



BIG BREAK: When Warren's husband was transferred to British Columbia from Ontario in 1996, she abandoned her career in communications to stay home and devote more time to her two preteen children – and try her hand at writing the romance novels she liked to read. In 2000 Warren had two manuscripts on editors' desks at Toronto-based Harlequin and a third entered in a contest for Blaze, Harlequin's steamy

new line. (Warren, who is in her early 40s, describes a Blaze heroine as "experienced, not so much the virgin in the typing pool stereotype.") She received "the call" and almost fainted: Harlequin wanted all three novels – a literary hat trick.

BEST-KEPT SECRET: "Hot baths," says Warren, laughing, adding that she actually toils in the tub: visualizing, plotting and listening to the characters who never stop chattering in her head.

WORDS OF WISDOM: "It took four years of writing and submitting before I sold [my manuscripts] to Harlequin. There were times when I almost gave up, but I'm pretty stubborn. I feel like one of my heroines: in the end, I got my dream." **H**

head BY SHERI RADFORD over heels

When new writer Nancy Warren submitted three manuscripts to Harlequin Books in one year, it was love at first sight.

CLAIM TO FAME: Prolific Vancouver writer of playful Harlequin Romance novels – 10 in the past three years.

LATE-BREAKING: Nancy Warren's new body of feisty romantic fiction, *Drive Me Crazy* (published by Kensington Brava), hits bookstore shelves in February. Things heat up when a librarian meets an art historian ("the Indiana Jones of the art world") over a decidedly unromantic dead body. Elements of comedy and suspense round out the romantic entanglement.