

# The Crime Cafe with Daniella Bennett

Presented By:



**Debbi:** Hello everyone. This is the Crime Cafe. Your podcasting source of great crime, suspense and thriller writing. I'm your host, Debbi Mack. It's a real thrill to be back for a fourth season of this podcast and before I get into introducing my guest, I would like to say two things. We have *The Crime Cafe* publications on sale on my website, debbimack.com under Crime Cafe. You can find them at any retailer, online and if you happen to catch this podcast during July of 2018, they're going for a special price on Smashwords. I mean a really low price, so check it out. And the second thing I wanted to say is we now have a Patreon page. If you want to support the podcast, there are all sorts of cool perks that go along with being a supporter, like early looks at novels and drafts and free short stories, video chats, that kind of thing. So, there is a lot there for people who support the podcast, including a free copy of the 9 book set if you support at the \$10 or above level. So, having said that, let's get to the podcast. Let's get to our guest, our distinguished guest who is back for a second time; a return visit from Daniella Burnett who writes the Emmeline Kirby/Gregory Longdon series, mystery series. Welcome, Daniella. It's great to have you back.

**Daniella:** Thank you very much. I'm glad to be here again.

**Debbi:** It's wonderful to be here for a fourth season and to have you as well.

**Daniella:** Yes, your program is so delightful and you give so many people an opportunity to hear about different authors and their mysteries.

**Debbi:** I do my best [laughs].

**Daniella:** [laughs]

**Debbi:** Right now you have a third book out. Is that correct? And you're working on the fourth one and getting it published.

**Daniella:** Actually the third book is out. The fourth book, *The Checkered Past* will be released on September 29<sup>th</sup>, and I'm actually working on book six at the moment.

**Debbi:** Okay, yeah. Of course, we're always working on the book that's way ahead of what's being published [laughs]. Or, you know, yeah. But, so everything always feels a little out of whack timewise [laughs].

**Daniella:** Yes, it does a little.

**Debbi:** But, in any case, tell us a little bit about Book Three because I noticed that it gets into some dark secrets, as far as Gregory is concerned and Emmeline's relationship with him.

**Daniella:** Okay, well Book Three was, *From Beyond The Grave*, which took place in Torquay along the English Riviera in Devon. There's a change in dynamic in Emmeline and Gregory's relationship so that's why I decided to take them out of their usual environment, which is in London so that we could focus more on their relationship and the change in dynamic of it and as you mentioned, in that book Gregory

has always had secrets but his secrets are taking a different turn and are impacting the dynamic of their relationship.

**Debbi:** Yes! And there's a kind of a love triangle of sorts.

**Daniella:** Yes there is a woman from his past that causes conflicts and a lot of grief for Emmeline in, *From Beyond The Grave*.

**Debbi:** So that sounds intriguing and it ends up extending to a certain extent into Book Four.

**Daniella:** Yes, it does because I am leaving something hanging at the end there to intrigue my readers and make them want to go to four, which will be coming out in September.

**Debbi:** Yes!

**Daniella:** Certain questions are answered in Book Four, but more questions linger.

**Debbi:** My goodness! One of the things I was wondering, in Book Four you get into the very interesting subject of Nazi-looted art.

**Daniella:** Yes, I do. Book Four focuses on a looted Nazi painting and a former IRA Commander because as I was developing the story line for my book, I also learned that a number of IRA members were Nazi collaborators. So that worked very well in the storyline that I had in mind so I decided to connect the two and the looted Nazi painting has a connection to a former IRA Commander in my book.

**Debbi:** Interesting. That's getting into some social commentary there and I was wondering if Book Three was anything like that. Do you get into that?

**Daniella:** Not really so much. As I said, Book Three, *From Beyond The Grave*, was really more of the changing relationship between Emmeline and Gregory. This one I decided to take a little bit...it's not so much of a social commentary, but it does work on that aspect of the looted Nazi painting and this issue is still going on today that the victims of the Holocaust are still fighting to get their possessions back and it's a hard fight.

**Debbi:** Yes, yes. I've been reading about that.

**Daniella:** Yes, I mean you see in the paper all the time about these families and the victims of the families that are still fighting to get their possessions.

