

The Crime Cafe with Daniella Bernett

Presented By:



Debbi (02:25): Hi everyone. Today we have another author making a repeat appearance on the podcast. Her mystery series now includes her sixth novel *Old Sins Never Die*. You can find my own review of the book on my blog as well as on GoodReads and so forth. I gave it five stars, by the way. So check it out. It's a pleasure to welcome back the very talented writer, Daniella Burnett. Hi Daniella.

Daniella (03:00): Hi Debbi. It's always nice to come back And speak to you about mysteries and books and all sorts of things. So I thank you for having me back again.

Debbi (03:06): Well, it's a pleasure, believe me. And I enjoyed your book very, very much.

Daniella (03:12): Oh, thank you. That's very gratifying. I always like hearing that. I never get tired of that.

Debbi (03:17): Somehow that seems to be a common trait of authors. I can't imagine why. Even though technically you write the Emmeline Kirby-Gregory Longdon series, do you tend to think of Emmeline as being really the main protagonist?

Daniella (03:38): Well, she tends to get into more of the trouble, but I think I view them as equal protagonists because they both bring different aspects to solving the crime and ensuring that the criminal is caught. So I think it's an equal between the two of them.

Debbi (03:58): That's good. Actually, I like that. Yeah, because Gregory certainly has a complicated backstory of his own.

Daniella (04:08): Oh, he does. But that makes him interesting.

Debbi (04:11): Very, very interesting. Apart from the investigatory role of journalists generally, was there a reason that you chose journalism as her profession?

Daniella (04:26): Well, as you said, it's a way ... she's not a professional sleuth, but journalists have that inherent need to find out the truth, to make sure in cases of a crime to make sure that justice is served. So that was, I didn't want to have a police officer, but I wanted someone who had a similar type of role. So, that seemed like the perfect career for my protagonist when I was envisioning the series. Plus, I studied journalism. So, you know, I had a little bit of familiarity with that, that whole skill, that whole so forth. So that's why I thought a journalist would be an ideal protagonist.

Debbi (05:17): Yeah, I can, I can understand that as I have a journalism background myself. Understanding that type of mindset. The need to find out the truth, the desire to express it.

Daniella (05:32): Right. And to make sure that the public knows the truth, you know, that things shouldn't be hidden, you know, everything should be out there in the open. I mean, granted, you know, if it's a security issue, you don't want that out in the open, but in terms of everything else, you know, the public has a right to know which as readers know, that's Emmeline's core, the core of her fabric is to make sure that the public knows the truth.

Debbi (06:00): Yes. So, tell us just a little bit about your latest book *Old Sins Never Die*, and by the way, everyone, an excerpt from the book is featured on my blog from last week. So if you go back and check for that, you'll see that. But go ahead.

Daniella (06:19): Okay. Well, just to show everybody *Old Sins Never Die*. [Displays cover.] And this book is set in, well, it starts off in London. Then it's also set in Grasmere in the Lake District, and ultimately, it's up on the Isle of Mull in Scotland. So these are all places I visited because, in my books, setting plays an important role. It's almost like another character that I feel sets the mood of the story. So, in this case, in this book, Emmeline and Gregory, they've finally got married in this book. But on their honeymoon, in Grasmere in the Lake District while taking a sightseeing trip on Lake Windermere, they overhear a man trying to hire an international assassin. So who else on their honeymoon would run into trouble? Only Emmeline and Gregory. So this sets off an avalanche of trouble.

Daniella (07:20): They rush back to inform the authorities in London. Meanwhile, they don't know who the victim is. All they overheard was that someone was trying to hire an assassin. So that's another element of the story, who is this person that is the target of the hit? Meanwhile, back in London, Emmeline's also pursuing the story about this shipping magnate, Noel Rallis, who's on trial for murder, and he's involved in this sinister scheme called Poseidon with Lord Desmond Starrett, a former diplomat, a member of Parliament, and the complications ensue. And they just keep growing because at a party, the ballerina, Anastasia Tarasova, who is a former lover of Rallis, threatened to tell his secrets to everyone. And she ends up being murdered at the party. So, you know, layer upon layer of trouble keeps piling up and Emmeline and Gregory are forced to find the truth.

