

Science Fiction & Sub-Genres

<http://dorion9.wix.com/authorscafe>

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By Gary Dorion

MARY SHELLEY: THE WORLD'S FIRST SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR WITH HER MASTERPIECE

In this edition we feature ten writers in various genres including science fiction, paranormal, dystopian, memoir and historical fiction. Thanks to all writers who made great submissions to this, our fourth magazine but our first multi-genre issue.

Being that the focus for the majority of authors this month is on science fiction and sub-genres, it's fitting that we look at one of the originals - Mary Shelley (1797-1851), who made her debut as a writer in 1818 with her best-known Gothic horror novel, ***Frankenstein or Prometheus***. She became the first famous science fiction writer. Her story about Dr. Frankenstein is a cautionary tale about the dangers of scientific inquiry and experimentation. The

book basically prophesied that unrestricted scientific and technological growth may be the then future, proverbial, monstrous genie that would be let out of the bottle and which could never put back inside. Well, welcome now to the 21st Century where the genie is out of the bottle in many forms.

This warning is more applicable in today's world than in Shelley's and perhaps that is the major reason why science fiction - with all of its sub-genres including paranormal, dystopian, supernatural, paranormal romance, horror, etc. - has become so popular a subject for writers well into this 21st Century. Some of our writers seem hopeful and optimistic while at least one expresses a profound lack of hope for the earth's future – looking

uncomfortably toward a dystopian world.

Today we face many potential horrors with the growth of enormous weapons arsenals around the world from nuclear-armed states such as North Korea, Pakistan, Israel and soon – Iran – as well as Russia, China, Britain, France and the USA. Where will it end? Biological and chemical weapons are nearly as lethal. The pressure is on for many countries to develop nuclear technology because it is not only considered a 'protection' – a defense against aggressor states – but it also immeasurably displays a state's power and ability to influence and to throw its weight around. The Middle East seemingly is where the race is intensifying to the extent that it can threaten countries on a global scale. North

Korea continues its sabre rattling with its nuclear technology development, threatening the USA, Japan, South Korea and, perhaps, others. A nuclear Iran may cause Israel to upgrade its nuclear arsenal and Saudi Arabia might feel compelled to develop the technology or lose the race for hegemony in the region. Potentially the more immediate and more lethal threat might be posed by “terrorist organizations” such as those operating in Syria and Iraq who, it seems, would like to acquire nuclear weapons.

The genie has been out of the bottle since 1944-45, and even earlier as a clandestine German project had begun in 1939.

In this issue, many authors comment on the genre of science fiction and its various sub-genres but also on historical and detective fiction and memoir. They talk about the reasons they are attracted to certain genres, and – with science fiction - why they believe its popularity among writers and readers has gone unabated since Shelley’s time. As in each of the previous magazines, where we featured a chapter so of a famous writer of old, so in this issue we will end Chapter 1 of Shelley’s masterpiece.

Frankenstein might never have been created had it not been for a challenge that she and several other major writers, including Lord Byron, made to one another on a night of inclement weather to write a Gothic story and to get together at another time to see who wrote the best one. Shelley’s book, *Frankenstein*, was the historical winner.

In addition to Sci-Fi authors, we are featuring others in this multi-

genre edition and will begin with one of them. Little White Bird, whose birth name is Shelley Ott, wrote a memoir about her experiences living at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.



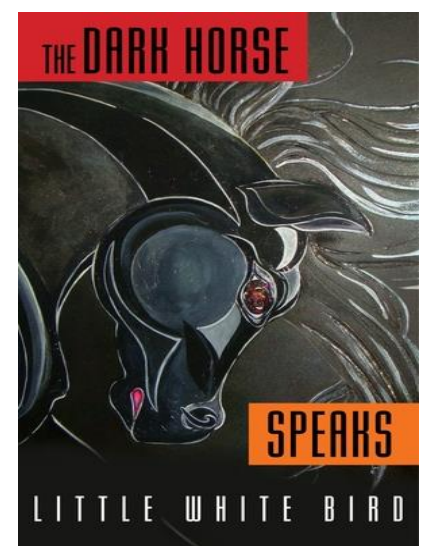
Little White Bird (Shelley Ott)

The “noble savage,” is a common literary characterization that idealizes the indigenous, natural man unsullied by civilization, said Little White Bird (LWB). “The concept has existed in various forms since the dawn of time and is prominent during the Romanticism movement,” she stated. “Savage” may sound like an offensive word, but it was originally intended to mean beautifully “wild,” such as the free spirit of the wild flower growing on the prairie. The Native American “noble savage” character lives on a mythicized, exotic frontier, according to LWB. “He is quiet, stoic, and incapable of lying. He is in touch with Nature and simple things. His beautifully uneducated soul has not been corrupted by science or

civilization. Due to this purity, he is a symbol for the innate goodness of humanity. He is not what I found on the modern day Pine Ridge Indian Reservation,” she said.

I moved to the reservation

without knowing anything about Native American traditions, values, culture, or ceremonies. I had only vague, romantic stereotypes learned from society. I believed I would encounter freedom, love, passion, a respect for nature and all its elements by living on the reservation. Marrying into it would surely be my salvation from society. I could not foresee what I found: Reality. A third world country right here in the United States. I wrote, “The images of poverty juxtaposed with a sense of unbroken spirit spoke to my soul and moved me in a way I had never felt before. I had an unexplainable desire to experience the heartbreak and history for myself.” The Romantic writers would understand how the melancholic beauty drew me in.



“Towards the end of the Romanticism movement,

historical conflicts between white man and the Indian were coming to a head. “Noble savage” was used sarcastically by society to mean “cruel,” the beast-like Indian. Ironically, it is the white man who ends up being the cruel beast in his devaluation of the Indian, as marked by the last of the American Indian Wars, the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890.

By 1890, the “noble savage” is seen as less than human, less than cord wood, as hundreds of Indian bodies murdered by U.S. Soldiers lay in the blizzard, twisted and frozen in death, only to be tossed into a mass unmarked grave three days later. That's the harsh reality of being Indian. Eagles with sunbeams in their wings do not alight on Indian shoulders, wolves don't lick their feet. Indians are human, with all the horrors being human entails.

My new Lakota family's ancestors were murdered at the Wounded Knee Massacre on land practically outside our back door and I was immersed in the emotional aftermath of war. The main influence on me during this vignette of my life is my husband, named Chief Two Bear Paws in my memoir. He is the last of the heroic “noble savages.” He is headsman, a great leader of his people, the respected elder of an extended family of about 2,000 members, a role model, a keeper of traditions. He is, while understandably so, a resentful racist. He is also an abuser of women, which can never be excused. Just because he is an Indian doesn't mean he is not a man, and man has flaws. This modern day Indian does not personify the Romantic symbol for

the innate goodness of all mankind.

Some people who pick up my memoir are looking for this, though. They want to read about the idealized, Romanticism Indian. They don't want to face tragic Realism, the poverty, the diabetes, the horror of these concentration camps called “Indian Reservations.” And the Indians don't want me giving away the insider story since the white man, the enemy, is rarely allowed deep into the inner circle of this remote band of Lakota, as I was. But, as I write in *The Dark Horse Speaks*, “It was never the poverty that deterred me, never the disease, unsanitary conditions, bugs or garbage, those things were never even a thought in my head as a reason for not staying. I kept looking for the good and always found it each day. I was happy on the reservation. It would have all worked out if Chief could have been a little nicer to me. The only thing I was missing was love and respect from my partner. Maybe he had changed.” The reality of his abuse and his inability to love me were completely heart wrenching, a stark contrast to all the good I believed in. This is why my memoir is better seen as a story of my personal growth instead a story of the Lakota, or any Indian tribe for that matter. *The Dark Horse Speaks* is the sound of my innocence shattering, a transition of myself from a naive little girl to a jaded, grown woman. My 10th grade English teacher would be proud.

Brief Biography:

I grew up in Connecticut. I constantly rebelled against the city

way of life. Seeking nature, I struck out on my own and moved to New Hampshire, then went further north to college at the University of Maine, Orono. Going north brought me west to South Dakota. A cross-country motorcycle journey led me to become Little White Bird. I was arranged to marry one of the last remaining Oglala Lakota Chiefs. We lived on the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in the remote village of Wounded Knee, where my heart will always be buried.

I read everything I was assigned in school. Not the Cliff notes versions, but the real thing. Call me a geek or a dreamer, but I could never get enough of seeing the world through another's eyes. We all physically live in the same world, but we experience it from our own personal bubble. I've always enjoyed letting go of my own and entering this new version of reality. I strive to live, love, and learn with empathy.

I never thought it would bite me in the bum. And hard. I wrote my memoir *The Dark Horse Speaks* because, like Harper Lee and *To Kill A Mockingbird*, I felt I had something to say and it was the right time to say it. Maybe I just have one book in me, time will tell. I didn't write because I am a writer. Since the age of five, I saw my adult career as a school teacher, one who, at best, perhaps writes and illustrates children's books during summer vacations. Instead, I wrote a memoir. I never had any intention of becoming a writer. The story reared up from my real life and chose me. It grabbed me by the throat and said, “Bleed your soul onto this paper or I will kill you.” While I know

for certain my love of reading influenced my writing style and story structure in a positive way, reading has done more to doom me than save me. This includes Mary Crow Dog's memoir, *Lakota Woman*, which drove me to the reservation. I can't say I know what it feels like to be a writer. My memoir was therapy for me, but it was almost the death of me.

The Romantic period poet Percy Bysshe Shelley comes to mind. In a story told by my favorite teacher, my 10th grade English teacher, "Percy kept throwing himself into the ocean, hoping to drown, yet failing miserably each time. He didn't give up, though. He kept trying until he got it right. Which he did, once, that last time, and that's what counts." Perhaps my 10th grade English teacher's cynically jaded, yet well-worded viewpoints helped prepare me for my fascination with Romanticism in 11th grade.

The Romantic movement in literature (approx. 1800 to 1850) swept me off my feet; it spoke for my soul. Immersing myself in Romanticism was like finding the perfect group therapy where everyone present is just as messed up as you are. Members of my personal literary therapy circle were Edgar Allen Poe, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Emily Dickinson, and Nathaniel Hawthorne. The group leaders, Thoreau, Emerson, and Whitman, brought a perspective of Transcendentalism and Realism with elements of Romanticism thematic in their works.

Romanticism was almost an emotional revolt against the Industrial Revolution. The Romantic period valued the

individual over society. It valued emotion over logic. It glorified nature and yearned for the idealized life of the past. Resonating with such beliefs set me up to fall for the American Indian reservation.

When, at 30, I had an opportunity to give up my industrialized life, turn my back on society's rules and laws, cut myself off from everyone and everything I knew, and run towards an idealized life of isolation with respect for nature, intuition over science, creativity over reason, emotions over logic, and live outside the burdens of society with the innate good of the American Indian, well, who wouldn't?

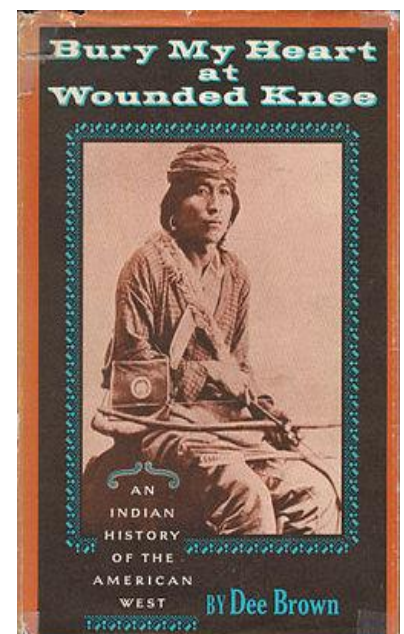
The unfortunate thing is, realism tarnishes the idealistic. At best, there is beauty in tragedy, which leads to nostalgic melancholy, a state that is also very much an element of Romanticism.

Like the erratic behavior in many Poe characters, I demonstrated illogical behavior in my memoir because I was run by pure emotions. The visual of Percy Bysshe Shelley tossing himself into the ocean repeatedly parallels with my actions in my memoir, *The Dark Horse Speaks*, and how I kept throwing myself back to the Reservation over and over, hoping for a different outcome. In contrast with Percy's intent, however, I threw myself onto the ocean of hope and kept receiving lessons in death, which I refused to learn.

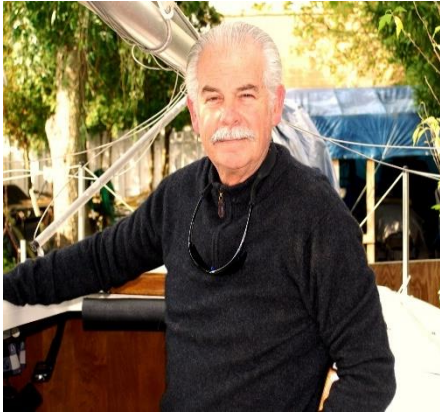
Like Herman Melville seeking the white whale, the perfection and solace I sought on the reservation was elusive and tragic.

