

My quilt story is more like a trip than a journey.

It is not so much as the journey into the quilting foray but to the stumbling and the stubbing of a big toe as I fall through the backdoor entering the quilting world. (My journey into quilting was never, ever going to happen except in nightmares.) I fight my way, searching for the front entrance and an escape. Unlike the story of Alice in Wonderland and more like the dreams of Lana in LALALand, the end to my fall may be in the far future.

In a swirl of color, the fabric prints and polka dots take form in patterns. Quilts I must create. (How could they consciously come to being as I had not learned to sew on a sewing machine. Hand stitching on a button has colored my vocabulary.) Those quaint stories of sitting underneath the quilting frame as mommy, aunties and grandma hand quilt a wedding quilt are fairytales to me; something to which I am never invited to attend.

So, I twirl and I run from right to left, searching for an end to my now weary woes: How do I escape? (I am not supposed to quilt. I used to get claustrophobia in a fabric store, that's when I would rather babysit 10 children rather than cross the threshold of a quilt shop.) I do not find my way out of the menagerie of roads leading to Broken Dishes and all those flocks of Flying Geese quilts. I have fallen over a block in the road, a pattern with flowers and Log Cabin Baskets telling me to "stop and smell the roses".

"No time, no time," I whimper. "There is absolutely no time to do it all," I say as I fall further into the quilting mode. The room on the left has all the applique work, the room to the right has all the paper piecing projects. Turning back is comforting, cribs of baby blankets. Moving ahead causes a crash as I fall further into LALALand and into the cool refreshing arms of William Morris, a gentlemanly touch into serenity. Time for reflection; a new feel for a new quilt. My stumble is a journey. Perhaps, I am, after all, a quilter. Twenty years of stumbling, twisting, twirling and falling onto a heap of quilts shows me that a quilter lives here. My journey is the confusion, the learning, the tripping and the stumbling over blocks upon blocks.

The journey is the pathway into creativity, a chaotic, albeit a gripping trip.

Lana Russ