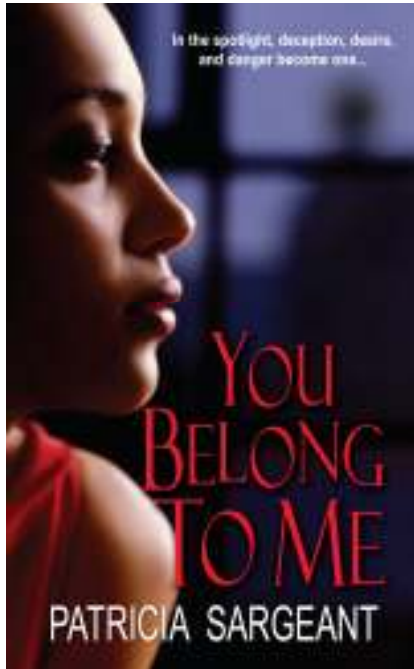


# The Call, Featuring Patricia Sargeant

By Kelley St. John

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**YOU BELONG TO ME** ~ Kensington ~ November, 2006



KSJ: Where were you when you received the call?

PS: I was in my office at work.

KSJ: Do you remember the date, time, etc.?

PS: It was approximately 9 a.m. March 1, 2006, which was Ash Wednesday. I was fasting and at first thought I was hallucinating. LOL!

Because of the delay between my submission and receiving the call – two years and four months, but who's counting? – I'd forcefully put the submission out of my mind, intending to immerse myself in my other projects.

KSJ: Whom did you tell first?

PS: I called my sister first. She's the one who cultivated my love of reading, which led to my desire to write fiction. So, in effect, she gave me the dream of becoming a published fiction author. We screamed and laughed and

screamed some more together. I felt 12 years old. It was a good time.

Then I called my husband. He's the one who's had to live with my imaginary friends. LOL! He was out of town taping a basketball game for ESPN, I think. He's a camera operator. I asked if he was sitting. He said he was near the utility truck. I told him to lean against the truck; I had some exciting news for him. I could actually hear the smile in his response. I waited up for him that night. He got home around 2 a.m. and gave me a huge hug. He lifted me off my feet – and realigned a couple of vertebra. It was a good time.

KSJ: What did you do to celebrate?

PS: To celebrate The Call, I bought myself a huge chocolate chip cookie. To celebrate the contract, which made it seem more real to me – go figure <g> – my husband took me to Outback Steakhouse. I can do some serious damage with an Outback Steakhouse menu.

KSJ: How long after the call did your book hit the shelves? Or, if it isn't available yet, when will it hit the shelves?

PS: My debut novel, You Belong To Me (Can you believe it!?) will be available November 2006. It's a Kensington Dafina release and will be on shelves in Barnes and Noble, Waldenbooks and Borders.

KSJ: How did your book make it to the right editor's hands? Via a contest? An agent? A query?

PS: I'd heard Kensington was launching an African American romance line. I submitted a proposal November 2003. Yes, 2003. I followed-up a couple of times, but never received a

response. Finally, March 2005, I called the editor's office. Her very nice assistant told me they didn't have a record of receiving my proposal, but she invited me to send my complete.

Another round of waiting ensued. I sent the editor, Karen Thomas, an e-mail November 2005 asking whether the manuscript was still under consideration. Two hours later, she sent me an e-mail explaining she'd enjoyed the manuscript and would call me next week. Next week became March 2006.

I think the moral of this story is never give up, never surrender your dreams. Persistence does pay off. If you think you have a fit with a line, don't be afraid to follow up.

KSJ: What was the original book title? If it changed, what did it become?

PS: Kensington changed the title to *You Belong To Me*. They thought that was a sexier title.

KSJ: Did you have a website prior to getting the call? Do you feel it helped with your sale? And, if you have a website, what is the url?

PS: I didn't have a Web site prior to getting the call, but I can see the benefit of having a Web site in advance to help build a fan base.

I have a Web site now, though, thanks to a wonderful Web designer. The URL is [www.patriciasargeant.com](http://www.patriciasargeant.com).

I also have an e-mail distribution titled *Road to Publication* in which I chronicle what I'm doing to prepare for my launch date: marketing, promotion, the contract, interacting with my agent, Roberta Brown, and my editor, Karen Thomas. It's my way of paying forward some of the help I received on this journey. So many people helped me with advice, insight, knowledge and encouragement while I was working toward publication. I know I would not have realized my dream of becoming a published author without their kindness and generosity. If anyone is interested in joining my distribution, they can send an e-mail to [booksbypatricia@yahoo.com](mailto:booksbypatricia@yahoo.com) and put "Road to Publication" in the subject heading.

KSJ: And finally, is your book available for readers now? If so, where can they buy a copy?

PS: My book, *You Belong To Me*, will be available November 2006 at Barnes and Noble, Waldenbooks and Borders. It also will be available at [BarnesandNoble.com](http://BarnesandNoble.com) and [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

*Kelley St. John's first book, GOOD GIRLS DON'T, is available now. Her next release, REAL WOMEN DON'T WEAR SIZE 2 is a September 2006 Warner release. Visit her website: [www.kelleystjohn.com](http://www.kelleystjohn.com) to read over one hundred interviews on THE CALL. And when you get THE CALL, or if you've already received the call and want to share your story, send her an email at [Kelley@kelleysbooks.com](mailto:Kelley@kelleysbooks.com) so she can feature you.*

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