I was crucified on social media, defeated by death threats and almost destroyed. I was driven to depression and suicidal decisions as I risked my life to double check my story by recently returning to the reservation. I confirmed I had captured my experiences on the Pine Ridge Reservation perfectly in my memoir as it captured me - which is why my heart will always be buried at Wounded Knee. Even if I'm criticized for feeling that way. It is *my* heart. My story. No-one can take my truth away from me.

Editor's Note: Little White Bird in the above paragraphs makes several allusions to the now-famous 1971 book - *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, 1971, by Dee Brown. Brown, who was not Native America, writes in this book about the destruction of Native American culture primarily in the 19th Century, the end of which saw the massacre at Wounded Knee where Little White Bird resided for a period.



Our next author is a retired cop who writes in the crime fiction genre. Meet Mike Fuller.



Mike Fuller

“The last thing a cop wants is publicity, or most cops, that is,” said Fuller. “I was one of the former. This will be difficult but now that I’m well retired and out of the mix, I’ll give it a go.

“The best part of the stories was often what was left out of the “official” reports. Initial and follow-up crime reports were to be fact based and no opinions please. It was drilled into me from the police academy days to the detective bureau. Leave out the supposition, the off color dramatics and hit the elements of the crime. It wasn’t enough for me.

My first crime novel began several years before anyone knew about it. My beautiful Child Bride finally figured it out when I was pounding away at my desk in the guest bedroom well after midnight. But there it rested. The tale transformed through several generations of word processing programs and was almost forgotten. My old partner, now

also retired and a talented writer of stage plays, and his wonderful wife pushed me into letting them read the book. But there was a big problem. My cops in the book drove 90’s Chevy’s and communicated by beeper and pay phone. Ancient artifacts by today’s standards. So some idle retirement time was replaced by more pounding in the guest bedroom office and *SINK RATE* grew into up to date police cars and smart phones. But what remained the same was the depth of the characters. The story is really about the people. Good guys and bad. Bad guys have moms and sisters too.

But it goes back even before that. Back to a skinny little kid in an upstairs bedroom and the two books a month Mom could afford to buy from the school program. The images the printed words formed in that young mind demanded more. More books. Reading was the world outside of poverty and small town cracked sidewalks and baseball on a vacant lot with the skin held on the ball by tape. That and Sky King in black and white on Saturday. Wonders, adventures, new things to learn about. I couldn’t get enough.

Why crime fiction? It’s what I know and it’s fun. Much of what I write about is based on real incidents from over thirty-six years in the business. Most of it was routine and matter of fact. But slipping around the side of a house in the dark with a nut and a gun inside leaves an impression. When it all shakes out there is always more to it than what ends up in the papers or in court. That’s often the very best parts of it. I try to tell the

story from all sides. Good guys and bad. My books follow them right from the beginning - the bad guy’s story and the good guys trying to figure out what happened and who did it.

What authors influenced me? Waumbaugh, Sandford, Griffen, McBain and many more. But crime fiction was only a part of what I enjoyed reading. Sailing ships, the wild west, even Jimmy Breslin and Jimmy Buffett also fit in. History and war as well as biography and true adventure. Sadly, my classical education suffered and never bloomed. I often feel the loss and try not to be too envious of those that sniff the air at a higher level. There was plenty of good stuff down here with the rest of the public school and state university crowd. It has to be interesting and (there’s that word again) fun.

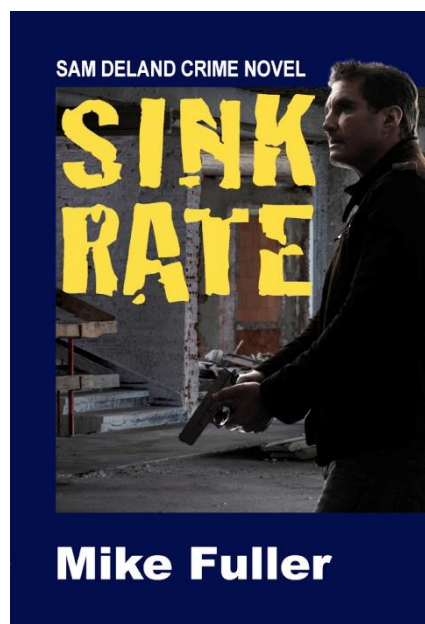
Do I make a plan? Yes and no. The vague plan forms in my head. I then research and research some more until the details begin to become clear. Travel is part of my research. Many of the scene portrayals are formed from being at the location and using the place to shape the story. When all else fails, make it up. It is fiction after all. Real life and real experience dictate the rest of the story. Not every gunshot hits its target. Not every plan, good guy or bad, works. And watch out for the forensics. There are plenty of experts out there and more often than not the case detective isn’t one of them.

***SINK RATE* is the first novel** featuring our hero, state police Corporal Sam Deland. *ROPE BREAK* followed and *SIDE SLIP* is due out later this year. The next

is forming on the hard drive and will continue the characters' lives and mysteries. The titles are taken from sailplane (gliders to land lubbers) terminology. I stopped flying years ago but the characters step in and take me with them up and away. Multi-dimensional people and places with evil creeps thrown in for a little chilling (you guessed it) fun.

SINK RATE: Excerpt

Corporal Sam Deland has a lot on his plate. He's a dog lover, single dad, jet pilot, likes girls and his tight knit state police squad is buried under the weight of an unsolved brutal double murder that has stunned his quiet upstate community. The pressure mounts as Sam's team tracks the bad guys into Philadelphia's tough, gritty streets. The characters are the real story though and with humor, hard work and luck Sam's team draws the reader's mind to unexpected and surprising places. Realistic police work with a rich descriptive character and scene portrayal is carefully crafted into a story that will be hard to put down.



Calvin thought he was diving head first into the blast. It seemed only inches from his face and he was sure he was going to die and he was angry. For falling, and angry because he couldn't get his own gun out. He wanted to fight back, he couldn't.

Jerome followed his target as the black man came toward him and went face first into the dirt at his feet. The shell casing was still tumbling through the air when Jerome squeezed again and the second bullet went into the man's back.

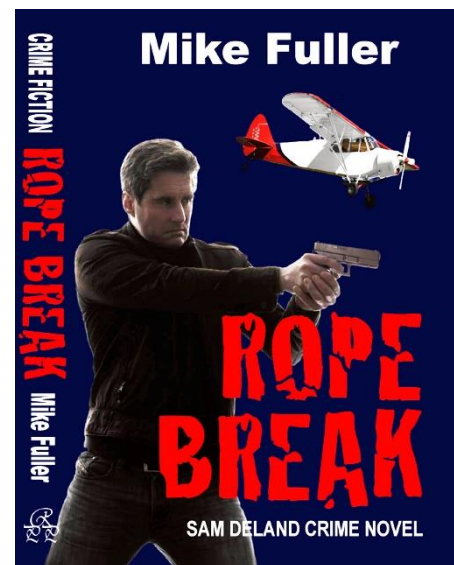
Johnny yanked his gun out and scrambled through the kitchen and to the back door as the sound waves from the second shot jolted him.

Calvin felt the hammer blow in his right shoulder. It didn't hurt so much as it seemed to knock the wind out of him. He couldn't get his hands out in front of him as he went down and hit the ground face first sliding forward almost to the feet of the man trying to kill him.

Don started yelling before the echo of the second shot even reached him, "Drop the gun!" Don's .45 was double action. He didn't need to release any safety, when he pulled the trigger the gun would fire just like a revolver. He knew when he saw the second shot he would have to shoot this man. The range was a little over twenty yards. Don was a good shot, but any shot over about fifteen yards is difficult. Add fear, shock, darkness and a moving target and it's damn near impossible.

Calvin felt the heat from the second shot. The blow hurt this time and drove into his back and

down his legs. It felt like his feet were going to explode. He was looking right at the legs of his attacker less than a foot in front of him. His right side wasn't following orders from his brain and he didn't know if he had his gun in his hand or not. He thought, *how odd it is that his guy actually has a crease in his jeans...*



He's worried about being due in Federal Court tomorrow and trying to enjoy his day off when it turns ugly once again. Corporal Sam Deland is drawn into another mystery double murder in his usually quiet suburban community and Sam's team of state police investigators have to dig deep into the gang and drug underground to find the shooters. The Oz, Calvin and Johnny are as different as could be but these tough, smart state troopers meld together their talents to work through the twisting trail of leads on this bloody case with Sam. But just as Sam sees the mystery starting to come together he is slammed in the face with his own family tragedy when Sam's 18-year-old son and his son's beautiful Cuban-

American girlfriend turn up missing and in danger over a thousand miles away.

ROPE BREAK EXERPT:

Grace was moving much slower now. She needed water and her vision was blurring if she ran too fast. She held it to a walk, a fast walk. It was all she could do. Now she wished she had eaten more, she needed the energy.

She could see the looming shadows of trees ahead. Several big oaks were clustered together and she came up to the edge of the starlight shadow and stepped in. At the base of one of the oaks was a clear spot and she sat down to rest. She was determined not to fall asleep again and actually slapped herself twice to keep alert.

There was a fallen piece of thin oak branch close to her legs and she reached over and flipped it away into a palmetto cluster. The sound she heard puzzled her. Then all the TV shows and movies she had seen in the past told her what the buzzing sound was. She couldn't see the snake, but it was there. The buzzing got louder and she was afraid to move...

What's next? Well, cops and robbers are only the beginning. Along life's way I learned a bit about sailing ships and getting along in the more uncivilized parts of this country. Historical fiction is my second love. My next release is scheduled for this summer, the land and sea action/adventure novel, *CAPTAIN'S CROSS*, set in colonial America. More fun!

Sink Rate

Amazon: <http://goo.gl/1kJbQ0>

Rope Break on amazon:

<http://goo.gl/cy1JzV>

website:

<http://mikefullerauthor.com>

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Twitter:

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Our next author is our first Sci-Fi author who writes in a multi-genre approach with a focus on the paranormal sub-genre. Meet Elisabeth Zguta.



Elisabeth Zguta

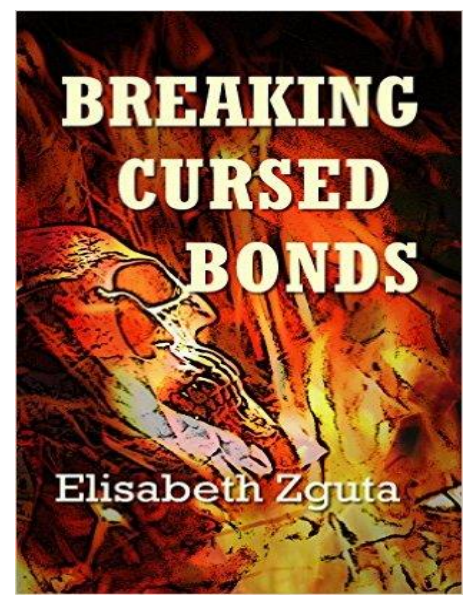
How did you come to the genre? Do you write in other genres? What do you prefer if you write in different genres and why?

I've always been open to the possibility and the existence of the paranormal. 'I want to believe', as they say in the X-Files. I've experienced strange feelings, odd incidents, and dreams. Many have experienced that feeling—knowing someone is there, maybe

a lost loved one. I've experienced this strange phenomenon after my father died, and at other times. Some things aren't explained through science, but we know they exist.

When I began writing my first novel, *Breaking Cursed Bonds*, one of my main characters decided to have a clairvoyant talent. Instead of ignoring the direction my character took, I followed her lead. The character Emilie de Gourgues is an empath. She feels the emotions of others around her without knowing the cause. No mind reading talents, she only experiences emotions. You can imagine how horrific that could feel when in a room filled with angry people.

The next thing I knew, the de Gourgues family in my story had a legacy curse. It existed because of an ancient ceremony between the family's ancestor and the Timucua tribe chief. This idea was inspired by the real history of the French Huguenots' situation in Florida in the 1500s. The story's flow happened naturally. When I began writing the story, my family had recently endured the loss of my young nephew. I felt my family had been cursed in a sense, and I



empathized with my characters as they developed.

My stories involve more than one genre. They are paranormal in nature, but also have a bit of historical fiction, romance, and of course thrills and suspense. Some may say even a touch of horror, but it's all subjective. Burning old bones in graves and at burial sites may seem horrific to some readers. But to others it's acceptable in the paranormal genre. I enjoy reading and writing in all genres and like to write mysteries. But murder alone isn't enough for my stories.

I took the mystery and placed it into the paranormal genre, fused it with horror, thriller, suspense, and mystery . . . to create the plot. To me the mix matters. The main idea is to choose a genre, then you must deliver the necessities expected by the reader.

In paranormal genre the character(s) are expected to have ESP talents. Clairvoyant, mind reader, dreamer - they are all characters with the gift. Even the ability to speak with the dead is considered a paranormal gift. Or the plot must have religious overtones, apparitions, curses. Paranormal could also involve alien forces or otherworldly experiences like dwellers on the threshold at the edge of other realms. It's all spooky stuff.

