

Local writer has beaten her own path to become a publisher

By **Evan McMurtry**
Town Crier

Veronica Elizabeth Low has recently published her own fable *The Tale of the Rabbit and the Rose* with her publishing company she created for the task.

As her fable is unconventional it is no surprise its author is as well. Low, who graduated from Carleton University in 1985 with a BA in political science and has worked in marketing and advertising, is a practicing Buddhist and a vocal spiritualist.

Her fable is set in the Swiss Alps and tells the story of a rose and a rabbit that go on a quest to find love. They meet a woman who has a sanctuary for people who have lost loved ones.

Low answered the question most frequently asked about her book; why a fable for adults?

"The reason why it is a fable, as children we love openly and freely, without questions and we are very honest with our emotions. As we get older we're told no, boys don't cry, keep a stiff upper lip, don't be so emotional, and hold it all in. And I think we learn through society to squander our love."

The St. Clements School alum challenges modern society's view of kindness as a sign of weakness, which Low believes is an act of courage. Low recounted how after she once found a rabbit trying to cross a highway in the Swiss

Alps she stopped traffic to let it cross. She said that this is something Zelda, the fable's protagonist, would have done

Low's sense of spirituality has corresponded to a tremendous rise in spirituality in popular culture.



▲ Photo by John Narvail

North Toronto resident Veronica Elizabeth Low wrote a fable, she published herself, to allow readers to reconnect with their inner spirituality.

"We're all here to make a difference," she said. "I've learned through certain events that it's not a good thing or a bad thing, its just something that's happened. And try to take the lessons of what this

thing is and go on from it . . . Spirituality for me, it doesn't have to be Catholicism, Judaism, Muslim . . ."

Low had enthusiastic responses from publishers Oxford and Scholastic, yet there was the question of what demographic to market the book to. After she moved back to Toronto and re-wrote much of it she found that her contacts at the two companies had retired. Her choice was to either start all over again or start her own publishing company.

With the help of her associate Meredith Mosher and the money she had saved in radio sales the previous year she inaugurated Roar Publishing. Her fable has been sold through independent bookstores and sales were steady through March, April, and May. So far, 600 copies have been sold.

"I am going at my own pace, which is really great and I still have a lot of control creatively in what happens and how it's presented and how it's marketed," said Low.

In the future Low plans to write another fable and to begin publishing other writers' works this winter. As for this book, Low hopes to be able to sell its international rights when she goes to Frankfurt.

The Tale of the Rabbit and the Rose is available at The Omega City Bookstore, Rock of Ages, Mirvish Books, Book city, The Village Library, HY + ZELS (Yonge and Steels), Toronto Women's Book Store, and Pages Books and Magazines. ♦