



Writer's Block

A Cindy Bauer Books Newsletter



Cindy Bauer

Welcome to new Writer's Block newsletter! I'm excited about this first edition for 2009. The newsletter will be sent to all my subscribers and also posted on my news blog. If you were previously subscribed, **you need to resubscribe** to continue getting the newsletter.

This month's interview is with award winning and bestselling author, Jordan Dane! The interview with Jordan will be posted on my interview blog and you can actually participate!

Jordan has agreed to answer your questions as well as mine. I will be posting her interview today, January 1, to my interview blog. During the week of January 5th, you can post your questions for Jordan and she will be guest-blogging the week of

January 12th to personally answer your questions.

So come on and join us! It's your chance to connect with Jordan and ask those questions you've just been "**dying**" to ask her!

Still need to get that book reviewed? Submit your request for a review to Norm Goldman at <http://www.bookpleasures.com> today!

All the features previously in Writer's Block are now posted to their own individual blogs. I will be adding information off and on during the month, so check often. The only "set postings" will be my column on my news blog and my interview for the month on my interview blog.

<http://cindybauer.blogspot.com>

<http://reviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>

<http://interviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>

<http://authorresourcesbycindy.blogspot.com>

<http://recipesbycindy.blogspot.com>

“Wishing everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year!”

Blessings!
Cindy



CB: I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Jordan Dane, award-winning, bestselling novelist. Hi Jordan, it's good to have you here today. I'd like to begin this interview with a little background. You'd been trying to publish your work since 2003. AVON, a subsidiary of HarperCollins, purchased it in auction and released your 'No One' series in 2006. What transpired during that three-year span while you awaited publication?



JD: I wrote every day, three hours during the week after my workday and more hours on the weekends. I was an energy sales manager and worked a demanding job with travel, but I made sure to write every day after I heard motivational speaker Zig Ziglar say that he wrote his non-fiction book doing it a page a day. I thought, hell I can do that. Once I got into the discipline of a rigorous writing schedule, I

joined a local writers group (the OK RWA) and entered national writing contests, submitted proposals to agents and editors and attended conferences to learn more. I networked with other writers online too. Coming from a sales background, I got myself out there in many different ways.

CB: How many writing competitions did you enter and what awards did you receive?

JD: I don't remember how many I entered, but I

became a finalist or won thirty-three contests when the smoke cleared prior to my sale. I am a recovering contest diva. I got spoiled from the start, becoming a semi-finalist with my first entry. But there are many ups and downs entering contests. I have an article on contests at my website on my **FOR WRITERS PAGE** (<http://www.jordandane.com/writers.php>). These were Romance Writers of America chapter contests of varying types. The most prestigious final was for the **2005 Golden Heart Contest**. That really got me noticed by agents and editors.

CB: Was your work ever rejected and if so, how many times and did this discourage you in any way?

JD: I received plenty of rejections, but I never counted them. I had a shredding ritual to rid my house of negativity. I only kept a list of submissions for tax purposes but I never got a final count. I got requests for full manuscripts from contest finals and I submitted proposals to agents and editors. And we all experience the highs of someone wanting to see more of our work to the extreme lows of rejections. The key is how we deal with this. I always looked at the highs and lows as one step in a long journey to keep myself on an even



keel-to stay focused.

CB: I was fortunate to be able to read a galley copy of your first published work, 'No One Heard Her Scream'. Tell us a bit about the 'No One series' and where did you get your inspiration for the plotting of those?

JD: I actually wrote them out of order. **NO ONE LEFT TO TELL** was my first foray into writing suspense. I had a larger story in mind and started to write **NO ONE LIVES FOREVER**, but stopped after six chapters and a detailed synopsis. Characters and story line connect those two stories and since I wasn't sure they'd sell together, I started on **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM** as a standalone. My debut book was actually the fourth manuscript I finished. Two are still unsold (contemporary romances) and "under my bed" as other authors say.

CB: You have a new series coming out in 2009, beginning with the release of 'Evil Without a Face' in February. Briefly tell us about this new series and when can we expect the others to be released?

JD: The **Sweet Justice** thrillers will focus on the lives and loves of three women—a bounty hunter operating outside the law, an ambitious vice cop, and a former international operative with a mysterious past. These women give Lady Justice a whole new reason to wear blinders. And their brand of justice is anything but sweet.