What is paranormal literature? Is it similar to supernatural? What are the distinctions?3339

Paranormal literature is anything that contains strange phenomena in its storytelling. It could be

characters with strange talents. Think of the classic *The Ghost of Captain Gregg* and *Mrs. Muir* a novel written in 1945 by R. A. Dick, which is the definition of the classic ghost 'apparition'. Compare that to *Poltergeist* by James Khan. It was written after the successful horror movie about a suburban family terrorized by 'unseen forces'. Both are paranormal in nature but succinctly different.

A more recent paranormal book is the story *Heart-Shaped Box* the debut horror novel of author Joe Hill, which includes a nasty ghost. Then there are *The Bishop Files* by Kay Hooper, NY Times Best Seller. The book series has characters sporting a variation of clairvoyant talents, which they use to fight crime. My favorite paranormal character appears in the series *Odd Thomas* by Dean Koontz. *Odd Thomas* fights for justice, encounters strange 'shades', and receives information from the dead.

The paranormal genre varies, depending on how an author mixes the plot.

Supernatural fiction is similar to paranormal also containing strange phenomena. Yet, supernatural usually goes further. The characters have supernatural abilities that defy science, like shapeshifters, vampires, changelings, and werewolves. Often supernatural tales have more horror invested in the plot. In my second book, *Exposing Secret Sins*, I added the supernatural element. Tom Bennett, the antagonist, happens to turn into a shapeshifter wolf. I also used a bit of historical Native American

folklore to give the story a sense of realism.

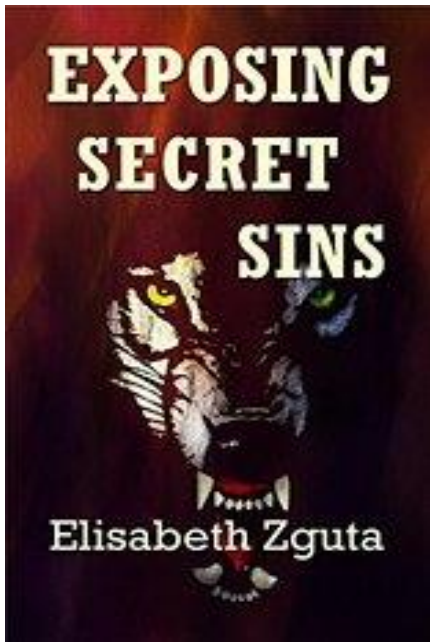
There are also supernatural sub-genres that include zombies and walking dead, and aliens for example. The genre is wide open to interpretation and can be mixed with other genres to create a unique tale.

Some authors do not like to be 'pigeon-holed' by being squeezed into a genre. Do they have a legitimate concern or even a gripe?

I think of genre as a way to categorize a book like they would in a library or bookstore. It's used to identify the story's main style so a reader knows what section to visit to find a book with the anticipated elements they seek. For example, in paranormal the reader expects some kind of abnormal presence or existence. They will search for books with those elements. Genre lists, however, often shift to make way for new additions like YA, which is a new popular category. New markets like Netflix for movies can also change our perspective on categories, and pushes to change the book genre lists. The problem arises when genre lists change and no longer match up with our work. Of course, most stories are a mix of genre, which makes distinguishing the most prevalent a difficult decision.

In my *Curses & Secrets* serial, book one *Breaking Cursed Bonds* is a paranormal, with the added elements of suspense, mystery, and romance. The main character is a clairvoyant. Book two, *Exposing Secret Sins* has the paranormal sister still in the story-line, but I also added elements of a

supernatural being. My editor suggested choosing supernatural as the most relevant genre for the second book, so the reader knows what to expect from the novel. It's difficult to decide, but necessary to reach our target readers.



Here's an interesting conversation between Neil Gaiman and Kazuo Ishiguro last June. It's about the politics of storytelling and genre division. Anyone interested to hear more about the genre controversy should check it out.

<http://ow.ly/ZOtIs> (original longer url)

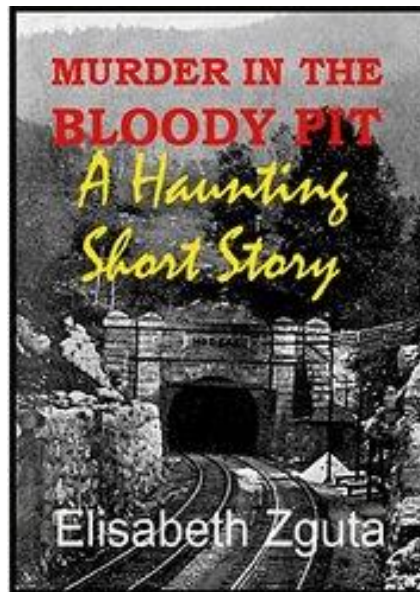
<http://www.newstatesman.com/2015/05/neil-gaiman-kazuo-ishiguro-interview-literature-genre-machines-can-toil-they-can-t-imagine>)

Even well-established authors struggle with the constraints of genre definitions.

Is paranormal a sub-genre or a major category and is it related to 'horror'? If so, which is which in

terms of the major genre and the sub-genre?

Paranormal is treated like a sub-genre, and that explains why there are complaints. The paranormal stories have to hide behind other categories. I believe that most paranormal lean toward horror in the classic sense. Yet, some places like Borders have moved away from the horror genre all together. Often readers are confused with the horror genre and think of it as belonging to chain-saw killers, with blood and guts, like in the movies. This makes me sad because I enjoy horror, and a good paranormal tale can be horrific.



Another issue an author of the paranormal genre faces is the difference in the lists. They aren't consistent from distributor to distributor. For example, when one searches in Kindle eBooks to find 'paranormal' you must drill down from either of these two: Romance category and then Paranormal, or Mystery / Thriller / Suspense / then Paranormal. There

is no thread named 'paranormal'. On the Kobo site, you have to choose Romance, then Paranormal or YA fiction then Paranormal. Even when purchasing an ISBN at Bowker, assigning the book as paranormal is not an option, you must first go to Romance, then Paranormal. If my paranormal novel, *Breaking Cursed Bonds*, had no romantic or suspense element, I would have been out of luck.

The saving grace in all this definition of genre is that we do get to use the other elements in the story as the tag words. Remain true and use the best genre available to label your book for no other reason than to keep your reader happy. I hope someday paranormal will stand alone as a genre everywhere.

Who are some of your favorite authors and why do you like them?

I enjoy reading many genres and authors. The recently published five book series LINGER by Ed Fallon is a favorite of mine in the paranormal/horror/thriller genre. The three main characters are unique and intriguing and the plot is gripping—the kind of stories you bite your nails while reading.

My favorite horror/thriller writer is Jeremy Bates, next in line with the greats—right there with Koontz and King—and master of twisted endings. His novels are stuffed with suspense but my two favorite books are *Suicide Forest* and *Taste of Fear*.

A great series for the thriller/suspense novels with the paranormal touch is the London

Psychic Series by J.F. Penn. The first book *Desecration* will show you a different view of life and death. Great characters spring to life a bold storyline.

Another great book

GREYLOCK by Paula Cappa is a favorite of mine. It's a glorious fusion of old mystery. The paranormal blends with folklore and delivers a musical plot. The main character is driven to the brink—an intense mystical murder story.

Currently I'm binge reading the historical/fiction/action-adventure of the *Outlander* series and trying to catch up on the books by Diana Gabaldon. Different from the modern fast-paced thrillers, it's more of a detailed story that brings the reader into the characters' lives. Enthralling.

I also enjoy the works of

authors: Ken Follett, Ray Bradbury, Jim Butcher, Saul Bellow, Kristin Hannah, Karin Slaughter and many more. Let's not forget past greats: Truman Capote, Edgar Allan Poe, H. P. Lovecraft, Arthur Conan Doyle, Gaston Leroux and Virginia Wolfe. So many authors and books, I can't begin to scratch the surface. I hope more people pick up some of the books I mentioned and discover the joy for themselves.

What do you like about paranormal?

The reason I chose to add the paranormal element to my books, *Breaking Cursed Bonds* and *Exposing Secret Sins*, is the mystery it adds to the story. In real life, we have the mundane. So when we pick up a book to read

it's nice to imagine the things that don't happen in our daily routine. Paranormal opens the door to so many possibilities. Once the reader enters the paranormal world and meets the characters, they can become the dweller of the threshold. They can seek the answers to the questions of the heart. If you want to believe, then read paranormal novels.

Book Blurb:

Breaking Cursed Bonds (Curses & Secrets Book One)

Jeremy Laughton finds his beloved Uncle Thaddeus dead in his Surrey home. The precious ancient journal holding the answers to family secrets, is stolen.

Days later in Memphis, Emilie de Gourgues discovers the ancient journal. It reveals stories of French seamen, Florida tribes, and ancient ceremonies, responsible for the curse of her bloodline. Haunted by her mother's mysterious death when Emilie was still a child, the gifted empath vows to break the curse before it destroys any more of the family she loves.

Each on a quest to find answers, Emilie and Jeremy cross paths in New Orleans. They are drawn to one another, helpless to fight their attraction. The mystery of the de Gourgues curse pulls them both deeper into a world of voodoo, superstition, and darkness. Travel with Emilie and Jeremy from Memphis to New Orleans, then Florida to France, as they search for the answers to their cursed bonds.

Exposing Secret Sins (Curses & Secrets Book Two)

Michelle de Gourgues is haunted by a secret from the past and ends up chased and struggling for her life. Caught up in the strong hold of the underworld secret Black Wolf Society, Michelle soon finds herself running for her life. Nevertheless, it's not a secret society chasing her now . . . it's a real monster.

Coming soon— Seeking Redemption (Curses & Secrets Book Three) Synopsis:

Robert de Gourgues has done horrible things in the past, even to his own family. He wants to start anew, but is hounded by the elite Black Wolf Society. To remain free from arrest, Robert agrees to spy on the treacherous group for FBI Agent Sloan. Robert wants a normal life but ends up with something he never dreamed possible . . . will he survive the evil group's reach?

Brief Bio:

Elisabeth Zguta currently lives in the Memphis area, but grew up in New England and also lived in upper New York state and Florida. is an advocate for independent publishing and encourages all writers to learn the skills needed for today's book markets and to keep in touch with the new technologies.

She is curious about everything, and her attention goes to many places and topics. A life learner, she is mother to four grown children and has a grandson.

An avid reader, nothing brings her more satisfaction than reading something new that sparks her imagination, or connecting with other people regarding a topic.

She is an Indie Author of paranormal and supernatural, suspense novels and blogs.

Find out more at her website:

<http://ezindiepublishing.com>

Book Links:

Breaking Cursed Bonds

<http://www.amazon.com/Breaking-Cursed-Bonds-Curses-Secrets-ebook/dp/B00ESI8UJ8/ezinpr-20>

Exposing Secret Sins

<http://www.amazon.com/Exposing-Secret-Sins-Curses-Secrets-ebook/dp/B0128939RQ/ezinpr-20>

Social Media:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/zguta>

her handle @zguta

Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ElisabethZguta>

Google +:

<https://plus.google.com/+ElisabethZguta>



Regina Puckett

"I love my characters, Liberty and Boy, and the post-apocalyptic future I created for them to live in. This is my world and my rules, and it gives me the freedom to do whatever I want."

My first love was writing romance, but over the years I added several other genres. I know the theory behind branding myself as a writer, but I also hate to be pigeonholed and forced to write only romance. Life is more complicated than people falling in love. Where there's love, hate isn't far behind. Walking next to joy is fear and don't get me started on what horrible things some people will do to get their jollies. I can see horror lurking behind every corner and in my daydreams I can fly above the daily chaos in my steam-powered airship. So why would I only write about people falling in love when I can also kill them with just a couple of slashes of a chainsaw, take them on a grand quest or have them attacked by

"I know the theory behind branding myself as a writer, but I also hate to be pigeonholed and forced to write only romance. Life is more complicated than people falling in love. Where there's love, hate isn't far behind. Walking next to joy is fear and don't get me started on what horrible things some people will do to get their jollies."

— Regina Puckett

zombies? You see my problem? There are so many stories to write and I want to write them all.

I didn't try writing science fiction until 2015. I'm embarrassed to say the only reason I tried then was because of a photo I fell in love with. My book cover for *I Will Breathe* took me on my splendid voyage into steampunk and I'm so glad it did. I love my characters, Liberty and Boy, and the post-apocalyptic future I created for them to live in. This is my world and my rules, and it gives me the freedom to do whatever I want.

My Forbidden Series and Liberty Series are steampunk stories, but to make things interesting, I've also added some romance, horror and mystery into them.

What genre do I write?

I write about life and if you ever watch the news, you know as well as I do that life has a little bit of everything in the mixture.

"I can see horror lurking behind every corner and in my daydreams I can fly above the daily chaos in my steam-powered airship. So why would I only write about people falling in love when I can also kill them with just a couple of slashes of a chainsaw, take them on a grand quest or have them attacked by zombies? You see my problem? There are so many stories to write and I want to write them all."

