

The Crime Cafe with Earl Javorsky

Presented By:



00:13 Intro Debbi: *Hi, everyone. This is the Crime Cafe, your podcasting source of great crime, suspense and thriller writing. I'm your host, Debbi Mack. Before I bring on my guest, I'll just remind you that the Crime Cafe has two e-books for sale; the nine-book box set and the short story anthology. You can find the buy links for both on my website, www.debbimack.com under the "Crime Cafe" link. You can also get a free copy of either book if you become a Patreon supporter. You'll get that and much more if you support the podcast on Patreon, along with our eternal gratitude for doing so.*

01:01 Debbi: Hi, everyone. Today, we have with us the author of one of the most interesting stories I've read in quite a while. When I say 'interesting', well, you'll see. But before I introduce him, I'd like to give a shout out to a friend of the podcast, Stewart A Williams Design. I can personally vouch for the quality of his work. He does my covers and he's absolutely fantastic. He runs a gamut of services, from typography, graphics, but his specialty is book covers; e-book and print. So, I highly recommend Stewart A. Williams. You can find his website at www.stewartawilliamsdesign.com. And with that now, I'd like to introduce to you the author of *Down Solo* and *Trust Me*, two very different thrillers that our guest is giving away. It's my great pleasure to introduce Earl Javorsky.

02:08 Earl: Great, thanks. Good to be with you.

Debbi: Well, thank you for being here. Now, my introduction to your work was with *Down Solo*, and please tell the listeners about the main character, Charlie Miner, you know, the interesting part about him.

Earl: The part that he's dead?

Debbi: Yeah. It kinda catches your attention right off the bat.

Earl: Yeah, but he's not a zombie or a superhero or any weird thing like that. He's just a regular guy. He is PI, he has a drug problem. He wakes up dead at the morgue and there's a bullet hole on his forehead. And once he finds out he can move, it's like in the middle of the late night, early in the morning, the place is pretty quiet. And he finds a place to shower off. It's one of those hoses over a tub and he cleans himself up and steals clothes from another corpse and goes out. Gets a cab, on a mission, he's got to find out who killed him. It's pretty straightforward, isn't it?

Debbi: It is, it's very straightforward and a very intriguing premise. It kind of made me think of the movie, *DOA*, except instead of a guy who has been murdered but hasn't died yet, you've got a guy who has died and wants to find his murderer. They're both trying to find their murderers but in different ways. What prompted you to write about a character in that particular situation?

03:48 Earl: I have absolutely no idea. So, I haven't been a 'supernatural type' reader, you know, since my early 20's. I loved it then and then I went off into more conventional like Raymond Chandler and traditional mysteries and up to, you know, current great writers in that genre. And one day I sat down and I wrote the first page of Charlie Miner, of *Down Solo* and I had no idea what to do with it for like six months. And somewhere along the line, I went, okay, I got a guy, he's dead in a morgue, he's a heroin addict, let's make him a PI. Let's make his murder part of the case that he was looking into. Which case? How do we find out? And all of a sudden, I realized I could develop it and so I get him going home, finding out that his place has been searched and trashed. He gets access to his files and has to go through a bunch of files to find out which one maybe had to do with his murder and who the people were. And then I've got a plot outline and it all kind of made sense and I knew where it was going and unfortunately, I got there at page 90, which was not a novel. So, then I sat on it for

another year and then I realized that where I had gotten to was not the end, it was the end of a foundation where the real story was at a deeper level, and that there were string-pulling puppeteers behind what we thought was the end of the mystery. We had to go find that. So, it opened up for me in a weird or organic fashion I really can't explain.

Debbi: Sometimes, that's the best way for a story to come, I think.

06:07 Earl: I think so.

Debbi: At some subconscious level, something was coming out there, that's really cool. So, I just had to follow that up with *Down to No Good*, which I'm currently reading.

Earl: Okay. Are you amused, I hope?

Debbi: Of course, yeah. I mean, the situation is somewhat comical that you can't help but be amused and also just odd. I mean, it's just a great set up. Do you plan to write a third book?

