

Suggested Interview Questions

1. This was apparently a bedtime story you told your grandchildren? What inspired you to put it into print?
2. You dedicate the book to your brother Randy; is there a story behind this?
3. I understand Randy once asked you if Jay knew you had made him so churlish as a character? What prompted you to make Jay such a impish and self-absorbed teenager?
4. Food seems to be a major part of the book – lots of mentions of specific cuisine – why was it important to highlight things like scones, tea-rings and other baked goods in the book?
5. You seem to purposely jump around in time throughout the book. It is not a straight line from past to present to future: what was the inspiration behind writing in such a way?
6. How did the characters of your book *Shadows of December* come to be based upon your children and grandchildren?
7. Different family members inspire all of your characters: are you in the book as one of your characters as well? Who do you relate to?
8. Why did you choose to base the story in 1947?
9. A large part of your story takes place in 2364: why choose that date? What was the most challenging part about writing for a futurist world?
10. Danielle seems to be an Angel that grapples with human emotions and frustrations, why is that?
11. Your writing seems to be a mix of spiritual fantasy and sci-fi time travel: what inspired you to combine the two genres?
12. Are there any lessons you hope your readers learn from this book?
13. Will there be a sequel?
14. Why start writing at this point in your life?

Author Q&A

Why did you choose to base the story in 1947?

I was a small child in the 1940's; it was a simpler time....I remember sitting around the table listening to the radio with my family and thinking the world had so much potential. It was just after the war and everyone was hopeful for the future. There was massive expansion industrially

How did the characters of your book *Shadows of December* come to be based upon your children and grandchildren?

I have been creating and recreating this story to entertain and delight my grandchildren since they were small. Using them as the characters helped keep them fascinated with the story as they could recognize parts of themselves in the personas created for them. This is a favorite cozy-up-before-bedtime-with-flashlight story that found its way to print.

***Shadows of December* is a bedtime story you told your grandchildren: What inspired you to put it into print?**

My oldest grandson, Jay, the inspiration behind the main character of the book, inspired me to write the tale down as a memoir for the family. He loved it growing up and always asked for me to regale him with it. It was at his prodding and at the insistence of my brother Ray, who read the first completed version of the book, that I published it.

A large part of your story takes place in 2363: why choose that date? What was the most challenging part about writing for a futurist world?

The hardest part was that while this story is fiction, I wanted it based a bit on fact. I am a huge science nerd and love reading articles about new technology and science, like that of gene-splicing, stem cell advancement, new energy sources, climate

change, etc. These concepts really dominated my writing and I found myself constantly wondering what the world would be like in 300 years if some of these ideas went unchecked? That thought process led me to the world the characters visit in 2363.

Danielle seems to be an Angel that grapples with human emotions and frustrations, why is that?

I wanted Danielle to be just as relatable a character as any of the others in the book. We often view Angels and spirits as “all knowing serene beings” and I thought that seemed rather boring. I thought that it must be difficult helping people cross over from this realm to the next. Why not make Danielle a creature that continues to learn in the next life? A being that is compassionate, kind, but also fiery and a little mischievous as well. I think we can all empathize with her throughout the book; which helps to make the fantasy more genuine.

Your writing seems to be a mix of spiritual fantasy and sci-fi time travel: what inspired you to combine the two genres?

That’s lovely, isn’t it? Mixing it all up and smashing the two together? It may come from my love of the Twilight Zone: there are many topics in that television series that walked the line between spiritual fantasy and science fiction. Many scientists, including Einstein, were huge believers in God and the unending probabilities of the universe. I think I consider myself open to all the possibilities of what might happen after we die: the last great mystery. I love the idea that things like time travel, changing dimensions and places, etc. could be so easy once we pass through the veil of death. At the same time, science and technology are constantly growing and changing: there is no reason why some of the ideas that seem preposterous today couldn’t be realities tomorrow.

Are there any lessons you hope your readers learn from this book?

1) The grass isn't always greener and 2) be grateful for what you have currently...we all fall prey to thinking our lives are mundane and find ourselves wanting a life that is more exciting, lavish, extravagant, but at what cost? Decisions we make today can have a profound effect on others in the future. It's important to weigh out all of the outcomes before making decisions. Jay learns this the hard way and I hope that it will act as a warning to all those who read the book as well.

Will there be a sequel?

My grandchildren are all asking me the same question! There are quite a few unanswered questions at the end of the story and several characters that deserve a closer look. I think a sequel is definitely forming in my head. Right now, the characters of my current book *The Unseen Player* are dominating my thoughts, so I'm afraid a sequel will have to wait until they have all had their say, but after they all make their way to the page, perhaps!