~Regina Puckett



Brief Biography

Regina Puckett has been writing for over forty-eight years, and lives in Tennessee with her husband of over forty years. She has two grown daughters and four grandchildren.

She writes sweet romances, horror, inspirational, steampunk, picture books and poetry. There are always several projects in various stages of completion and characters and stories waiting in the wings for their chance to finally get out of her head and onto paper.

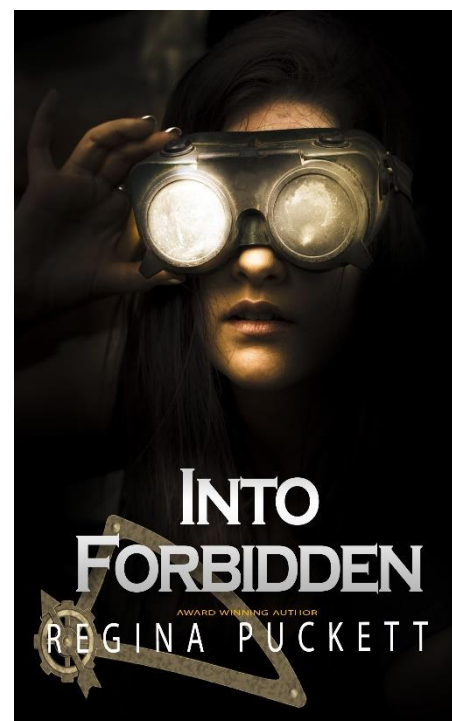
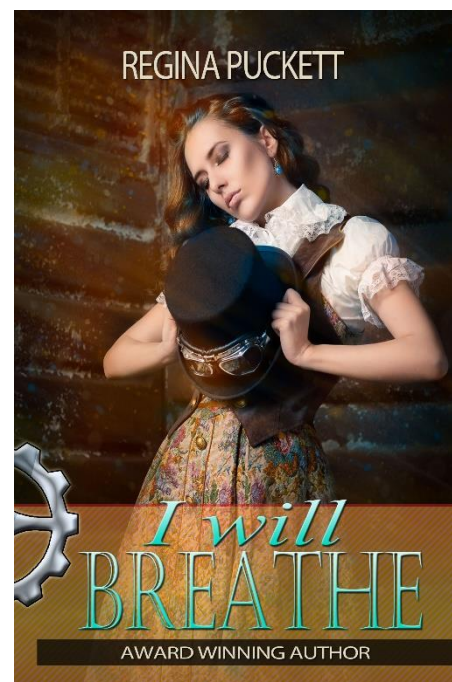
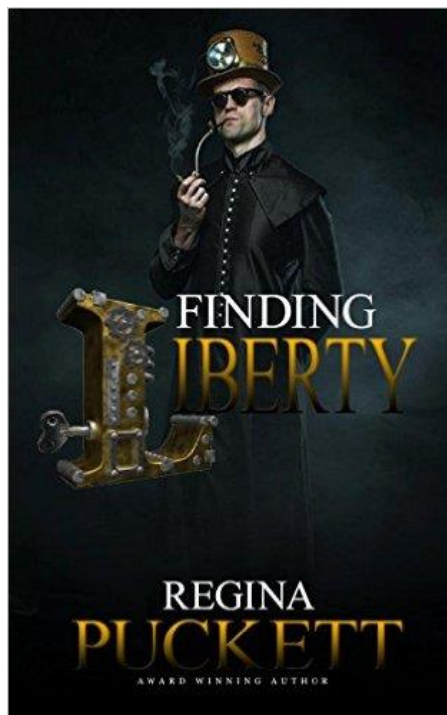
Book links

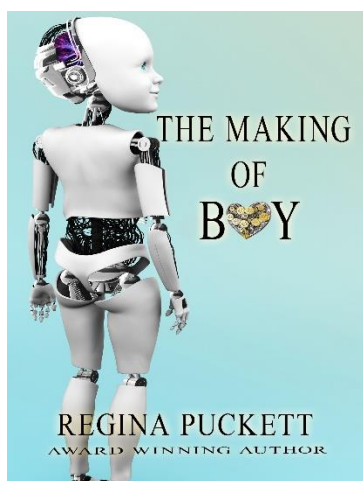
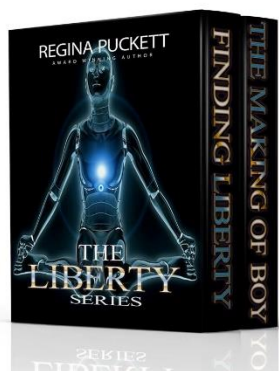
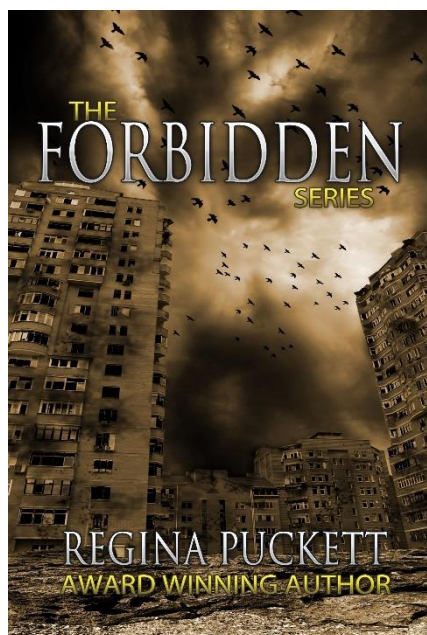
Into Forbidden - smarturl.it/intoforbidden
 Finding Liberty - smarturl.it/findingliberty
 The Forbidden Series - smarturl.it/TheForbiddenSeries
 The Liberty Series - smarturl.it/TheLibertySeries

I Will Breathe - smarturl.it/IwillBreathe
 An Ill Wind smarturl.it/IlWind
 The Making of Boy smarturl.it/TheMakingofBoy
 Author links
 AMAZON AUTHOR PAGE – http://www.amazon.com/Regina-Puckett/e/B004S3ORSG/ref=dp_b_yline_cont_book_1
 WEBSITE / BLOG – <http://reginapuckettsbooks.weebly.com/index.html>
 FACEBOOK – <https://www.facebook.com/reginapuckett1>
 TWITTER – <https://twitter.com/ReginaPuckett>
 GOOGLE+ – <https://plus.google.com/116509703065029920410/posts>

PINTEREST – <https://www.pinterest.com/reginapuckett1/>

GOODREADS – http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/154116.Regina_Puckett





Our next author is Rosie Chapel, historical fiction writer, South Perth, Australia.



Rosie Chapel

Born and educated in the north east of England, I worked for several years first in a law firm, then in motor insurance; ending up in the accounts department of the same engineering company for whom my, soon to be husband worked. Marriage opened up a whole new world for me, as my husband was seconded first to South Korea, then Australia. Four years later we returned to the UK, but Australia had got under our skin and we decided to emigrate. That was nearly twenty years ago; and having lived near Sydney and Brisbane, we now reside in Perth and love it.

After a long career in finance and customer service, five years ago I

took a leap of faith, making the decision to follow my first love - classical history - and returned to University as a mature student. It was one of the best decisions of my life and I enjoyed every minute of it, recently completing a BA with a double major in Classics & Ancient History and Medieval & Early Modern Studies.

Having developed an abiding love for anything connected to Ancient Rome, I decided to channel my passion into fiction, which culminated in my first novel 'The Pomegranate Tree'. Based around archaeological excavations on Masada, this is book one in the 'Hannah's Heirloom' sequence. The sequel has just been released, with the final novel in the trilogy, still a work in progress! I wrote these books in a style that I love to read, historical fiction with romance and a twist.

Why did I decide to write historical fiction?

Ancient history in all its forms has always fascinated me and, not very long ago, as is noted in my bio, I was persuaded to return to University, so that I could immerse myself in it, rather than remain an armchair historian. A devotee of archaeology documentaries, initially I thought that this was my calling, however, two lectures and a tutorial convinced me otherwise (I realized that I really didn't care about seeds).

Already signed up for a unit on Roman history, I was lucky enough to have a lecturer whose

passion for her subject was infectious. Before long I was completely spellbound by the Julio-Claudians and their successors during the first century AD.

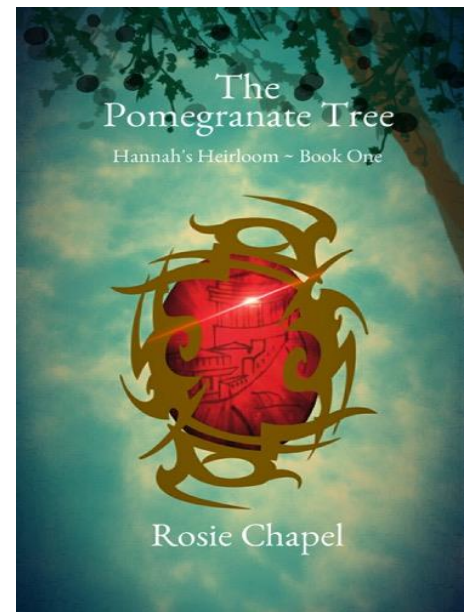
I had no intention of leaving University. I considered continuing along the academic path right up to a doctorate. I even had an idea for my thesis. Life has a funny way of redirecting you though and as there were changes afoot within the academic sphere and few other things happening that year; I decided to put further studies on hold just for a little while. It was at this point my husband suggested that I might like to try and write a book set in antiquity, putting my love for history to a different use. That way I could continue to study without all those pesky tutorials, assignments and referencing.

An avid reader since childhood, historical fiction has always been my favorite genre and I am rarely without at least two novels on the go, often to the detriment of everything else around me. Thus, the idea did appeal to me – writing a book has long been a dream of mine – but I wasn't sure I had it in me and wasn't I too old anyway? Even if I decided to give it a go, what would I write about? How on earth could I come up with an original storyline?

It took some doing, for there are so many great stories out there. Although there are several eras throughout history that I love, such as the Viking Age, the Italian Renaissance, my favorite has to be classical antiquity. So we were back to the first century AD and Ancient Rome. Letting the concept play around in my head

for a while, I jotted down any and all possibilities, ranging from the sublime to the utterly ridiculous. **Hoping for a brainwave, I began** perusing my old assignments, coming across one that mentioned King Herod's building program, part of which was his rebuilding of the ancient fortress of Masada in the Judean Desert.

I remembered that a massacre had occurred at Masada in the mid first century AD, that today it was a world heritage site and a magnet for archaeologists. Devouring all the information I could find on the history of this fortress and the archaeological excavations, the spark became a little brighter and an idea started percolating, one that intrigued me, but one I struggled to pin down. Then I remembered that, according to the only surviving ancient source, seven people — two women and five children — had survived the massacre and inspiration hit. One of these women could be my heroine; I just needed to work it backwards to determine how on earth she might have been able to avoid being slain. Then, I added a further complication, deciding to include a modern heroine, related to the woman who survived and that somehow they connected across time. Not time travel in the accepted sense, she wouldn't actually disappear from her own world, but her soul would meld with that of her ancestor. She would see events as the unfolded and could use her knowledge of what would happen to save those she loved. Suddenly more ideas began to flow and 'The Pomegranate Tree' was born.



It was all very well having the idea, but how did I turn this into a story? How did I create characters that I believed in? That others would believe in? My plot line should include all those things I researched — the ambush, the massacre, the Roman army and the woman who lived. Then within that plot line I wanted a romance, no, not just one — two — one in the modern era and one on ancient Masada. I had to choose names, come up with back-stories and I had to find a solid reason why someone would suddenly decide to travel to Masada. Even though it is close to the Dead Sea, it's still quite isolated.

While researching Masada, I came across an article about some skeletal remains that had been discovered under a pile of debris on the lower tier of the Hanging Palace. Initially assumed to be one of the Zealots, further examination has suggested that it may well have been one of the Roman soldiers killed in the ambush of AD66. Interested, I started to play with the notion that one or two soldiers might have survived the

rebel attack. Wounded, but rather than killed, they were treated and once healed, held as captives to be used as bargaining tools should the need arise. All well and good, but how were they cared for? Who would treat their injuries? These men were an enemy; the Zealots would more likely prefer to finish them off.

Enter my ancient heroine.

Choosing to call her Hannah, meaning ‘favor’ or ‘grace,’ I decided that she would not be a typical Hebrew woman. Brought to Masada by her brother, Hannah was a young, single woman, trained in the art of healing by an indulgent uncle, himself a physician. Holding a unique status in the burgeoning community at the fortress, she would be central to the survival of the Roman soldiers.

Creating the characters:

Characters turned out to be quite easy, I based them, loosely, on people I know, but only described them enough for the reader to build up their own picture, preferring to leave something to the imagination. In fact, for me, the creation of my characters and researching the background to the story was just as fascinating to me as the actual writing the book. Learning about ancient healing methods, laws and tenets, food, clothing even marriage and burial rituals all convinced me that I could weave them into what I hoped would be an interesting story. I must admit though, there were times when I struggled, I was trying to make my readers believe that my heroine of the modern world could somehow slip through two thousand years to connect with an

ancestor who was living at the time of the rebel ambush and subsequent massacre — time travel being totally credible, of course.