**Debbi:** What prompted your interest in that? Was it reading about in the paper or was it something else?

**Daniella:** Well, I mean I've always had an interest in history and this issue in particular it angers me, as it should anger anybody.

**Debbi:** Yeah.

**Daniella:** And being Jewish it reinforces that, so it's a very personal issue and I think it should be a personal issue for everybody.

**Debbi:** I agree. How much research did you do to learn about it?

**Daniella:** Oh, I've read a number of articles. I've dug into certain aspects of the IRA storyline and the Nazi-looted painting, just to help get the basic idea in my mind and to help formalize it so I'd have the history, so that I could work on my story based on that. On both of these issues, there are a lot of articles and books out there that you can easily find information about it.

**Debbi:** [agrees]. Sometimes I feel like a frustrated historian myself in that sense that we share an interest in that subject generally.

**Daniella:** Yeah.

**Debbi:** I love history.

**Daniella:** Yes.

**Debbi:** I almost thought about going into graduate studies in history.

**Daniella:** Well, I mean it's important to learn history because it helps you understand why things are the way they are today, how they evolved. So, you have to learn the past to understand the present and the future.

**Debbi:** Yes, absolutely! I agree completely. And the things that have happened in the past are fascinating.

**Daniella:** And unfortunately certain things are repeating themselves. I mean you would think that they were...that people would have learned from that but certain things are still going on and still repeating themselves.

**Debbi:** Sadly, yes. Let's see. Without revealing any spoilers, where do you see the series going from here?

**Daniella:** Oh, well...

**Debbi:** Since you're working on Book Six [laughs].

**Daniella:** Yes, yes, I don't want to give you too much so that you know to go on to the next one. Well, it's still the evolving relationship with Emmeline and Gregory. She does still love him, but his secrets are a bit of a barrier there, you know, because Emmeline is a journalist and her core being is to find the truth and to see that justice is done. So she has some mixed emotions there. I mean she does love Gregory, but his secrets bother her quite a bit, especially because she's always fighting for the truth and fighting to see that justice is done. On the other hand, I mean Gregory, yes he's a jewel thief, he's a criminal, but on the other hand he is a gentleman and so in that sense he understands the criminal, but you know murder is a line in his mind that should never be crossed and in that sense he's the same as

Emmeline, trying to find justice, ensuring the criminal is brought to justice. So, they do have similarities, but their differences also help to propel the story and to have offshoots and different tangents so there are lots of things spinning around in the back of my mind that I could do with the two of them because of their different backgrounds and their philosophies and also the man/woman relationship that also plays into it.

**Debbi:** He's a fascinating character to me. They both are.

**Daniella:** Well, I am glad to hear that. That's what I like to hear.

**Debbi:** I love their relationship actually. Gregory is the kind of person that you kind of want to strangle, but at the same time, you love him because he is that gentleman and he is...he sticks up for Emmeline so much and what can I say? They really do, as a couple; they really hit it off there on the page and in my mind. I can picture the guy, you know. You do such a great job of describing them and I can picture both of them so well and their relationship with the detective...

**Daniella:** Oh, Chief Inspector Burnell. Yes.

**Debbi:** Yes! It's just priceless. It's just wonderful stuff.

**Daniella:** Well I have a soft spot for Burnell. Of course, the law is the most important thing and he has to see that justice is done.

**Debbi:** Right!

**Daniella:** I like Burnell and that's why I created the cat-and-mouse relationship with Gregory. That helps to propel my storylines as well.

**Debbi:** [agrees].

**Daniella:** Both, I mean they do clash, they do have conflict, but to a certain extent Burnell and Gregory do have a respect for one another.

**Debbi:** Precisely. It's the way that they clash but can kind of join at various points to where they work together as well as against each other enough so that they aren't just bashing each other over the head all the time.

**Daniella:** Oh, no.

**Debbi:** But just rub up against each other the wrong way sometimes. Gregory ultimately wins you over with his charm [laughs].

**Daniella:** That's what I try.

**Debbi:** It's funny, I don't picture him physically this way, but I keep thinking of Cary Grant in, *To Catch A Thief*.

