

WELCOME TO LINDA'S TEA ROOM



Authors are often more than writers and I am in awe of those proficient in two or more mediums. I dabble in pottery and have fun at a Paint & Sip. Kathleen Reardon, who I'm thrilled to introduce to you, is one of those truly talented creatives. Not only is she a wonderful novelist, she's a painter of beautiful watercolors and oils.

Meet author Kathleen Reardon

I met Kathleen Reardon through the Authors Guild and it's been a pleasure getting to know her and her two-book series. Kathleen's debut novel, *Shadow Campus*, came out in 2013 and her latest, *Damned If She Does*, in 2020. In both, we meet Meg and Shamus, estranged brother and sister. Oooh, I was intrigued. Estranged siblings – possible family secrets, which I love in novels – I had to find out more. I'll let Kathleen tell you about her story.

"I was writing Damned If She Does long before the MeToo era began. Meg, one of two lead characters, keeps a dark secret until she stumbles upon the dead body of the man who caused it all and quickly becomes the prime suspect. Four characters from Shadow Campus return in this second crime mystery, which I anticipate becoming part of a trilogy. The first book took place in L.A, the second in New York City, and the third, now partially written, will be situated in West Cork Ireland."

Intrigued by authors who write series, I asked Kathleen what her greatest challenge was in writing hers. Let's "listen" to her answer:

When writing [Shadow Campus](#) and [Damned If She Does](#), a major challenge involved not giving away the ending. Second to that was keeping each main character's story engaging and on track. My technique for the former is to keep myself in the dark — essentially not determining who done it until nearly the end. That way, there's little chance of spilling the beans.

The second challenge is a bit more complicated. My general approach is to keep each main character's story in my head much like we do with our friends. If you think about it, you know what most of your friends would and wouldn't do in a variety of circumstances. Sure, there's room for error, but the same can be said of fictional characters. Every now and then someone tells me with conviction what one of my characters will likely do in the next book. That's always a pleasure to learn. It's as if the characters live beyond the pages and no longer belong only to me.

Kathleen had an interview with one of her primary characters, which I found to be so clever. I'd never seen that done before, in print, though many writers probably do it in their heads at some point while crafting their story. Let's see how Shamus answers Kathleen's questions.

Kathleen: Shamus, I'm delighted that you're here. I know you're a private person. Let's start there. You finally said yes to this interview on the fourth try.

Shamus: You've put me in two novels. I guess you could say my life is no longer my own. Besides, my sister can't seem to shake the notion that her brother is an introvert whose love life won't blossom until he opens up.

Kathleen: Any other reason?

Shamus: (smiling) Maybe I'm just a little worried about what you'll write about me in the third book.

Kathleen: At this point, I may have little wiggle room. Our readers know you as well as I do. Some tell me what you'll do next.

Shamus: You reap what you sow.

Kathleen: Let me ask you this: You've stolen the hearts of many female readers. They describe you as a "diamond in the rough." What's your response to that?

Shamus: Detective Jeffries says any charm I might have is wasted — that I'm oblivious to women noticing me.

Kathleen: Do you think he has a point?

Shamus: I think he's just grumpy.

Kathleen: He is that. So, tell me, in book three you'll be in Ireland. Are you looking forward to that?

Shamus: I'm not much for travel, but my Irish roots go way back. I think we can tell Meg that I'm branching out.

Kathleen: She's going along, isn't she?

Shamus: Yep. She's been there many times and loves it, especially West Cork.

Kathleen: You're becoming quite the amateur detective. Is that something you plan to turn into a career?

Shamus: It's born of necessity. My dream is building beautiful homes. Maybe someday a degree in architecture.

Kathleen: I guess we'll see.

Shamus: (Smiling) Unless you want to tell us now.

Kathleen: Thank you for being here, Shamus.

Shamus: Ah, you're keeping it a secret. I knew it.

Kathleen: One last thing, Shamus. Is Denise in your future?

Shamus: She's in my present. That's really all I can say.

Kathleen gave me an idea and I might just have to interview Liz or Bobbi, characters in my novel, *Sisters of the Vine*, coming out in March 2021. I'll let you know if any of them agree to it.

Take a look at Kathleen's art work on her website <http://www.paintingdoc.com> and follow her on Facebook to see more about her writing and her paintings.

Shadow Campus is available at: <https://www.amazon.com/Shadow-Campus-Kathleen-Kelley-Reardon-ebook> and *Damned If She Does* at: <https://www.amazon.com/Damned-She-Does-Kathleen-Reardon-ebook>