Finalising the plot

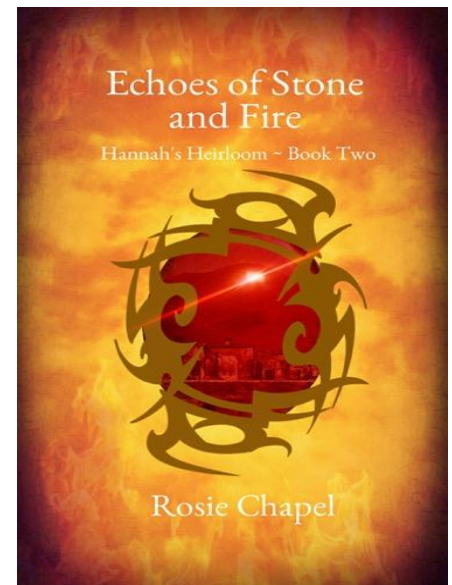
So far so good! Now I had to determine why my modern heroine, also called Hannah, would want to visit Masada. She receives a ruby clasp, a surprise birthday present from her long dead grandmother and the accompanying letter tells her that it was a gift from a grateful soldier at Masada. Hannah decided to try and trace its origins and by sheer coincidence (hmm) her best friend, male — of course — is already going to the fortress as part of the season’s current archaeological excavation.

Once on Masada, Hannah begins to have dreams or visions about the AD66 ambush and its aftermath. She realises she is seeing the events as they unfold through the eyes of her ancient counterpart. At the same time, while assisting on the dig, she finds artefacts that link her to the past. Artefacts that she, or rather her ancestor, has discarded or lost.

Now we needed the magic, something that would connect these two women, merging them into one, without either of them physically travelling through time - I did say I wanted it to be believable! I also wanted whoever read this book to believe in the love these two couples shared, hoping that they each had a chance of a happily ever after.

Right then — how about this — the best friend who has travelled with her, believes what Hannah is

experiencing is real and not her imagination and that this same best friend has loved her for a long time. Then, maybe, allow one of the Roman soldiers to fall in love with the Hebrew woman who is treating him — a forbidden love and one that could have fatal consequences. Finally, I just had to arrange for Hannah to slip through time and then add a dash of rebellion, a jealous would-be suitor, an avenging army and one woman in love with two men across millennia. What could possibly go wrong?



Authors I admire.

I love and read a variety of genres. Although I prefer historical fiction, I enjoy crime fiction, regency romance, mystery and some fantasy. I do find that I get spellbound by a particular style for a while and am unable to move in until I’ve satisfied the urge. Diana Gabaldon, Mary Stewart, Charlaine Harris, Tolkien, Linda Fairstein, Anne Perry and Kathy Reichs are probably my favourites, but my list is huge. It’s actually a good job we have Kindles now, as there is no way I’d be able to fit all the

books I've bought onto my bookshelves!

Why are readers attracted to historical fiction?

I believe that historical fiction is becoming much more popular, in the main because people love to imagine what it was like to live during a particular time period. Readers are especially drawn to those that include an element of 'time travel' because it gives them an opportunity to live vicariously through the characters. The chance to see how people really lived, not how the historical sources tell us they lived. How they interacted in their daily lives. How much of the world beyond their own doorstep did they know about? What were their fears? What were their joys? What kinds of restrictions were placed on them because of traditions and tenets? The list goes on. Finally — let's be honest, if you had the chance to go back in time, physically, to your favourite era in history, if there was a way to do so, without giving up your modern accoutrements, I bet you would do it — in a heartbeat.

This is why I chose to write historical fiction. It is a way for me to do just that. In fact, I became so involved in the story and my characters, that one book was never going to be enough, so — as you do — I decided to try for a trilogy. The second book 'Echoes of Stone and Fire,' is set in Pompeii, just prior to the eruption of Vesuvius and the final book, due out shortly is set in Roman Britain.

I believe that if writers of historical fiction do nothing more than inspire their readers to look beyond the novel into worlds long

past, then they have done their job!

My books are available in print and kindle format through all Amazon sites, or via my website:

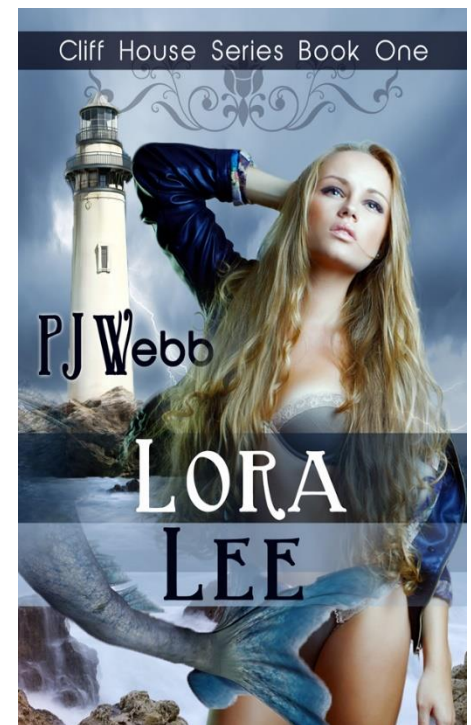
www.rosiechapel.com

Next in our fantastic author lineup is PJ Webb, a self-described author in the dark fantasy sub-genre.



PJ Webb

I write paranormal and supernatural fiction. At least, that's what most would say and then probably go on to categorize me even further by pigeonholing me into the genre of horror. I do write about vampires, apparitions, and things that go bump in the night, but when all is said and done, I think my writing is more refined and less gory than what I consider hard core horror to be, so I prefer to be referred to as an author of Dark Fantasy.



The labels “supernatural” and “paranormal” are actually confusing to most anyway, and I consider the terms outdated. Their descriptions are so similar that they are many-times confused with each other and often times thought of as the same thing. In fact, one is “unexplained phenomena of *THIS* world”, PARANORMAL, and one is “unexplained phenomena *NOT* of this world”, SUPERNATURAL, and while I feel the lines between the two often become blurred, they don't always fall under the category of horror as most perceive horror to be. All though, they often have certain similar aspects that, whether brutally unmistakable, or an atmospheric building of fear, intertwine causing a touch of the well-placed macabre.

The opening paragraph in my book, Lora Lee, is a perfect example of what I mean. The reader is left to ponder whether the events that are unfolding within the story are connected in some sinister way with this recurring dream, or nothing more than a series of nightmares meant to produce an underlying sense of fear.

Another perfect example of dark fantasy is the 1897 timeless Novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. It's a memorizing and freighting tale told through a series of love letters, diary entries, and a ships log, and is considered to be gothic horror at its finest. If I had to liken Dark Fantasy to anything, I would say it is the new modern gothic horror.

“A ferocious looking sky stirred above revealing from time to time a quivering moon through a cauldron of ominous black clouds. Lightening had begun its startling show, briefly illuminating the blackness with hues of blue and grey. She was standing dangerously close to the edge of the cliff but didn't seem to notice, nor did she feel the cold, damp, frenzied wind whipping around her bare arms and legs. The rain would be coming soon pouring down like needles on her delicate skin—pouring as it always did. She was frightfully aware of the huge waves beginning to form as far as her eyes could see. Soon the

waves would be crashing into each other with ear-piercing clarity, and somewhere in the midst of all that chaos a large wooden ship would appear, fighting the odds for its survival.”

What is offered up immediately is a blending of some aspects of paranormal and the supernatural, and eventually, a touch of romance and a trace of the macabre combine to create an atmosphere of uneasy anticipation as past recollections of horrific events are revealed.

So then, I would summarize dark fantasy as sinister but refined, fantastical though explainable, frightening yet poetic, and not always happily ever after, but ever so memorable and never as simple as horror for horrors sake.

Another perfect example of dark fantasy is the 1897 timeless Novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. It's a memorizing and freighting tale told through a series of love letters, diary entries, and a ships log, and is considered to be gothic horror at its finest. If I had to liken dark fantasy to anything, I would say it is the new modern gothic horror.

I'm an indie author of dark fantasy. The novel that started my writing career is *Prince of the Blood – Transformation*, and it will always be very dear to me not only because it's my first, but because it was born out of a desire not to stay up all night worrying

about events that were unfolding in my life that were beyond my control. I decided the time could be better spent doing something creative, and so I began to write a story about a character who lost everything and managed to cope with that loss and reinvent himself in the process.

You see, like him, my husband and I were about to lose everything we owned, including what had once been our very lucrative business, because of the recession, and that was in spite of our tremendous effort to save it. So, by losing myself in the fantasy world I was creating, not only did I spend my nights doing something worthwhile, but the story I was telling and the strength of my main character, Sebastian, actually helped to heal the enormous depression I felt.

It was with the creation of his character that I gained an understanding that nothing ever stays the same. There are just different degrees of change, and it's not those changes that define us, but what we do with them that matters. That is the thread of every one of my books.

Transformation became the first in my Prince of the Blood Vampire Chronicles. I've now written and released the second book, *Evolution* and am currently editing the next two books in the series. I haven't limited myself to the subject of vampires, however.

Lora Lee is my newest book, and the first in my *Cliff House* series. A recurring nightmare, a family tragedy, and a stately old manor house conspire to play a part in Lora Lee's ominous destiny. When she moves into Cliff House, a spirit trapped within a ghostly world of loneliness and despair desperately reaches out to take back that which was once hers.

Lora Lee

<http://amzn.to/1KgmRrR>

Prince of the Blood --

Transformation <http://amzn.to/1RyKV44>

Prince of the Blood --

Evolution <http://amzn.to/1COtfsE>

Our next author also submitted in the paranormal sub-genre is Heidi Angel.



Heidi Angell

How did you come to the genre? Anecdotes would be nice but not crucial. Do you write in other genres? What do you prefer if you write in different genres and why?

"I actually started my publishing career with an urban fantasy series, and when I was looking for a publisher for The

Clear Angel Chronicles, I was informed that it was considered a paranormal thriller. I was surprised because I thought of it as a psychic detective series (that is not actually a category! Live and learn.) I love all the genres I write in, and don't really have a preference as I tend to let the story take me where it needs to go, then figure out the genre after. Messy, but fun!

What is paranormal literature? Is it similar to "supernatural? What are the distinctions?

When it was suggested that Clear Angel Chronicle was a paranormal thriller, I immediately went and looked up paranormal. Reading through the wiki entry I realized it was essentially what my generation called supernatural. I think that the shift to paranormal developed because with books like Twilight and Warm Bodies, there was a whole other realm of the supernatural concept being explored, rather than just the horror aspect. Paranormal is its own main category, and then elements such as romance, horror, thriller, etc., get added as a sub-genre. It is fascinating learning all these background elements to the publishing world. As a reader who loves telling stories, I never really considered distinct genre aspects. I read across all genres and kind of write across them as well.

Some authors do not like to be 'pigeon-holed' by being squeezed into a genre. Do they have a legitimate concern or even a gripe?

I am right there with them! But I understand the importance for readers. As a reader, I like lots of

different genres, but there are some people who only read specific genres. Helping them know if your book is for them saves in bad reviews simply because the reader had expectations that you could not meet. That being said, I don't write for specific genres. I figure the genre out after the book is written.

Is paranormal a sub-genre or a major category and is it related to "horror." If so, which is which in terms of the major genre and the sub-genre?

Paranormal is a subgenre that gets tacked onto several traditional genres. You have paranormal romance, paranormal thriller, paranormal horror, and (as is the case with Being Human) paranormal comedies.

Who are some of your favorite authors and why do you like them?

I am a bibliophile and read across (many) authors and genres! Some of my favorite authors would be Richelle Mead, J.K. Rowling, Clive Cussler, Orson Scott Card, Sue Grafton, and Stephen King. But that is just a small handful of favorites.

What do you like about 'paranormal'?

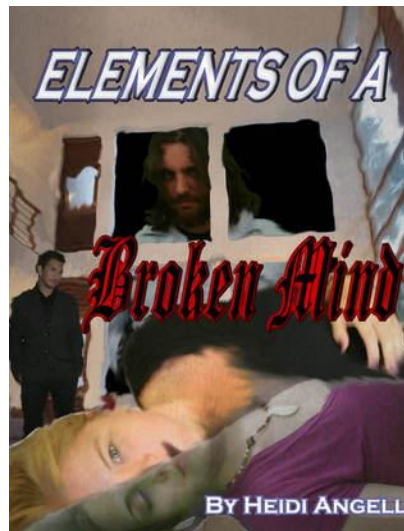
I think society has always had a fascination with the paranormal. It is the idea that there are things that occur that science cannot yet explain. It has been ingrained in our culture since our earliest writings. Sometimes the

paranormal is used as a cautionary tale, sometimes to explain experiences that cannot be explained otherwise, and sometimes as a way to escape the drudgery of modernity.