In **EVIL WITHOUT A FACE** (book #1 - Feb 2009), an illusive web of imposters on the Internet lures a deluded teen from her Alaskan home and launches a chain reaction collision course with an unlikely tangle of heroes who uncover a terrifying global conspiracy. They're battling a new kind of criminal. And soon their race for answers will become a dangerous struggle for survival.



In **THE WRONG SIDE OF DEAD** (book #2 - Fall 2009), the mysterious computer wizard Seth

Harper is framed for a heinous murder and becomes a sacrificial lamb to a ruthless killer. And between his gaps in memory and reluctance to reveal his secrets, fugitive recovery agent Jessica Beckett, vice cop Sam Cooper and international operative Alexa Marlowe have an uphill battle to help the boy genius. But Harper's plight is not what it seems. And with one fatal mistake, more innocent lives could wind up on the wrong side of dead.

And I'm currently writing book #3, no title as yet. This book will delve into The Sentinels, the covert organization of wealthy vigilantes that international operative Alexa Marlowe works for. And you'll learn more about her sexy boss, Garrett Wheeler.

CB: When you're writing a series, do you already have the plots floating around in your head for all of them, or do the others come to you as you write the first one?

JD: This is my first time writing a series, but I conceived of a much larger world and bigger, more sustained plots. And the characters have to be larger than one book. I have many many stories about these characters and I love learning about them as I write. I don't plot. And even though I have broad ideas on how this series will work, there are many avenues I can take to explore more. This series really excites me.

CB: You've been compared to **Lisa Jackson, Lisa Gardner and Tami Hoag**. How does that make you feel as far as accomplishing your career goals in the writing industry?

JD: These authors are some of my favorites and it's an honor to be compared to writers of this caliber. Publishers Weekly did the comparing, which is an even bigger honor. I don't try and emulate anyone. I just write the types of stories I want to read. But I'm thrilled an industry professional sees similarities. Very cool.

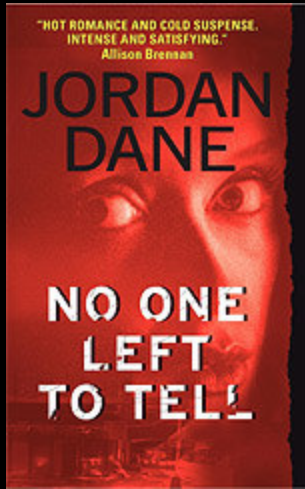
CB: Approximately how long does it take you to write one book from start to finish, and do you first spend time laying out the "floor plan", such as characters, their traits, the setting, etc?

JD: It takes me a while to formulate things in my head. I generally start with the characters in my head. And although I don't plot, I do like to get a general idea how the broad-brush strokes will fit together in my mind. My first sale story on my website on the **FOR WRITERS PAGE** (<http://www.jordandane.com/writers.php>) has my crazy account of how I sold for anyone interested. But **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM** was written in 6-weeks while I was recovering from major surgery. I don't want to EVER do that again (and I'm not referring to the surgery), but most books it takes me 4-5 months for a completely edited version. My house gives me 7 months, but life

gets in the way and the business side of publishing also is a distraction. But I write full time now, so that's why I can focus on all this.

CB: Have you always been an avid reader and is that perhaps, the reason you've chosen this particular genre?

JD: I have been an avid reader since I was a kid. I used to hang out in the library and read anything I could get my hands on that had horses in it. So my first love was Westerns. But it didn't take me long to analyze why I liked the protagonists in those stories and I soon went to espionage thrillers and on to many other subgenres. I am a fairly eclectic reader, but my comfort read is crime fiction of any kind.



CB: Of all the novels you've written thus far, which has been the easiest and which the most difficult for you, and why?

JD: They all are different. Sometimes the writing comes easy in sections, but I struggle with plot and character motivation. That's when easy goes out the window. For me, each one is an effort and they present their own challenges. But in hindsight, **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM** eventually became easier with the words flowing onto the page towards the end. I think because I knew I had a deadline of going back to work from my medical leave. And the most difficult so far has been **THE WRONG SIDE OF DEAD**. Getting into the heads of the characters to make sure I answered some of the mysteries from the previous book and give them a personal journey was difficult. But I was pleased how it turned out and so were my editor and agent.