**Daniella:** Oh, well Cary Grant was one of my favorite actors. Cary Grant and Gregory Peck, so.

**Debbi:** Oh, yes!

**Daniella:** So there's a certain extent the formation of Gregory came from all different, you know things for me. So, I'm glad that you get a picture of Cary Grant. That's a good thing.

**Debbi:** Oh, definitely. Definitely that personality [laughs]. Although physically he might be more like Gregory Peck, you know tall and handsome and, not that Cary Grant wasn't handsome. In any case, do you have anything else you're working on in addition to the series?

**Daniella:** No, the series is my main focus, because I also work full time so it's a struggle as it is to squeeze in time to write on a daily basis. For now, I'm focusing on Emmeline and Gregory. If it gets to the point where I can't think of any more trouble for them to get into, perhaps I'll think of a different series to start. But for the moment, I'm focusing on Emmeline and Gregory and of course Burnell and Sergeant Finch and all the other minor characters too.

**Debbi:** You work full time and you work in architectural?

**Daniella:** Yes, I work for an engineering architectural and construction management firm. I'm the research manager.

**Debbi:** The research manager?

**Daniella:** Yes.

**Debbi:** How do you manage your time so well?

**Daniella:** [laughs]. That's a big struggle because I can only write when I come home in the evening from work and on the weekends and it's a big struggle. I have to...I try to be disciplined about it, because after all, I mean writing is the love of my life. It's something I have to do. It's like breathing, so I try to squeeze in time as much as I can, but you know some days I'm stressed out from work or I'm just tired and I can only write a paragraph...

**Debbi:** Oh, I know.

**Daniella:** That frustrates me because I have so little time to begin with and then other days the ideas just flow and I can do two or three pages.

**Debbi:** That's fantastic. Do you usually outline ahead of time or do you tend to be a pantsner?

**Daniella:** No, I don't outline but I do like to plot the storyline in my head before I start and sit down to write my books because at least I have that basic skeleton of the plot to follow. Along the way oftentimes, I think of a different idea so I change it. At least I have that basic line in my mind to follow as I am writing the story.

**Debbi:** Yes, I think that's important, especially when you're writing a mystery.

**Daniella:** Yeah. I know certain mystery writers; they can just start like that. No, I have to have like the basic idea in my head and I also have to know who the murderer is. Some people, you know, just think of the murderer as they go along, but for me I have to know who that is so I can leave the little red herrings and put people on different tangents and so on.

**Debbi:** Exactly! I agree. I am with you on that. I mean I find it impossible not to write a mystery without knowing who did it.

**Daniella:** Yeah.

**Debbi:** Even if I don't know how exactly how that person got there. I have to know who did it, otherwise...

**Daniella:** I want this person because of A, B and C and then I work that out as I am writing the story.

**Debbi:** It helps you a lot with the motivations of the characters.

**Daniella:** Yes. For me, you have to know the motivation to be able...of course the character is important but their motivation, you have to understand that to know why the crime was committed because for me a mystery has always been about the "why" and figuring out why the crime is committed or if there was revenge, murder, jealousy. It's the "why" for me. It was never about the blood and guts and things like that.

**Debbi:** [agrees]. Yeah, I like the psychological aspect myself, yeah. Okay, well is there anything else you'd like to add before we finish up?

**Daniella:** As I said, *A Checkered Past*, will be released on September 29<sup>th</sup>. People can...I have my website [daniellabernett.com](http://daniellabernett.com). I'm on Facebook and Good Reads if people want to drop me a line. I'd be happy to hear from you. I hope this has piqued people's interest. Perhaps if you haven't heard about Emmeline and Gregory, this has piqued your interest and you can dip into the other books and I look forward to hearing from more readers and thank you again for having me here. It's been a delight.

**Debbi:** Well it's been my pleasure, Daniella and I'm reading *A Checkered Past* now, and I am enjoying it thoroughly.

**Daniella:** Oh, I'm delighted to hear that [laughs].

**Debbi:** I really do. These characters have become very real for me now that I've read a couple of your books and I really do love them and I hope others will try your books as well. I also hope that you will check out the Crime Cafe publications on my website, [debbimack.com](http://debbimack.com) and check out our Patreon page. You can find the button on the "Crime Cafe" link on my website. So, with that, I will simply say thank you very much for listening. Thank you for being on, Daniella and until next time, see you in two weeks.