Heidi Angell refers to herself as a bibliophile, lexicomaniac and wordsmith! She is the author of The Hunters Series, The Clear Angel Chronicles, and The Hell School Series. She also created Royal Prince Vince, and Creative Exercises to Inspire,

When she is not reading and writing, she can be found spending quality time with her lovely family camping, hiking, swimming, or watching movies. Learn more



about Heidi and her books at HeidiAngell.com.

Heidi Angell's Social Media Links:

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/angellslife?ref=hl>

Twitter @HeidiAngell <https://twitter.com/HeidiAngell>

Heidi's Blog <http://www.heidiangell.com/#!/blog/cten>

Google + <https://plus.google.com/110386409014571436851>

Pinterest <https://www.pinterest.com/heidiangell/>

Linkedin <https://www.linkedin.com/in/heidi-angell-78079530>

YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/user/HeidiAngell>

Our next writer is Angela Mortimer, who was raised in Lancashire and in Bristol, England.

Once fiction would have been described as supernatural, which means a force beyond the understanding of the laws of nature. Paranormal, often used incorrectly now, meant something slightly, but importantly, different and was usually investigated by scientists as it meant beyond normal scientific understanding. Some paranormal investigators were of course considered a little barmy, mainly those studying ghosts and the like. Others, such as those investigating the possibility of clairvoyance or kinesis were looking at it from, say, a neurological perspective and usually getting nowhere. However, all that is changed thanks to new physics.

I was a strange child, and wondered about how time seemed to move at different rates and how spaces seemed to change in volume. I'd spend hours pondering but, as I grew up, I lost the wonder of it and accepted it was just my brain making adjustments. Which perhaps is just as well for my mental health.

Now Quantum Mechanics, has been accepted and has opened a completely new way of thinking about our reality, so perhaps I should have kept questioning time and volume after all.

To make a supernatural book really interesting to the reader, it

usually requires a good dose of horror.

Dystopia always requires horror. It's an unpleasant imaginary society which dehumanises people. This is an increasingly popular genre and the reasons for this are very obvious.



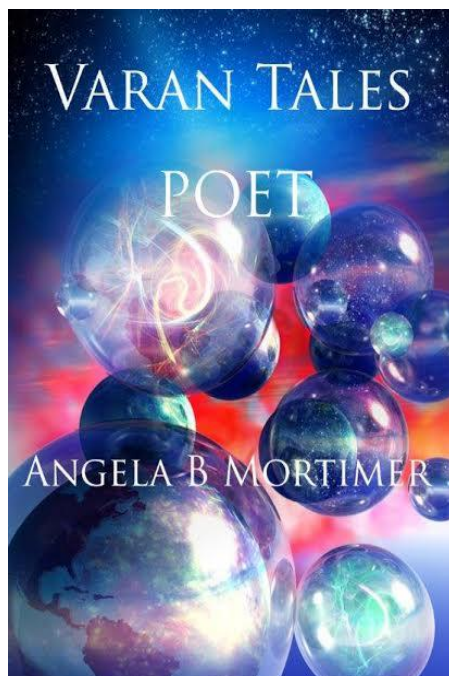
Angela Mortimer

We see the world now quite differently than we did say a mere sixty years ago. We are too many now and increasing steadily in number and there is no humane way to stop that, but there are a lot of inhumane ways of decreasing populations and these are explored in dystopia. The planet we live on, so wondrous and beautiful, is under severe stress and we cannot take to those imaginary spacecraft to escape to another world as perhaps we once thought. We are trapped here. Added to that, the world is controlled by those who have little regard for this beautiful, blue ball or any of its inhabitants, only their own lusts. Many of us cannot understand their madness

and feel helpless as what we see around us degraded without sensible reason.

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- Angela Mortimer



So this is the Age of Dystopia, we live in horror - we always have - but once there was hope and peace at times. We try to release our sorrow in portraying even

worse imaginary societies than our own reality. Hope for a decent future is eroded further and we feel more helpless as we see terrible, possible outcomes for Earth. A sad reflection, and why many prefer to read something frivolous and try to hide from it all.

Last, but not least, we have Science Fiction. Visionary to plain dull. Horror helps this along too. Yes, those early pioneers of the genre were visionary. HG Wells of course and the French writer, Jules Verne, stand tall, then we had the Golden Age, with Heinlein, Asimov and Clarke taking us to other worlds and new ideas.

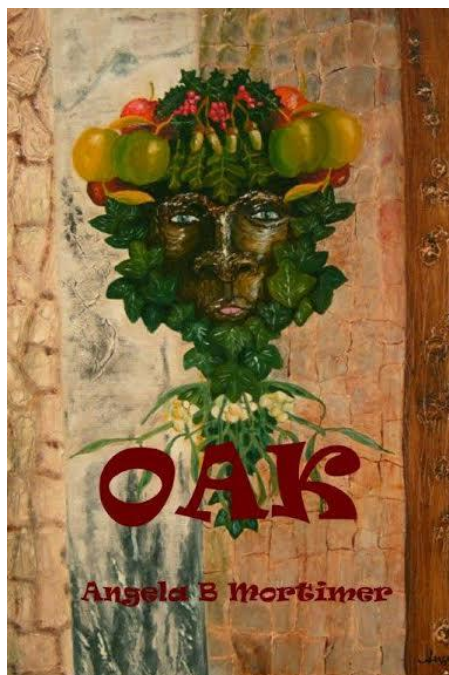
Being an indie writer, I often wonder how many wondrous visionaries in those times were stifled by not being able to get their work published. We had more than a century of marvellous works to choose from, including TV shows such as The Outer Limits and the most important, Star Trek. Imagine if Gene Roddenberry was an insurance clerk? I must add here, it doesn't matter if much of the old imagined science is primitive, some of it has come to pass, the most obvious are the mobile phone and tablet. Most important there was usually some hope for the future. Star Trek had lots of it; good defeated evil after struggle and sharp minds made this possible. Where have those characters with brilliant minds, once so important to the genre,

gone? I still read good Indie Science Fiction, some have hope too, however this is not portrayed enough on the screen or in the "popular" books. I get offered a lot of these top ten books; I rarely finish them, most are too simple to keep my interest and I get sad too, that science fiction has come to this. And on screen.



Now Science Fiction is only vicious, violent, dystopian or supernatural - even more brutal, greater horror. A sign of the times we live in. I am bored and appalled too, the genre has been eroded. I retreat into the old series and try to find hope, for without that hope we really are teetering on the edge of destruction, almost willing our own destruction.

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Brief Biography:

I was born in England, in Lancashire, however when I was 5 my father had to move south to Bristol so he could get job in his field as an aircraft engineer. My childhood was pleasant, full of what I'd wish for every child - love, comfort, adventure, music and books. Mum would play opera

and I soon bought my own Tchaikovsky ballet music to match the ballet prints in the sitting room. I wanted to be a ballet dancer, but my mother was adamant I should play the piano, as her family were musical. We both were stubborn and so I did neither. It took me until I was 21 to appreciate my mother's love of Verdi and Puccini. From dad I had Shakespeare; when he washed my hair I'd get the Tempest. He read me his copy of Lamb's and, to be honest, I was hooked.

My Links to my Books:

<http://goo.gl/omKn5G> **Flawed Gods**

<http://goo.gl/onKbKg> **Hyclos**

<http://goo.gl/ji1TBW> **Incandescence**

<http://goo.gl/xwgMJU> **Nothing Gained**

<http://goo.gl/a8Knbz> **Oak**

<http://goo.gl/wWKQVE> **'Round 'n 'Round the Hill**

<http://goo.gl/EA48z7> **Poet**

Our next writer specializes in historical fiction. Meet Judith Arnopp, who lives on the coast of West Wales.

Judith is the author of eight historical novels, and she says she is currently working on Book Two of *The Beaufort Chronicles*, following the life of Margaret

Beaufort. She also writes historical articles and offers talks on history and writing historical fiction.



Judith Arnopp

How did you come to the genre?

There was really no other choice of genre for me. I grew up reading and loving history; I studied it at school and later in life took a master's degree in Medieval Studies. Since my first degree was in English and creative writing, it made sense to blend the two and write in the historical genre. I am far more at home in the past than in the modern world. Although I do enjoy central heating and my computer, I can't bear cities, or offices, or shopping malls, or, as I recently discovered, bowling alleys.

My work is undeniably 'historical' so I am happy to be described in that genre but I am not so sure about the 'romance' part – I usually just call it 'historical fiction' but all my books are heavily reliant on

accepted historical fact and every chapter requires a great deal of research. I do try not to let the research show too much. I hope I don't preach history in my work – it is supposed to be entertaining not a history lesson.

My chief concern is perspective.

If one event is witnessed by a group of people, they will all relate it differently. Each will have a unique explanation as to what happened, and why. I like to look at a historical event from all angles and then present a fiction of one person's experience. Some of my books, *The Forest Dwellers*, *Intractable Heart* and *The Winchester Goose* have several narrators who provide a multi-faceted view of events. When I write in the first person the reader sees the world through the eyes of that narrator alone. This can be seen as limiting but the question I am exploring is the one I always ask myself. 'What must it have been like to be Margaret Beaufort/Elizabeth of York/Anne Boleyn.'

For instance, A Song of Sixpence

is a fictional account of Elizabeth of York and a few readers objected to my portrayal of Margaret Beaufort whom Elizabeth sees as a bit interfering. Margaret was devoted to her son, Henry Tudor, and once she had helped him take hold of his throne, played a lead role in his rule. He listened to her advice, she was present at council meetings etc. etc. while his wife, Elizabeth, was excluded. Margaret also had her say in the upbringing of the children. The Elizabeth in my book, the fictional Elizabeth, would not be human if she didn't resent this just a little. I wouldn't

want my mother-in-law being so influential in my own marriage. The relationships between the three do settle down after a while but initially there are tensions. Margaret does come across as domineering but history shows us she was a strong, forceful woman. I don't see that as a negative; she would never have risen so high has she been meek. Now I am writing her own story in *The Beaufort Chronicles*, the experiences that shaped her into such a strong character become evident. I have come to know the protagonists in this era very well and am enjoying them immensely.

Who are some of your favorite authors and why do you like them?

I like authors who take you to a different time, a foreign place, or a strange new world and make you feel you are really there. I dislike soppy women as much as I dislike overtly heroic men. I like flawed characters, human characters and for me the novelist who provides all this is Hilary Mantel.

I know many people can't abide her but I think to really appreciate what she is doing you have to let go of preconceptions about what a novel should be. She breaks rules and she does it fabulously. I loved *Wolf Hall* and *Bring up the Bodies*. Having studied and written about Anne Boleyn myself in *The Kiss of the Concubine*, I was well aware when she broke from the accepted view or put a new emphasis on events but it didn't spoil it for me. People like Anne Boleyn and Richard III have been vilified in the past but now we are in danger of turning them

into saints – and saints do not exist. It was refreshing to see Mantel's multi-layered representations of Cromwell and Anne. Everyone has flaws; it is what makes us interesting, and Mantel illustrates the internal conflict between good and evil perfectly.

Cromwell did bad things, we all know that, but it was his job and for the first time his better side is illustrated in Mantel's work. I am not aware that his early life, or the tragedy of the loss of his family has ever been addressed before in fiction. She has shown that humans aren't black and white, we are all shades of grey; some of us just have deeper shadows than others.

Other authors who have influenced me are the classical ones, the old favourites. I love Chaucer for his characterisation, his humour, and Shakespeare for the same reasons plus his total domination of the language. During the process of writing a book, I try to read something other than the historical genre for fear of it influencing my own voice. Recently I've been reading some contemporary crime fiction, about as far from my own genre as I can get.

Why are there so many romance books/authors out there? Do guys read these books, or is it basically women?

If I can apply the tag 'Tudor' to this question I can answer it. There are countless books about the Tudors. They range from very flimsy bodice ripper type novels to the heavy Mantel volumes I referred to previously. When I first

began to write seriously, I mistakenly believed that the subject of Tudors had been done to death and I concentrated on the medieval period, focusing on the years surrounding the Norman Invasion.

The books sold reasonably well and the reviews were mostly positive but I received many, many emails that went along the lines of: 'I loved your books, *The Forestwellers*, *Peaceweaver*, and *The Song of Heledd* but I'd really like to know if you've written any Tudor ones.'

I had so many queries like this that I decided to oblige and wrote *The Winchester Goose* which is a murder mystery contrasting the life of a Tudor prostitute with two of Henry VIII's queens. Although I have written four and a half Tudor novels since, *The Winchester Goose* remains my best-selling book. I went on to write more set at Henry VIII's court, then some in the reign of Henry VII, and they all do far better than the medieval ones.

My career took an upward turn when I switched to the Tudor period, I am eternally grateful to both the Tudor family and their hoard of fans – more of whom are introduced to the era every day, thanks to television and film. People just love the Tudors – I think it is a combination of familiarity (lots of us studied them at school), the romance of the tragic wives, and the blood-thirsty nature of execution and torture and then there is the political intrigue. You really can't beat them for that.