Earl: I have a third and a fourth Charlie Miner book, plotted and kind of mapped out. Right now, I'm giving priority to a different kind of novel, a much more conventional one. It's not noirish and it's certainly not supernatural, based on something close to my heart that happened locally here in Oceanside, California, where I'm living. And having to do with the local drug and gangbanger scene and a kid gets beat into a coma over a drug deal and his dad has to track down what really happened. So, that's more of a straightforward psychological thriller and I'm giving my attention to that.

Debbi: Mm-hmm. Is that what *Trust Me* is like? You described that as a more conventional thriller, what is that novel about?

Earl: *Trust Me* centers around, well, the bad guy. It's sort of an ensemble piece, tracks five different characters. The villain in it is a sex predator in the Los Angeles recovery community and actually he's based on a real guy but the real guy didn't kill his victims, he just seduced them and was predatory and creepy. He's like a doctor or a psychologist, he was old, he went after good-looking newcomers and it was creepy. So, I just turned him into a serial killer because it was fun and it worked for the novel.

Debbi: Is it tough keeping track of five different characters? You said it follows five characters, it sounds almost cinematic.

08:50 Earl: I had that. Well, I like to think that I write visually and track cinematically. I come from a film background, my dad was an actor, a Paramount star. My mom was in the theater. But regardless, yeah, I had to. It was complicated and I had to storyboard it just to keep track. I used four by six cards with notes and character names and kept reshuffling them, trying to figure out how they interlaced into something coherent. Sure. And I was told early by an agent, "hey, you can't do this", and I go, "okay, I can't work with you anyway, so thank you for rejecting me because it wouldn't have been fun". And since, of course, it has to be handled well and maybe she was saying you're too new to handle this, I don't know. It went through several versions after that rejection but I certainly read a lot of stuff that I've liked that tracked multiple characters. So, again, it's in the handling, I hope I did a good job.

Debbi: I think that's true, definitely. You were a working musician at one time.

10:15 Earl: [laughs] Barely.

Debbi: What did you play and what kind of music?

Earl: I played guitar and unfortunately, I guess, not that well. I supported my wannabe rock stardom in illegal trade. I call it working my way up the ladder, the corporate ladder in ... What's my phrase? I've forgotten.

Debbi: Chemical Entertainment Industry?

Earl: Yes, there it is.

Debbi: I was going to ask about that but then I said, dare I ask?

Earl: Dare you ask. You already did, go ahead. It ruined me. I ended in a County Jail for nearly a couple times. It was boom and bust; I had some good times. I had a nice car and a house at Malibu once and then I had a crappy car and no car and no apartment anywhere. It was a zig-zag odd career, where I met a lot of very strange people, they now populate my books. So, there.

Debbi: Every experience becomes fodder, you know?

Earl: That's right, yeah. Lemons to lemonade, I hope.

Debbi: That's funny because my father was a writer and he used to talk about how much experience is important when it comes to writing. Every crappy experience I was having, you know, when I was younger, he would say, "oh, it's all good for your writing", and it's like you were right, Dad. What authors do you draw the most inspiration from?

12:04 Earl: Oh my, okay. That's a tough one only because the list is so long. So, I'm going to apologize right now because they're gonna be mainly men. Sorry. And I keep trying and there's women writers, like Ursula Le Guin and Barbara Kingsolver, a number of them that I just love. But when it comes to influences, I'm gonna start with Elmore Leonard and the anti-Leonard, which is James Lee Burke. Why I call him the anti-Leonard is because Elmore Leonard is so sparse and you know his cardinal rule, 'leave out the parts that the readers are gonna skip over'. And then there's James Lee Burke, whose prose is so lush and gorgeous and any other writer, I don't want to know what color the sky is and I don't want to know about every nuance of the weather but when he handles it, it's part of his characters' experience and enriches it and he's just ... So, I try to draw a line between, you know, I try to be sparse but descriptive at the same time and do the best I can with it. If I found a reader that I thought had my tastes, like my first two suggestions would be to read Michael Gruber's *Tropic of Night*, which is just fascinating, and Vikram Chandra's *Sacred Games*, gotta read *Sacred Games*, just a huge novel.

Debbi: I'm writing these down. *Sacred Games*, huh, interesting.

