

Tuscany by Stephanie Payne Hurt

When Lana Daniels, a simple girl from Georgia inherits an olive farm in Tuscany, her world is turned upside down. Now she has one year to decide to stay or sell. To make things more interesting, she meets the foreman, Romeo Russo. He's the most handsome, infuriating man she's ever met, but together they're like oil and water. When strange accidents start happening on the farm, they have to work together to solve the mystery. Can they find common ground as things heat up? As the year comes to an end, will she make the right choice?

Editor's Critique:

This fun idea for a fish-out-of-water story reminds me a little of *Under the Tuscan Sun*. It sounds as if there will be some exciting chemistry between Lana and Romeo, and the accidents happening on the farm will keep things interesting as well.

You may want to rethink the time frame. Having the story take place over a year will diminish the immediacy of the romance and you may struggle to maintain the reader's attention. Plus, for a category-length novel you're probably going to have to skip over some important events in order to cover a whole year. Why not make the deadline just a month or two? Maybe there's some reason she needs to get back to the states, or it could be a financial issue.

Also, it's not clear what the conflict is between Romeo and Lana. You need something that will work to keep them apart, something they have to overcome in order to be together. What does each character stand to lose by being with the other? Maybe she wants to sell the farm and he's determined to stop her. Think about the characters' motivations and your conflict should become clear.

Thanks for submitting this pitch, and best of luck with your writing!