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Jessenovels Q & A With Ara 13

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Thanks to Ara 13 for letting us conduct this Q & A with him, enjoy.



Q: What Got You Into Writing?

Ara 13 : I wrote a book as an Independent Project my senior year in high school, twenty years ago. It wasn't bad for a teenager, but it certainly wasn't a work I would be proud to put out as an adult. I've shelved it and four or more manuscripts since. *Drawers & Booths* was the first piece that continued to make me laugh, and that I found thematically sound. As with my high-school manuscript, *Drawers & Booths* is dialogue driven. I was always drawn to plays. Later, my writing was honed by the Defense Information Schools of the military. Journalism is a great foundation for the novel. The style forces a writer to have a point, and to get to it. Many of my favorite writers have a journalistic background, even Winston Churchill.

Q: Whose Your Favorite Author ?

Ara 13: My favorite author is Graham Greene. He seems to give me just enough descriptions to set a scene without miring me down in elaborate narration. His settings are often multicultural, and his characters are multidimensional. Greene's characters are realistic human sketches. I believe everything he puts down on paper. My favorite of his is "The Heart

of the Matter.”

Q: What's Next For You ?

Ara 13: In March, I will release *Fiction*, by Ara 13, my second novel. I have several speaking engagements lined up at various universities. I discuss thematic metafiction. I love to dissect my motives and discover what I think works. I don't believe in hoarding this information either. I like to share my ideas with other writers and readers. Doing so, allows me to challenge my preconceptions and better my work.

Q: Any Tips For The Young Writer Out There ?

Ara 13 : Be deliberate. That is the best piece of advice I know for any business. I've heard several authors claim they “channel” something inside them and put down on paper whatever comes out. Then they scrutinize the work for a “found meaning.” I think this is an awful trend that produces muddled communication. I believe a writer can have a deliberate theme, even moral, and not overly steer the plot, allowing for serendipity, keeping writing fun. But, the thematic skeleton must be established first. Without it, the novel is just an anecdotal exercise. To publish is already a mildly arrogant endeavor. We believe we are saying something so important or funny or poetic that others should devote time reading us, in lieu of doing other things. I for one feel obligated to deliver a point, justifying the reader's commitment, respecting their choice of supporting my endeavor.

Q: Where Do You See Yourself within Ten Years?

Ara 13: In ten years, I expect to be working on my tenth novel, while continuing to lecture on writing. Hopefully, I can slow down on the marketing and just produce my work and submerge myself in an environment of fans of literature and the sentence.

Q: Tell The Readers About Your Novel *Drawers & Booths*

Ara 13: *Drawers & Booths* is a strong metafiction novel. Anytime the reader is intentionally made aware that the story is an artifact, a product of man, then a metafictional device is employed. *Drawers & Booths* is the story of a Marine corporal acting as a liaison between an island nation and the U.S. Army, when his story is hijacked by a displaced narrator seeking a suspected criminal. The disruption causes the characters to become aware of their role in a novel, even rebelling against the author's intent—my intent.

Q: Do You Believe An Indie Writer Can Make It Alone In The Writing Industry ?

Ara 13: That depends on what you mean by “alone.” I'm guessing you mean without an agent or a big production house. First, I do not think they can make it without a good editor. Quality really is job one. If Indie writers want to distance themselves from the pack, they need to produce great work. I certainly think bad writers and an inferior product can succeed if the author is a marketing and networking guru, but the point of the question is to suppose the writer doesn't have such connections. That being the case, their best chance is to produce quality. From there, building name-brand recognition is the major hurdle. Even distribution is not a problem. Realistically, most people can get an Indie book from Amazon or even order it

at a brick-and-mortar store. It's product placement that we Indies are missing. Not enough people are seeing our book covers. I imagine someone will fill this niche in the future, specializing in Indie distribution to the big stores.

Q: The Internet Has A Vast Sea Of Writing Communities, In Your Opinion Do You Feel That These Sites Benefit A Writer or Hurt Them ?

Ara 13: I do not like writing by committee. I believe if an author isn't sure where to *take* his novel, it is because he hasn't well developed his theme. I feel most writers can profit, not from plot ideas, but from editors and the study of the sentence and various authorial styles. I am skeptical of communities that talk about writing more than they grind away on the keyboard, or that will vent anything onto paper. If, however, a writer can find support from some serious peers who approach writing like the job it is, then that group is a positive influence. My experience has taught me that most of the people who hang around in these groups have yet to do the work. They talk about projects they are going to do. Meanwhile, everyone seems stunned that I am marketing book two while editing book three. Not that I'm a dynamo; I just advise others to take accurate personal inventory about their level of effort and commitment. If you can find a community of like-minded writers being productive, join. I am a big fan of support systems, just as long as we don't delude ourselves about the value of the group. Good company is not always productive company.

Q: This One Of My Favorite Question To Ask Each Writer, What Fan Fiction Would You Love To Write?

Ara 13: I always instinctively feel contrary when asked questions such as this. Sorry. I just don't see the fun in running with someone else's ball. (Is that even an expression?) For me, the joy of writing is the creative process supporting a theme that I find interesting. To expound upon someone else's characters takes the fun out of it for me. I like creating the characters. I want my characters to be the avatar of future metaphors and allusions. I want my writing to endure. I realize that takes the fun out of the question, but you're talking to a guy who wouldn't write a sequel. Those characters are done for me.

Ara 13 Final words: Drawers & Booths by Ara 13 is available at Amazon.com and at most bookstores. Fiction, will be released March 2009. Those interested in having Ara lecture either at a their university, college, book or writing group, please email:

Publisher@CovingtonMoore.com or search Ara13.com for lectures. Thanks. Ara

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