overwhelming sensation of holding a newborn baby? Or a rainy day spent inside on the couch, cuddling with someone you care about while watching old Westerns and drinking hot chocolate. Even more compelling is the memory or imagery of heated sex, the touches, the smells, the sights and sounds of being totally connected to another human being.

Do these feelings and sensations all begin with genuine romance, and end with the proverbial 'happily ever after?'

Unfortunately, not in real life. But in fiction? Is there any media, any form of entertainment, that continually guarantees you the happy ending?

Only the romance genre.

Whether the book makes you cry or smile, sigh or laugh out loud, readers know they'll find satisfaction in the ending. Two interesting, compelling people will fall in love, and they'll form a lasting relationship. Guaranteed.

It's a temporary, harmless escape from the hardships of real life, where women stand on equal footing and can make a difference. Every heroine in every book finds her man, but first she struggles to overcome the problems and in the process, gives women everywhere a glimpse of success, and a reason to believe in the happy ending.

No matter what happens in society, no matter the chaos, the disasters, inflation and soaring domestic crimes, romance does still exist. People fall in love, and they go to great lengths to win the heart of another. Romance is the basis of our history, and it's the backbone for our future. Sometimes it takes a little encouragement to believe, sometimes it takes a little fiction.

And smart women everywhere know...it sometimes takes a little romance.