CB: Are you excited to see your books on actual store shelves and what steps were taken, if any, to make that happen or do you credit that to your huge success in book sales?

JD: My publisher **Avon HarperCollins** is responsible for getting my books out there in such a big way. When my debut book came out, the big national accounts really loved the ARCs (advance

reader copies) and placed significant orders. That's always a plus. And being in mass-market paperback allows my house and booksellers to take a risk at a lower price point. And in this economy, the price of a paperback is much more affordable. But seeing my books on the shelves was a real thrill. And my sales have been very steady since my release too.

CB: How much of the marketing and promotion do you do yourself, if any, or do you have a publicist, agent, etc. to help you?

JD: I hired a publicist for my first series, but don't have one now. I'm a multi-tasker and love being busy, so doing my own publicity works for me. I used to be an energy sales manager so I have an eye on promotion and tend to maintain an online presence.

CB: Have you been offered any movie deals yet?

JD: No movie deals yet. Although I can see my debut book **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM** as a movie and also my new series has real potential too. **EVIL WITHOUT A FACE** is action packed with the great locales of Alaska, Chicago, and Russia. And the characters were fun to write. I'd love to see **EVIL WITHOUT A FACE** as a movie too.

CB: If your first series, 'No One', were to be made into a movie, what actors and actresses could you imagine in the parts?

JD: When I first start a story, I usually gather images for my characters to put me in the mood to write about them. I post images to a powerpoint file and collect lots of pictures for clothing, attitude, whatever works. In **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM**, Diego Galvan was always Eduardo Verastegui, a Hispanic actor. He's a gorgeous man. Google him and see. And I always pictured Becca as Sarah Wayne Callies, the actress who played Dr. Sara on Prison Break. She's got a really expressive face. And in **NO ONE LEFT TO TELL** and **NO ONE LIVES FOREVER**, I can picture Pierce Brosnan playing Nicholas Charboneau, my sexy Tony Soprano crime boss. I had Lucy Lui in my head for Jasmine Lee, but there are other actresses who could play the part of a lethal Asian bodyguard. Christian Delacorte became the image of an actor I met in Toronto when he starred on the TNT TV show Witchblade, Eric Etebari. And Raven MacKenzie could be played by Jessica Biel or a

young Sandra Bullock.

CB: After this next series in 2009 comes out, what can we look forward to reading next?

JD: My **Sweet Justice** series will take me into 2010. And I would love to see more books in this series, but I have plenty of ideas for something new. My house is interested in me writing a book that focuses on a male protagonist and he's been lurking in my mind already. He may even take a bow in this series.

CB: While writing, do places you've lived or people you've encountered in your life, ever play into the character plotting or settings?



JD: Always. Every time someone asks me how long it takes me to write a book, I want to say it took me a lifetime-because that's what being an author is. You incorporate all your life's experiences into each book. I call this "free association" but you draw from places you've been or people you've met to create a world or a scene. It's a lot of fun. For example, a line from **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM** was "if she

wanted to engage the only brain he had, all she had to do was unzip it and free Willy." That line survived my personal edits but it came from a vacation when I visited Vancouver Canada and saw where they filmed the movie, Free Willy.

CB: Besides the writing competitions, what else did you try while awaiting someone to pick up your work for publication, if any, and if so, what seemed to work for or against you the most?

JD: I think you have to get yourself out there in many ways. I joined a local **RWA** chapter and got involved as Program Director and attended many craft classes. I attribute the resources **RWA** offers to aspiring authors as one of the main reasons I learned the craft so quickly. Plus I entered contests and I went to smaller conferences as well as **RWA** nationals and pitched to agents and editors. Pitching is tough and a necessary evil. But the biggest

thing is to learn how to write and keep writing. Each manuscript brings new skill. I see many people re-hashing the same manuscript, but that's not what I did. I chose to write something new while I was sending out proposals. I watched the industry and noticed what was hot and focused on a genre I love to read. It really all boils down to telling a good story with interesting characters that leap out of the slush pile as unique.

CB: Where can we learn more about you and your books?