The moment Henry VIII is mentioned one instinctively thinks 'wives' 'Bloody tower' or 'rack.' **And they are fascinating.** Henry himself is an enthralling psychological study. I would love to do a first person narrative from him but I am not brave enough yet. One day though.

Before I write, I read everything I can lay my hands on regarding the period and the character who is to be my next subject ... I nearly said 'victim.' Then I think for a long, long time; take long walks, long hot baths and sort of let the character inhabit my brain for a while. Then I sit at the keyboard and channel all that, let them tell their own story.

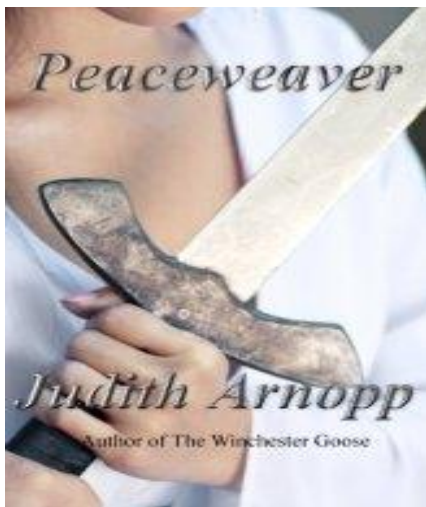
I have a lot of female readers but some men too. I was surprised to discover that fact when I was at a book fair and a man asked me for a signed copy of three of my books. He'd bought one the year before and now wanted others. I very wrongly assumed he was buying them for his wife but he wanted them signed, To Robert, Best Wishes, Judith. I was thrilled, it hadn't occurred to me that men might read them too.

Where did your love of books/storytelling/reading/writing/etc. come from? How long have you been writing?

My love of books came from my mum. She always had her nose in a book and even while she did the housework she listened to LPs of Shakespeare's plays. As I played with my toys I absorbed the language of Shakespeare and his vivid characters – I am sure that is where my love of literature first began. I don't remember not

writing. I have written stories since I was very young. I used to make little books out of paper and write stories to read to my dolls. As a teenager I wrote very bad romance, and worse poetry; and as a parent I invented stories with my children as protagonists.

I read my first book when I was seven, *What Katy Did*, Afterwards I moved from one book to the next, so there has never been a time when I am between books. I have always had something on the go. I've read many things twice but my favorites are the classics; the depth of character, the vivid scenery, the journey they take you on. I think classic authors relied less on shock value than we do today; I think that is a shame. I studied English Literature to A level standard at school but it wasn't until I went to university as a mature student that I realized I had any particular talent. My tutors encouraged me to try for a full length piece. I completed my first novel a year or so after graduating. It was not very good and will never be published but I straight away began work on my first published novel, *Peaceweaver*, the story of Eadgyth, queen to both Gruffydd ap Llewelyn of Wales and Harold II. There was no stopping me after that.



What cultural value do you see in writing/reading/storytelling/etc.?

I think it has massive cultural value. We've been storytelling forever, haven't we? Stone age man probably gathered at the fireside and told tales. It reveals so much about human history, from Beowulf (the proper poem not the rubbish T.V show) to Great Expectations. You can learn as much about Victorian society from a Dickens novel as you can from the historical record. He was a champion of the poor, describing conditions as they were, not to thrill the reader but to encourage the people to think and force the authorities to act. It worked too. He and Gaskell, and Hardy (among others) were invaluable to raising awareness and instigating social change, just as many authors continue to do today.

The things authors write, and the books readers choose to read reflect society, not the other way round. In times of conflict fantasy and history come into their own as those seeking escape flock to buy them just as those who want to fight back against authority seek out books of war and revolution, looking to the past for the answers to today's problems.

What was the hardest part in writing your book?

The most arduous part is always the research. I read as many books as I can on the subject which, because history is mostly about opinion, can vary widely. There are often differences in opinion or theory. I always say there is no

'truth' in history; everything hinges on the perspective of the person who initially recorded a given event. There, I am back talking about perspective again. That old saying 'Truth is everything' should really be 'perspective is everything.'

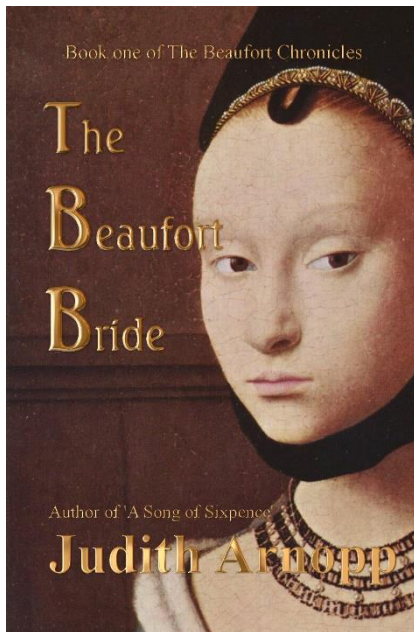
We all have an agenda and none more so than a medieval scribe. My books put flesh on the bones of historical data and I try to be as accurate as I can and, where possible, stick to accepted known fact but I would never claim that what I am writing is 'truth.' We will never discover that. Until someone invents good reliable time travel we can only speculate.

How long does it take you to write a book?

My first two novels took the longest. I think *Peaceweaver* took about four years but that was mostly rewrites and editing. Since I was relatively new to writing I had a lot to learn. I made lots of mistakes which had to be rectified. The process has become quicker now. It helps that most of my books are written in a similar era because the research for one book crosses with another. For example, table manners changed very little from one decade to the next and even fashion was much slower to evolve than it is now.

The Beaufort Bride, Book One* in *The Beaufort Chronicle details Margaret Beaufort's childhood marriage to Edmund Tudor and is quite a short book. It took a year to write but Book Two: *The Beaufort Woman* will take longer because it covers a longer time frame, and involves

the intricacies of the Wars of the Roses, ending at the Battle of Bosworth. I dread to think how long Book Three will take me. The King's Mother will cover Henry VII's reign, up to Margaret's death early in the reign of her grandson Henry VIII. Such a huge amount of material to cover I am trying not to think about it.



What is your work schedule like when you're writing?

I write every day in the mornings, after answering fan mail and tweeting mine and other writer's tweets. Social media is very important. Sometimes it is tempting to skip it but it pays to be visible. Authors have to help each other and I support a wide network of writers who have now become friends, and they in turn do the same for me.

I try to get out for a walk at lunchtime. I live near the cliff path on the Welsh coast so it is lovely and brisk and revitalizes my numb brain really quickly.

Sometimes I take a picnic lunch and lie on a blanket, emptying my head. Then I come back to write for the rest of the afternoon, finishing around four. I have to slot research and writing blog posts in between working on my novel but I have been doing it for so long that I have found a routine that works for me.

I cannot write in the evenings. I am usually burned out by then. The one thing I do find with being a writer is that holidays are non-existent. Even if I do manage to get away I cannot escape the ideas that pop into my head and demand to be written down. I also visit many historical sites, to soak in the atmosphere and check out the surrounding landscape so I can move through the buildings easily in my mind once I am back in the writing seat.

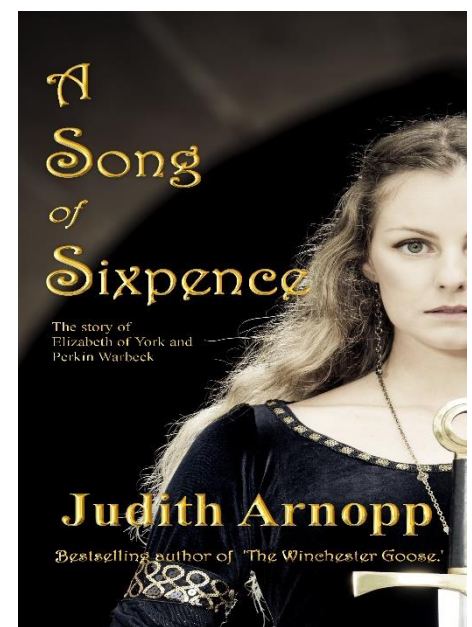
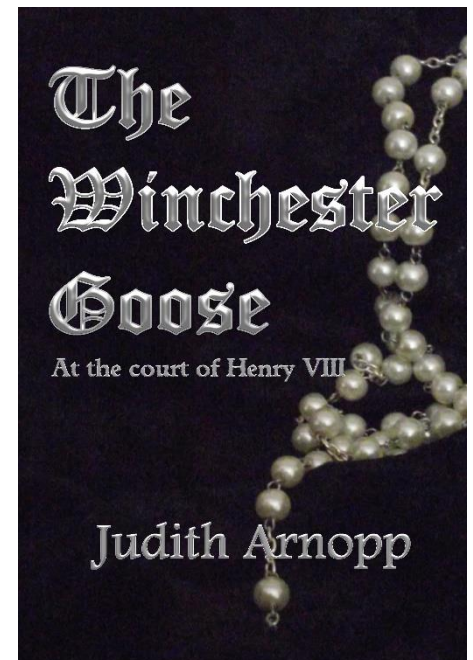
Writing can be dull, it is very lonely but the research trips lift the monotony and are a very enjoyable part of the job. I also attend book fairs and historical events, my most favorite being the Tudor Weekend at Raglan Castle in Monmouthshire where I get to wear my Tudor gown and talk about history and writing all day long. Try and get along in mid-June if you can.

Do you make a plan?

Because I generally write about real historical figures I have the skeleton of their life to follow. I use their time line as a guide but usually I weave the story of another fictional character through that skeleton. I let the person I am writing about lead me through,

and they seem to develop on their own so I don't have to make a plan as such. I love it when the story unfolds organically and slowly takes on a life of their own, revealing characteristics I had no idea about. I let go and let it come and usually it works out ok.

juditharnoppbooks.com
www.juditharnopp.com



Our last featured author writes in the horror sub-genre. Meet A.L. Sexton.



A.L. Sexton

What is paranormal literature?

In today's literary world, there is not a clear cut answer as to what is paranormal literature. The term paranormal is technically defined as something that is unable to be explained by science, which leads me to associate it with phenomena like UFOs, telekinesis, psychic abilities, etc. But, I'm seeing the term *paranormal* being used as an umbrella for any and all things outside the plausible world as we know it, e.g., witchcraft, vampires, zombies, and any manner of things that go bump in the night.

Is "paranormal" similar to "supernatural"?

In most circumstances, I think the two terms are interchangeable. Both are used to describe things, beings, or events that are beyond the plausible world as we know it. There might have been a time when the two were clearly distinguishable from each other, but I don't think that's the case

anymore. Whichever one you decide to use, it's commonly accepted that the content is going to be about something that doesn't have any existential proof.

Is "horror" similar to "paranormal"?

There is a more significant gap between these two genres. While a story can certainly be classified as both horror and paranormal, they don't always go together. Books in the horror genre generally must produce a feeling of fear or anxiety in the reader to be considered as such. They must, as the name indicates, be horrifying on some level, be it guts and gore scary or something more psychologically frightening. And, while a paranormal story can create these same feelings, they are not necessary to the plot or to ensuring their place in the paranormal genre.

Are the categories necessary?

Yes, I believe they are a necessary evil. I call it that because, as an author, being pigeon-holed into a genre is frustrating when there are many different elements to your story that may not be recognized or given as much consideration because the heroine happens to be a vampire or some other supernatural being. But, on the flip side, having these specific categories helps readers find those stories that contain the elements they are most interested in. If a person really loves vampires or werewolves, and fiction is the only category available, it's going to make for an aggravating search to weed through all the offerings to find those that are a match.

Edgar Allen Poe is known for specializing in horror stories, and if he were to write his stories today, I think that categorization would still be relevant. As most of his works can be disturbing on some level, horror still seems to be the most applicable tag; though in this day and age, with the more complete breakdown of story elements available, it's much easier to successfully cross the genre gap.

a) How did you come to the genre?

Since childhood, I've struggled with anxiety and depression. Getting lost in imaginary worlds, especially when those worlds don't look like the "real" world, is a way for me to cope and relax. It gives my brain a chance to turn off and focus on something that I don't have to deal with normally. Over time, I found myself gravitating towards the paranormal stories, especially those about vampires. It really has become an obsession. I'm a fangirl at heart! My husband has always laughed at me because I'm usually rooting for the bad guy, the dark and sexy, slightly (or more than slightly) dangerous character. And that just translates into vampire!

Do you write in other genres?

I do! In addition to *The House of Kestrel: Everlyn's Fire* that just released, I am currently writing a high fantasy novel, and also wrapping up a contemporary romance. While all of these seem vastly different, I tend to keep some common themes throughout all of my stories. I like strong female leads and you can bet that all of my books have a heroine that refuses to be pushed around.

Who are some of your favorite authors and why do you like them?

