

## *Sample Letter of Agreement*

Mary DeDanan, editor  
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Jane B. Lyrical, author  
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Dear Jane:

This is an agreement for editing services for your novel. In this letter, “you” refers to Jane Lyrical and “I” to Mary DeDanan.

**Novel:** *Away on the Shimmering Waves*

### **Description of Work:**

*Developmental Editing:* The aim is to improve the plot structure, narrative flow, internal logic, characterizations, and effectiveness in the marketplace. I will first read through the draft of the manuscript to get the whole sense of your novel. Next, I will edit from the beginning to provide you with specific feedback and suggestions. Notes will be embedded in the manuscript as comments, and broader suggestions given in an overview analysis report. Depending on the book’s needs, I may cut and paste your material to suggest a reorganization of story elements, condense and trim what does not serve the novel’s focus, and note gaps where new writing is needed. I might suggest wording as examples of what I mean. You may accept my edits in full, start fresh in your own words, or ignore my suggestions, as you wish. You always have full control of the work. I will be available to read later rewrites and drafts, and continue to offer detailed suggestions — rewrites and new drafts are not included in this estimate, but will be charged hourly.

*Copy Editing:* If your novel is largely complete and the developmental aspects will be minor, I will also copy edit as I go. The goal is to polish the work for publication. Here I pay attention to grammar, line-by-line flow, consistency, word choices, repetition, cliché-avoidance, spelling, punctuation, formatting, and such, in a “first-pass” copy edit. I also

will create an individualized style sheet for the manuscript. Copy edits of rewritten drafts are not included in this estimate, but will be charged hourly.

*Errors:* Please be aware that your final document will need to be proofread as its final stage. Errors can creep in during the back-and-forth process of accepting or rejecting changes, rewrites, and book design; most likely I will not see the final document before it goes to press. It's best to hire the fresh eyes of a professional proofreader. While you may expect excellent work from me, perfection is never promised and rarely achieved. My editing work does *not* include fact checking, nor can I offer legal advice; however I will point out any factual errors or libel issues if I spot them. After your acceptance of the last draft that I work on, you assume sole responsibility for any residual errors.

### **Schedule:**

I will complete the work covered by this agreement on a mutually agreed-upon schedule. Each pre-paid segment will be completed within two to four weeks of payment, or if applicable, receipt of your rewrites. So that I can plan my work, please give me one week's prior notice when your work will be coming in. It's important that you keep to your part of the schedule, or give me ample notice if you need to reschedule.

### **Rate and Payments:**

My rate for this work is \$35 per hour. Phone discussions and emails are part of my billable time.

Your manuscript is 60,000 words/240 manuscript pages. For a combined developmental edit and first-pass copy edit with style sheet, I estimate my work time to be between 30 hours/\$1050 and 40 hours/\$1400. Conscious of your budget, I will strive for the former.

Any estimate is only that: an estimate. It's possible that my work will not take as long as I first thought. Any pre-paid work that I do not actually perform will be promptly refunded to you. It's also possible that my work will take longer. I will do my best to stay within my estimated time range, and notify you in advance if more hours look likely.

I ask for a down payment of 50% of the lower estimate to begin work, and the remainder due on completion. You will receive by email the complete edited document as soon as your second payment is received and processed.

I will email you a detailed invoice of the work completed, for your tax records.

### **Expenses:**

I will absorb routine expenses such as telephone calls that are necessary to the completion of the work. I reserve the right to bill you for extraordinary expenses such as manuscript print outs and express mailing charges incurred at your request (however, as we will work mostly by email, these are not expected).

### **Rights in the Work:**

You are the sole author and copyright holder. The final manuscript that results from our work is your property. I will not use it in any way except as you authorize. (For instance, I may ask your permission to use a small portion of my editing work as an example for other potential clients.)

**Termination of This Agreement:**

Either of us may terminate this agreement for any reason at any time. All pre-paid work completed up to the time of termination will be sent to you, and any uncompleted hours refunded. I anticipate that I will only terminate for extreme reasons (such as unexpected illness because of an accident).

**Complimentary Copy of the Work:**

When published, you will send me one complimentary copy of the book for my archive.

**Agreed:**

If you agree with the terms spelled out in this letter, please attach your e-signature (as a graphic) to this agreement, email back to me, and make your down payment at my web site (<http://CatchWord.biz/Payments.html>). Alternatively, you can print out two copies, sign and date them, and mail them both to me with your first check. I will sign and date, return one copy to you, and retain one copy for my files. Depending on the schedule we've worked out in advance, I'll begin work once I receive your down payment.

Thank you for the opportunity to work on this project! I think it will be fun.

Sincerely,

Mary

Mary DeDanan

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)

I, Jane B. Lyrical, agree to the terms of this letter.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Date)