



On Your Mark, Get Set... Stalk!

by Sandi Colwell

I'm not quite sure how it started. Perhaps it developed when I was a teenager or maybe I was born with it. My family isn't sure either. My friends think it's humorous. I think they find it funny because they see it in themselves. The "it" I am referring to is the dreaded, awful, package delivery stalker gene. I'm sure the corners of your lips are beginning to curl in that slow smile of recognition. Maybe, you too, suffer from the stalker gene as well. My theory is that the development of the gene comes slowly. It begins with the first online purchase of a craft supply. Whether you use PayPal or a money order, once you click on "Place My Order" it seems the gene is notified to rear its ugly head...let the stalking begin.

The first email arrives that your order is placed. This is quickly followed with an email that the order has been shipped. For me, it is at this point that I scroll up and down the screen frantically looking for the method of delivery and the all-important tracking number. Oh, the tracking number. It is the key to package delivery stalking. Immediately, I click to copy that number and then I head on over to the UPS, FEDEX or USPS Web site. I paste that baby into the tracking number space and anxiously I wait. Will the package be originating from a state somewhere across the country or a place close to home? Has it begun its long, arduous journey and more importantly, what is

the estimated delivery date? I track that package every day and reluctantly I admit, sometimes more than once. I can't help but feel I'm not alone. In fact, I know that I am not.

I could tell many stories of package delivery stalking. Sometimes I even stalk for my friends. For instance, the time I hosted a scrapbook party and when everyone's orders were 3 weeks late, I took to driving by the consultant's house on a daily basis looking for the big boxes that I knew would be left there at any moment. Imagine my non-surprise when she called to say that the orders were in—but of course I already knew that. I have waited not so patiently for craft supplies of all kinds, including but not limited to: beautiful, colorful blocks of polymer clay, books on creating clay masterpieces, complimentary copies of magazines in which I have had the privilege of being published, scrapbooking goodies, you name it.

Sad, you say? Maybe. Or are you recognizing a little bit of yourself in this story? I know my friends are. The crafty ladies in my neighborhood have even tracked down the postman a few streets over when anticipating a delivery and they have to leave the house before the postman makes it to our street. I even have a friend who tracked a package from the UK through Royal Mail! So I guess you could say our package delivery stalking has now gone international. I suppose the important thing here is that we can laugh at each other and ourselves when the gene appears to get the better of us.

There is no 12-step program for those of us who suffer. There is no cure for the disease either. The best we can do is treat our package delivery men and women well. As for our neighborhood, I'm fairly sure the postman knows what's going on. We're lucky to have him. I even think he gets a kick out of us! So take heart my fellow stalkers—you are not alone—now go track that package! ■

About the Author: Sandi Colwell

Sandi is an independent polymer clay designer who enjoys many other creative outlets such as scrapbooking, sewing, quilting and writing short stories. She began dabbling in polymer clay after being inspired by the many projects on the Carol Duvall Show. She has several polymer clay projects on the Polyform Products Web site and has had a few short stories published on the Web as well. Sandi lives south of Boston with her husband, Greg, and their three daughters (Amanda, Lindsey and Leah).