JD: My website is the most comprehensive spot to learn more about my work at: <http://www.jordandane.com>. Plus you can sign up for my quarterly mailing list. I offer exclusives to anyone belonging to my list. On this site, I have resources for other authors, my appearances, links to my blog, and a list of my novels with excerpts and other special features. **HarperCollins** also maintains a great website for me at http://www.harpercollins.com/authors/33056/Jordan_Dane/index.aspx. This site has fresh material that rotates through and offers a Browse Inside feature to my books that allow readers to read some of my books and buy them, of course.

CB: Your books are available just about everywhere now, but I hear you have some news about being accepted into mass market publishing, which will mean seeing your books offered in book clubs. Tell us a bit about that?

JD: Actually, my debut book **NO ONE HEARD HER SCREAM** was just named by Publishers Weekly as the Best Book of 2008 for Mass Market, one of five selected for this honor. I was stunned by this recognition. And as for Book Clubs, my "No One" series was sold into all three major book clubs last year-**Mystery Guild, Rhapsody, and Double Day**. So these books are available in hard-cover through those clubs for anyone who is a member. I also sold my "No One" series into Germany to Blanvalet, a division of the prestigious **Random House**. My debut book (translated into German) will be out in March 2009 with the next two books release months to be determined. My German cover was really beautiful too. Very gritty. Thanks for asking about all this.

CB: Where might we be able to purchase one of your books and have it signed, such as at a signing event?

JD: My appearances are always posted on my website. I'll make a few conferences in 2009 too. But another good way to get a signed copy of my books is through a local independent bookseller I use here in town. **Best of Books in Edmond, OK** has my books available and can obtain signed copies prior to mailing them out. Here's their link: <http://www.bestofbooksedmond.com/home.nxg>. Just call or write them via their website and make arrangements.

CB: Is there anything you would recommend to aspiring authors still waiting to be published or still trying to finish that first book?

JD: Write, write and write some more. Finish that first book and keep on going. Don't wait for replies to come back. Keep writing. The only way you learn and hone your craft is to keep writing. I discover things all the time and only writing does that for you. Keep an open mind to criticism, but don't be ruled by it. You have to maintain a vision of what you want to be and keep pushing to get there. It only takes one set of eyes to like what you're doing. Keep putting yourself out there while you are building your inventory of stories and honing your voice.



CB: Is there any way your readers can contact you or interact with you on some sort of personal level, such as a forum perhaps, where they can ask ques-

tions and have you answer them for them at some point and if not, have you considered that option?

JD: I always love to hear from readers, so email me. And I would love the opportunity to conduct a forum with more direct communication, such as arranging a conference call with book clubs. That would be fun too. But contact me via my website contact page to make any special requests.

CB: Can you briefly tell us a little about Jordan, the person, not Jordan the writer?

JD: I've been married thirty years to my best friend. He's an amazing guy who must be crazy to put up with the strange hours of an author. And we have a Koi pond and have become Koi wranglers. I love animals of all kinds and have become an avid bird watcher and feed wild birds on my property with a special blend of seed I order from a local grain store. And family and friends are very important to me. How's that?

CB: Jordan, I'd like to thank you for allowing me this interview. I know you're an extremely busy woman now and we don't want to take up too much of your time (basically because we want you to get back in there and write!) But is there anything else you would like to express to your readers that I may not have covered here today?

JD: Books make the world a much smaller place. They allow us to travel to exotic locales and tread through worlds created in the mind of an author. And the price of a paperback is a bargain when it comes to entertainment. Plus sharing thoughts, ideas, and stories can connect us all in a way no international border can hinder. And with the emotion in our stories, we find a common thread of humanity that bonds us together. So keep reading and thanks for your support of new authors like me.

You can visit Jordan at the following sites: <http://www.jordandane.com/>

<http://www.jordandane.com/appearances.php> - <http://interviewsbycindy.blogspot.com/>

<http://www.harpercollins.com/author/microsite/about.aspx?authorid=33056>

<http://crimespace.ning.com/profile/JordanDane#> - <http://www.myspace.com/jordandanebooks>

Still got a question not answered here? - <http://interviewsbycindy.blogspot.com>
Post your questions for Jordan during the week of **January 5th** in the comment section under the interview. The week of **January 12th**, Jordan will be guest-blogging and will answer your questions for you personally!