14:08 Earl: This is Vikram Chandra or is he the poet? I might be mixing up the writers.

Debbi: Hmm, well, thank you for those suggestions. Given how different *Down Solo* and *Trust Me* are and your other one that you're working on now, how would you generally describe your writing to somebody who might be interested in learning more about your work?

Earl: Off the wall. You know, again, because I draw from my experience on the dark side and like I said, I populate my fiction with the kind of characters that I knew and I'm with, it's more about the social element. In all three of my books, well, two Charlie Miner books and *Down Solo*, the principal characters are personally inflicted with drug and alcohol problems. And the environment is that environment but there are regular middle-class guys that found themselves in the trap of addiction, so there's a lot that goes with that socially, personally, spiritually, psychologically, and I like to

explore that. Whether it's something as odd the Charlie Miner thing, the conceit that he's dead and you know, what's the word, ambulatory.

Debbi: The Walking Dead?

Earl: Really, yeah, but I don't wanna go there. I don't want people to think that they are zombies, you know, with hatchets in their head because it's not about that. But, yeah, so it's more about exploring that.

Debbi: Mm-hmm. You said that your father was in film and you yourself tend to write visually. If you could pick somebody to play, say, Charlie Miner in a movie, who would you imagine?

16:36 Earl: Farrell, who's the Irish guy? Colin Farrell. That'd be great, I'd love to see that.

Debbi: Cool. I don't know why I keep picturing ... now I can't think of his name. There's this guy. It will come to me later after this is over.

Earl: Okay. I do that to my wife all the time, it drives her crazy.

Debbi: It's Ryan somebody. Ryan Gosling.

Earl: Gosling, okay. Let's get him.

Debbi: Yeah, let's get him, indeed. Is there anything else that you'd like to tell us that I haven't asked you about?

Earl: Oh boy. Okay, free platform to reach a bunch of people and my brain goes blank. Well, who are we talking to; readers, writers, both?

Debbi: Readers, writers, wannabe writers.

Earl: Wannabe writers, I can talk to them.

Debbi: Yeah, I often ask people what's your advice for people who are interested in writing.

17:54 Earl: Sure. Okay. First, read good stuff. I don't believe anybody can write a better book than the sum of the books they've read. The same with music. I work as an editor and the only two books that I have given people money back and said, "I'm sorry, here's your advance. I can't work with you. By the way what do you read?" And of all the editing work I've done, beyond those two, I got the response, "well, I actually don't read that much". So, if you don't listen to music, don't play a guitar, and if you don't read, you're probably not gonna be a good writer. That's the start. Second, join a community of writers. Nobody can create in a vacuum, that's my belief. Find people, meet people that are inspired and then they'll inspire you, listen to what you do, listen to what they do, find out who you like most, talk to them, hang out with them and then when that gets old, leave. And get yourself a copy or familiarize yourself with the Chicago Manual of style and learn to self-edit, that's important. And just reach out and be involved with people and then keep writing.

Debbi: All good advice. Thank you very much. And let's see, do you have a website?

19:42 Earl: I do. Okay, oh here's the thing. First of all, actually my name is Dan Howard. I've been Dan Howard since I was five. I was born Daniel Earl Javorsky, right? Oh, my battery's running low. I hope we make it. So, when I had my first short story published a bunch of years ago, I chose Earl Javorsky just as a goof and because it's my middle and original last name. And then, it turned out that Earl Javorsky, if you Google it, I'm the only one in the world and that's hard to do with Google. So, it's www.earljavorsky.com and you get a brief bio on me and pointers to some of my books.

20:39 Outro: Well, it was a pleasure to have you on the show, Earl, thanks so much for taking the time. And don't forget, everyone, to please leave a review on your favorite podcast channel or whatever they're called, wherever you listen to podcasts. And you can also buy copies of The Crime Cafe publications at my website, www.debbimack.com. Plus, if you'd like to get access to perks and content that isn't for sale anywhere on the Internet, just look for my Patreon page and you can find the link to that on my website there as well. So, thanks for listening and next time, we'll have author, David Putnam, on the show. Until next time, happy reading.