Oh, I have so many. One of my top favorites is David Eddings. I've probably read *The Belgariad*, *The Malloreon*, *The Elenium*, and *The Tamuli* series at least three times each. He had a way of spinning life into his characters that make you really care about them and their journey, and the stories themselves are just genuine and entertaining. Another favorite is Lauren Kate. Her *Fallen* series has the perfect blend of real world and paranormal elements. I had picked the first book up based off just the cover, and was immediately intrigued by her voice. I binge read the rest of them and then started over.

What do you like about 'paranormal' or 'dystopian' or 'supernatural' or 'horror' or 'sci-fi' (any or all)?

I love the paranormal /supernatural genres because I can suspend reality for a while as I read. Although anything can happen in most fiction, there's something different about reading paranormal stories for me. It flirts with darkness and danger, power and seduction...things we aren't necessarily supposed to be interested in in our real lives. It's fun and provides a chance to explore those themes in a really satisfying way.

Brief Biography:

A.L. Sexton has always been a storyteller at heart. Born and raised in Texas, she refuses to live anywhere else, currently residing in the suburbs of Dallas/Fort Worth with her husband and two

daughters. She is a football enthusiast, music lover, Starbucks addict, office supply junkie, and spends most of her time puttering around the house, rooting for her beloved Aggies, and perfecting the art of sarcasm. After spending eighteen years surviving the corporate world, she left its security to chase her dream of writing. Her stories range from the shadows of the supernatural world to the beaches of Anytown, U.S.A., and often center around strong female characters. When she's not writing about vampires or romance, she's blogging about her struggles with depression, parenthood, and everything in between.

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Book Information/Blurb:

Title: The House of Kestee:
Everlyn's Fire

Blurb: Locked in a centuries-old war among themselves, the vampires' numbers are dwindling. Their future rests on the shoulders of one feisty vampire and the man she's been committed to for five hundred years.

Everlyn is the Countess of the Kestee House, prophesied to assume the Vampyrian Queenship and bear the child that will reunite the warring vampire covens. Jackson is her Chosen, bound to Everlyn at birth to stand by her side and share in the responsibility

of furthering the Kestee bloodline—a fact that both annoys and stirs something deep inside her.

As the time to assert her birthright grows close, Everlyn's enemies emerge bolder and stronger than she could have imagined. But it's not until Jackson's life is threatened, and an evening of celebration turns deadly, that it becomes evident the real danger may lie within Everlyn herself.



Smashwords: <https://goo.gl/d7GvG4>
Amazon: <http://goo.gl/DKiiNj>

The next edition of *Silverlight Café* will focus on how authors promote their work. What works? What doesn't? Share you tips. Please promote the edition on social media. All authors including those who previously made submissions to this magazine are welcome to submit. See submission guidelines: <http://doriong.wix.com/authorscafe> Readers also may leave comments on the *Silverlight Magazine* homepage by clicking the link. Comments are greatly appreciated. The authors will appreciate your feedback.

The following is the first chapter in Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Project Gutenberg's
Frankenstein, by Mary
Wollstonecraft (Godwin)
Shelley

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Title: Frankenstein
or The Modern Prometheus

Author: Mary Wollstonecraft
(Godwin) Shelley

Release Date: June 17, 2008
[EBook #84]

Language: English

Character set encoding:
ISO-8859-1

*** START OF THIS PROJECT
GUTENBERG EBOOK
FRANKENSTEIN ***

Produced by Judith Boss,
Christy Phillips, Lynn
Hanninen,
and David Meltzer. HTML
version by Al Haines.

Chapter 1

I am by birth a Genevese, and my family is one of the most distinguished of that republic. My ancestors had been for many years counsellors and syndics, and my father had filled several

public situations with honor and reputation. He was respected by all who knew him for his integrity and indefatigable attention to public business. He passed his younger days perpetually occupied by the affairs of his country; a variety of circumstances had prevented his marrying early, nor was it until the decline of life that he became a husband and the father of a family.

As the circumstances of his marriage illustrate his character, I cannot refrain from relating them. One of his most intimate friends was a merchant who, from a flourishing state, fell, through numerous mischances, into poverty. This man, whose name was Beaufort, was of a proud and unbending disposition and could not bear to live in poverty and oblivion in the same country where he had formerly been distinguished for his rank and magnificence. Having paid his debts, therefore, in the most honorable manner, he retreated with his daughter to the town of Lucerne, where he lived unknown and in wretchedness. My father loved Beaufort with the truest friendship and was deeply grieved by his retreat in these unfortunate circumstances. He bitterly deplored the false pride which led his friend to a conduct so little worthy of the affection that united them. He lost no time in endeavouring to seek him out, with the hope of persuading him to begin the world again through his credit and assistance.

Beaufort had taken effectual measures to conceal himself, and it was ten months before my father discovered his abode. Overjoyed at this discovery, he hastened to the house, which was situated in a mean street near the Reuss. But when he entered, misery and despair alone welcomed him. Beaufort had saved but a very small sum of money from the wreck of his fortunes, but it was sufficient to provide him with sustenance for some months, and in the meantime he hoped to procure some respectable employment in a merchant's house. The interval was, consequently, spent in inaction; his grief only became more deep and rankling when he had leisure for reflection, and at length it took so fast hold of his mind that at the end of three months he lay on a bed of sickness, incapable of any exertion.

His daughter attended him with the greatest tenderness, but she saw with despair that their little fund was rapidly decreasing and that there was no other prospect of support. But Caroline Beaufort possessed a mind of an uncommon mould, and her courage rose to support her in her adversity. She procured plain work; she plaited straw and by various means contrived to earn a pittance scarcely sufficient to support life.

Several months passed in this manner. Her father grew worse; her time was more entirely occupied in attending him; her means of subsistence decreased;

and in the tenth month her father died in her arms, leaving her an orphan and a beggar. This last blow overcame her, and she knelt by Beaufort's coffin weeping bitterly, when my father entered the chamber. He came like a protecting spirit to the poor girl, who committed herself to his care; and after the interment of his friend he conducted her to Geneva and placed her under the protection of a relation. Two years after this event Caroline became his wife.

There was a considerable difference between the ages of my parents, but this circumstance seemed to unite them only closer in bonds of devoted affection. There was a sense of justice in my father's upright mind which rendered it necessary that he should approve highly to love strongly. Perhaps during former years, he had suffered from the late-discovered unworthiness of one beloved and so was disposed to set a greater value on tried worth. There was a show of gratitude and worship in his attachment to my mother, differing wholly from the doting fondness of age, for it was inspired by reverence for her virtues and a desire to be the means of, in some degree, recompensing her for the sorrows she had endured, but which gave inexpressible grace to his behavior to her. Everything was made to yield to her wishes and her convenience. He strove to shelter her, as a fair exotic is sheltered by the gardener, from every rougher wind and to surround her with all that could

tend to excite pleasurable emotion in her soft and benevolent mind. Her health, and even the tranquility of her hitherto constant spirit, had been shaken by what she had gone through. During the two years that had elapsed previous to their marriage my father had gradually relinquished all his public functions; and immediately after their union they sought the pleasant climate of Italy, and the change of scene and interest attendant on a tour through that land of wonders, as a restorative for her weakened frame.

From Italy they visited Germany and France. I, their eldest child, was born at Naples, and as an infant accompanied them in their rambles. I remained for several years their only child. Much as they were attached to each other, they seemed to draw inexhaustible stores of affection from a very mine of love to bestow them upon me. My mother's tender caresses and my father's smile of benevolent pleasure while regarding me are my first recollections. I was their plaything and their idol, and something better—their child, the innocent and helpless creature bestowed on them by heaven, whom to bring up to good, and whose future lot it was in their hands to direct to happiness or misery, according as they fulfilled their duties towards me. With this deep consciousness of what they owed towards the being to which they had given life, added to the active spirit of tenderness that animated both, it may be imagined that while during every

hour of my infant life I received a lesson of patience, of charity, and of self-control, I was so guided by a silken cord that all seemed but one train of enjoyment to me. For a long time, I was their only care. My mother had much desired to have a daughter, but I continued their single offspring. When I was about five years old, while making an excursion beyond the frontiers of Italy, they passed a week on the shores of the Lake of Como. Their benevolent disposition often made them enter the cottages of the poor. This, to my mother, was more than a duty; it was a necessity, a passion—remembering what she had suffered, and how she had been relieved—for her to act in her turn the guardian angel to the afflicted. During one of their walks a poor cot in the foldings of a vale attracted their notice as being singularly disconsolate, while the number of half-clothed children gathered about it spoke of penury in its worst shape. One day, when my father had gone by himself to Milan, my mother, accompanied by me, visited this abode. She found a peasant and his wife, hard-working, bent down by care and labor, distributing a scanty meal to five hungry babes. Among these there was one which attracted my mother far above all the rest. She appeared of a different stock. The four others were dark-eyed, hardy little vagrants; this child was thin and very fair. Her hair was the brightest living gold, and despite the poverty of her clothing, seemed to set a crown of distinction on her head. Her brow was clear and ample, her

blue eyes cloudless, and her lips and the moulding of her face so expressive of sensibility and sweetness that none could behold her without looking on her as of a distinct species, a being heaven-sent, and bearing a celestial stamp in all her features. The peasant woman, perceiving that my mother fixed eyes of wonder and admiration on this lovely girl, eagerly communicated her history. She was not her child, but the daughter of a Milanese nobleman. Her mother was a German and had died on giving her birth. The infant had been placed with these good people to nurse: they were better off then. They had not been long married, and their eldest child was but just born. The father of their charge was one of those Italians nursed in the memory of the antique glory of Italy—one among the schiavi ognor frementi, who exerted himself to obtain the liberty of his country. He became the victim of its weakness. Whether he had died or still lingered in the dungeons of Austria was not known. His property was confiscated; his child became an orphan and a

beggar. She continued with her foster parents and bloomed in their rude abode, fairer than a garden rose among dark-leaved brambles. When my father returned from Milan, he found playing with me in the hall of our villa a child fairer than pictured cherub—a creature who seemed to shed radiance from her looks and whose form and motions were lighter than the chamois of the hills. The apparition was soon explained. With his permission my mother prevailed on her rustic guardians to yield their charge to her. They were fond of the sweet orphan. Her presence had seemed a blessing to them, but it would be unfair to her to keep her in poverty and want when Providence afforded her such powerful protection. They consulted their village priest, and the result was that Elizabeth Lavenza became the inmate of my parents' house—my more than sister—the beautiful and adored companion of all my occupations and my pleasures.

Everyone loved Elizabeth. The passionate and almost reverential attachment with which all regarded her became,

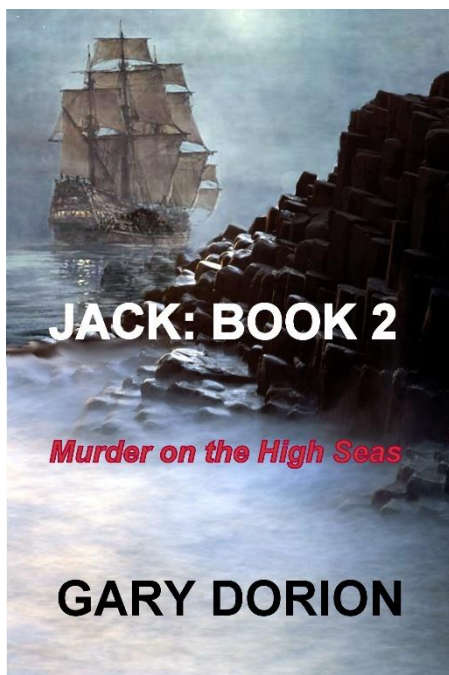
while I shared it, my pride and my delight. On the evening previous to her being brought to my home, my mother had said playfully, "I have a pretty present for my Victor—tomorrow he shall have it." And when, on the morrow, she presented Elizabeth to me as her promised gift, I, with childish seriousness, interpreted her words literally and looked upon Elizabeth as mine—mine to protect, love, and cherish. All praises bestowed on her I received as made to a possession of my own. We called each other familiarly by the name of cousin. No word, no expression could body forth the kind of relation in which she stood to me—my more than sister, since till death she was to be mine only.

END of Silverlight Café's May 11th Edition. (Please view the following pages)

This historical fiction trilogy teems with adventure, excitement and humor that highlights much of this antebellum novel, set in the 1860's in Charleston, South Carolina - the center of the rebellion against the north - and aboard a slave ship bound for the Caribbean Islands. Book 1 was published on August 26, 2015. Book 2 will be published on May 20, 2016, and Book 3 is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2016. In Book 2, Jack, Jeremy and their two newly-found, black Jamaican girlfriends conspire to set free some 100 slaves aboard the ship "Helena." Their elaborate plans lead them into wild, dangerous adventures while trying everything they can to disrupt the plans of the slaver ship's captain as his ship travels from Charleston, South Carolina, to Jamaica, Cuba, and Hispaniola. Book 2 is a coming-of-age rollicking adventure for the Jamaican girls and their white Charleston boyfriends - all four who have no qualms about risking their lives for a just cause. And the taking of the Helena is central to their plans.

(Hover over link)

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