

MY GUEST - JULIE EBERHART PAINTER

Today I have with me Julie Eberhart Painter, a fellow writer with Champagne Books. Julie has been writing for quite some time now, with a load of books under her name, with her latest, *Kill Fee*, out October 1 from Champagne Books.

Let's meet this amazing lady...

TKT: Okay, so, let's get straight into it... How many books have you written? I see that most are mysteries, what got you started into the devious world of murderers and intrigue?

JEP: Thank you for inviting me. I'm not all about murder, but I like intrigue and scandal.

Counting the three books not yet published, I've completed nine. We won't count the ones in the round file. I have a 105,000-word memoir that although written for publication, is meant more for our family. I haven't tried to sell it lately. That would be ten.

TKT: Good luck on your memoirs. Next question, do you draw on life experiences when you go about creating a story? Or is it just purely made it?

JEP: I always draw on my looo...ong life experience for my stories. I was blessed to be in several people-intensive businesses: Interior Design among the rich and famous and health care among the crotchety and interesting. I also play duplicate bridge against the competitive and nasty. Very broadening. The overall plots are my own but the people are composites from life.

TKT: Sounds very interesting and diverse. So, when did the writing bug bite you?

JEP: As a child making up stories was part of my culture. My parents were well read and older. They had a lot of memories to share. My favorite game was, "Tell me what it was like when you were a little boy/girl."

When I was eight or nine, I started writing about princes and princesses, I never read about them now—unless Tina Brown wrote their story.

TKT: Sounds like my parents. I used to enjoy their tales of when they were young. Right, you asked me this question, so now I only see it fit to ask you. Do you remember your first rejection letter, and how it made you feel as a writer?

JEP: I was very disappointed. The book was "On the Road to Cassadaga," a memoir of my decision to become a writer based on a conversation with a psychic over the phone. I'd been making comfort calls for a local hospice. The famous psychic told me a chilling story and invited me to meet her in Cassadaga, FL, a truly spooky place about 30 miles west of us towards Orlando. When I got there, it was so scary I came home and phoned to cancel.

Once Cassadaga was written, I picked the perfect agent. She was the right choice at the time and was nice enough to write and tell me my book wasn't ready for prime time. She was right about that. I had hoped to resubmit it to her because she was a major player in the industry. Sadly, my judgment was a little off. She was thrown out of the AAR ten years later for creating a false auction on another book she represented.

TKT: Wow, that terrible about your agent. Okay, so what's your perfect writing day? Do you have a routine, or are you one of those writers that fit it in when you get the chance?

JEP: I could have a routine. My husband is retired, kids gone, etc. I don't play much bridge now. But if a friend wants to do something or my very limited social life intervenes, I just go. I am always ahead of my deadlines, so I can do that. The perfect day is when I am creating a new story and I push back from the computer and cry, "I didn't see that coming!"

TKT: Tell me a little bit about your upcoming release, *Kill Fee*.

JEP: The cozy mystery begins among a group of seniors playing duplicate bridge. The director, Penny, has taken over running the game for her beloved uncle who is too old to keep up with it anymore. The old folks love Uncle Connie, but resent the delicious morsel, Penny, who has a romantic history. Her day job is that of an environmentalist with the EPA.

Her uncle dies at the table and the old folks think it's murder. The Keystone Cop-like police are called and Penny becomes a suspect because her uncle has left her \$15,000,000 and his environmentally sensitive beachfront property, complete with staff. The new young lawyer, Cole, whom Uncle Connie selected to disburse his estate, takes her under his wing. Naturally they fall in love, although she exercises caution this time around.

Penny has a pet Mynah bird, Bilgewater, the legacy of a former lover. The bird has a reputation for swearing and telling it like it is. Penny calls him the foul-mouthed fowl and her malevolent Mynah. He's a quick study and not a bad crime fighter either

In *Kill Fee*, everyone gets play. The old folks are scandalized. The police are annoyed and the environmentalist press is scared into action that takes several crazy twists. It's a fun read with poignant messages.

TKT: Sounds exciting!! Do you read other books outside of your genre?

JEP: I am especially fond of mystery romance, suspense, autobiographies, memoirs and currently anything written about animals such as the books of Sara Gruen. She wrote *Water for Elephants*, but my current favorite is *Riding Lessons*. She knows the animals' body language as well as human family dynamics. Her books combine my interest in anthropology with my love of psychology.

TKT: If you could have a conversation (or meet) with one of your favourite writers (living or not), who would it be, and why, and what would you ask them?

JEP: I have many favorites from long ago. Wilkie Collins wrote *The Woman in White*, one of the first English mystery novels. I admire him, but for a sit down, I'd like to talk with Margaret Mitchell. One of my nursing home residents in Atlanta was her personal friend. They were in a weekly two-table bridge game. One day Margaret didn't show up. The ladies asked, "Wheah's Mahgret?" The answer was, "She's writing a book." The ladies laughed. And the rest is historical romance: *Gone With the Wind*.

I wouldn't necessarily ask her anything about the South, but I'd like to know if she regrets asking to have all her unpublished work destroyed at her death. One story was found in an attic two generations later. She had been 15 at the time, writing a long short story for a young man a block away celebrating his 16th birthday. It's called "Lost Laysen," and can be purchased in the Margaret Mitchell Museum at her home in Atlanta.

TKT: That is truly amazing. My last question. If you could pick a place, time, year or even century (past, present, or future) what, which, when, and where?

JEP: I was born in 1936. According to my 50-year-old children, I could not have been born at a better time. They are probably right. I certainly would have wanted to be an American.

TKT: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

JEP: Thank you again for proposing this idea to swap interviews. I highly recommend it. Because we are polar opposites, you young, me more advanced in age, you a writer of sci-fi and fantasy and me a reality writer, the questions and answers have much more substance. I like that. Good luck with your series.

Thanks so much Julie for stopping by and I wish your oodles of sales for your upcoming release. Don't forget, Kill Fee - out October 1. Don't you just want to find out about Bilgewater? I do.

Bio info: Julie Eberhart Painter is the Champagne Books author of Mortal Coil, Tangled Web, and Kill Fee to be released in October.

You can find Julie at her Website at www.books-jepainter.com

Julie's books are available from champagnebooks.com and popular electronic bookstores. Paperbacks can be purchased from the publisher or lulu.com