Debbi (08:32): That's what I love about your books. They're just not complicated at all.

Daniella (08:38): No, no, you need that layer of complication. The readers, the readers need complication to tease their intellect. They don't want just a boring story. You have to have trouble on top of trouble.

Debbi (08:51): Of course, you do. Naturally, but wow. I mean, just listening to you describe that plot. I mean, that is just fabulous. And so you mentioned now they're married and I thought, wow, that's quite a change in their relationship. How do you think that changes things for the series in general?

Daniella (09:16): I don't really think, well, I mean, my readers would have to tell me that, but in my view, I don't think it really changes the dynamic of their relationship because, well, before Emily was hesitant to get, because they had been a couple, then they had broken up and then they got back together. Those were the previous books and now ultimately they were married. So that underlying, romantic tension was always there and they always each respected each other's judgment and intelligence. So that I think is—since you've read the book—I think I tried to enhance that even more now that they are, they are finally together. I think they just compliment each other even more. I don't think their marriage hurts that relationship because that romantic element of it was always there before.

Debbi (10:17): Mmm-hmm. And really the focus of a lot of what makes them interesting is the difference in their characters. Here's Emmeline, the irresistible force for finding the truth, against

Gregory's somewhat immovable object of keeping his larcenous tendencies to himself from her. How is that going to play out?

Daniella ([10:46](#)): Well, you know, that's, he's a former jewel thief, because that was the ultimatum she laid down when they got married, that he had to find a legitimate form of employment. But as readers see, he can't quite give up that thrill of stealing jewels. He just has to be a little bit more careful so that she doesn't find out cause she will kill him if she finds out. But, you know, he loves her just as much, but you know, that thrill of stealing jewels, he can't quite give that up. You know, it's a different type of love. He compartmentalizes those two aspects of his life. And, as you said, in terms of their—I wanted to create two different characters. You know, Emmeline was always the truth, always on the side of law. Gregory comes from a different aspect.

Daniella ([11:39](#)): You know, he is, you know, on the other side of the law, technically a criminal, but yet, you know, they share that, you know, that murder is a taboo, you know, it cannot ... someone can't just go out and murder people. So they have that in common. And, you know, I have Emmeline on the right side of law, Gregory on the wrong side of the law, but they come together, bringing their different points of view to catch the culprit. So that's what I wanted to portray in my books, you know, coming to the conclusion, but from different points of view and they do complement each other in a number of ways.

Debbi ([12:21](#)): So they share that kind of moral compass.

Daniella ([12:26](#)): Yes. Gregory's a criminal, but a gentleman, you know.

Debbi ([12:29](#)): A criminal, but a gentleman. Yes, exactly. I mean, he's not gonna kill you over your jewels.

Daniella ([12:35](#)): No, no, no. Gregory doesn't carry a gun. You know, those are nasty things that can cause holes in your anatomy, you know. It's a no-no.

Debbi ([12:46](#)): Absolutely. Yes. And let's see. Your books also reflect a great deal of knowledge about Britain and the international political scene, in general. Since you don't live in Britain or Europe, are there sources other than the news that you turn to for background information or inspiration?

Daniella ([13:11](#)): Well, I mean, I've been to the UK a number of times, so I'm familiar with a number of areas and in Europe, too. Like the places I depict in my book are actually places I visited. So I try to give readers a taste in my descriptions of what I was seeing and the impressions the places made on me to help them feel like they're following in my footsteps as they're reading along. So plus I've always been, as a journalism major, as just somebody who has been interested in history, I'm always aware of current events and history interests me. So I follow that sort of news. And if I see something, a particular issue, I go back and read about it a little bit more just to familiarize myself with it and just to gain more knowledge. So that's my approach to research plus sometimes, you know, an article in a paper might trigger an idea in my mind. So I follow up and I dig into that a little bit more.

Debbi ([14:29](#)): Yeah. I do that all the time. It's like, I'll see an article and it's like, an idea will just leap out at you.

Daniella ([14:36](#)): Yeah.

Debbi ([14:36](#)): Hmm. I wonder if that's something that's a journalism thing,

Daniella ([14:43](#)): Or maybe it's just a writer's inherent curiosity about different things. Because as a writer, you have to be curious about different things, because it's so that your imagination can, you can let it flow.

Debbi ([14:57](#)): Absolutely. You're right. Absolutely. Let's see. There was something you had said that I was going to ask you about. Oh, and it just escaped me. Oh, I hate that.

Daniella ([15:11](#)): It might come back to you.

Debbi ([15:12](#)): It may come back to me. Since you work full-time, when do you generally write and what kind of schedule or regimen in terms of production, do you follow?

Daniella ([15:24](#)): Well production, as much as I can write as possible, but I can only write in the evenings when I finished with work and on the weekends. So that's why I try to squeeze in time as much as I can. If I have a day off, it's a lucky break because then I can write a bit more or when I take off you know, that week between Christmas and New Year, I can write like 40 or 50 pages. So I'm thrilled, but I just try to squeeze in the time whenever I can.

Debbi ([15:53](#)): Yeah, I know the feeling. Yeah. I remember back when I used to freelance and do fiction, it was tough balancing them out.

Daniella ([16:03](#)): Yeah.

Debbi ([16:04](#)): It really, really was. And I remember now what I was going to ask you. It was about historical fiction. Have you ever considered writing historical fiction?

Daniella ([16:16](#)): Well, you know what? Somebody has asked me that before, you know, I love reading historical fiction. I mean, aside from mysteries and thrillers, I love historical fiction. So maybe one day when Emmeline and Gregory can't tempt me with any more adventures, maybe I might dip my hand into a historical fiction novel, so that's just the type of genre I enjoy too. So it wouldn't be too much of a leap for me.

Debbi ([16:43](#)): That's so cool. I hope you'll consider doing it actually. I love historical fiction too. And is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your latest book or anything else before we finish up?

Daniella ([16:59](#)): About *Old Sins Never Die*? Well, you know, I think just again to show everyone. [Displays book.] I think the readers, well, I hope that readers will enjoy the new dynamic of their marriage and also the setting, because I think the setting plays an extremely important role, especially in this one towards the end for the conclusion on the Isle of Mull and the Isle of Staffa, very rugged, picturesque area. And I think it, I hope it builds the tension for the readers to have it set in those areas. In terms of anything else, if there are listeners who are new to my work my website is DaniellaBurnett.com and that's Burnett, B-E-R-N-E-T-T. I have an email address there if

people want to drop me a note. I'm on Facebook, GoodReads, BookBub, so I welcome to hear from anybody.

Debbi ([18:00](#)): All right. Well, thank you so much Daniella for being here today.

Daniella ([18:07](#)): My pleasure and thank you for having me again.

Debbi ([18:09](#)): It's a pleasure, really. It's good to see you. And to everyone who's listening, thank you so much for listening. If you'd like to sample the work of some of the authors who've been on this show, we have the Crime Cafe 9-book box set and the short story anthology, which was created by me several years ago when I first started this podcast. And I tell you, there's some good stories in there. The ebooks are available from any online, major online bookseller. So look for it there. Also, if you become a Patreon patron, you'll get copies of those books as part of your Patreon perks, along with early access to the episodes and much more. Updates from me every week. Along with that, I share drafts of my works-in-progress. So you get to see the sausage being made in a sense, to a certain extent. So check out my Patreon page and see what you think. And with that, I'll just say our guest for next time, for the next and final episode of this season, will be the intellectual property attorney, Kathryn Goldman. She'll be talking about copyright and whatever other interesting issues there are in writing and publishing. We will not speak legalese, I promise. [Or, at least, keep it to a minimum. Or *de minimis*?] Until then, happy reading!