

Interview with Peary Perry **Author of *Manuel Muldoon***

Reader Views is happy to be talking with Peary Perry, author of the new mystery novel set in small-town Texas, “Manuel Muldoon.” Peary is being interviewed by Juanita Watson, Assistant Editor of Reader Views.

Juanita: Thanks for taking the time to talk with us today Peary. Would you please give readers an idea of the storyline of your book “Manuel Muldoon”?

Peary: It’s fairly simple, a young just out of high school boy goes to work for the president of the local bank. This bank president is involved in the Mexican Mafia, money laundering as well as being a habitual skirt chaser. Along the way a couple of folks get killed and our young man gets the blame.

Juanita: Peary, this is your first novel. What inspired you to write “Manuel Muldoon”?

Peary: I mainly wanted to see if I could actually sit down and write something from start to finish...the first draft was almost 500 pages. It got cut down before it was published.

Juanita: Tell us a little more about your lead character Manuel Muldoon. Who is he, why is he at the center of this mystery, etc.?

Peary: I suppose what they say is true, your first book is somewhat autobiographical...there is a lot of me in this one...I’ve wanted to write for as long as I could remember, but jobs, kids and other things got in my way. Manny is a composite of a lot of people, myself included. He’s stuck in a no way out job in a small town and no one wants to help him escape. The story of my life.

Juanita: It’s interesting that you chose such a young lead. Would you tell us more about the significance of Manuel being fresh out of high school?

Peary: I never really thought about it until you mentioned it. It just seemed like the thing to do. I think reading Stephen King’s book called...”On Writing” got me out of my rut and convinced me I could finish something. I recommend anyone who wants to write to read what he says.

Juanita: Who are the main characters, and how did you come up with this very interesting cast that converges in Marshlake , TX ?

Peary: The main characters are Manuel Muldoon, a half Irish Mexican kid working for Robert Sturmwell, the local big shot banker, who isn't really the owner of the bank...His wife Nancy, who is a nut case of her own. Their daughter Victoria, a spoiled rotten person who gets in the middle of the entire mystery as well as involved with Manny. Also assorted other weirdo's that seem to pop in and out from time to time. The people are all based on various people I've met or been in contact with during my lifetime.

Juanita: Now Peary, I understand that you are from Texas. How did you create the sleepy little Texas town of Marshlake? And, why was this town the perfect backdrop for your story?

Peary: I needed a place where Robert Sturmwell could be the big cheese and able to wield a lot of power....trust me the banker in a small town is very important...sometimes he controls life and death by his decisions. Also I wanted the police to be somewhat behind the times and not so much on the cutting edge as they might be in a larger city.

Juanita: What are the main themes you address in "Manuel Muldoon"?

Peary: Greed, sex, greed, sex, power and ego...that should cover it.

Juanita: Would you tell us more about the creative process of writing your story "Manuel Muldoon"? There are a lot of secrets that get revealed and a fantastic amount of drama surrounding the whole mystery. How did this all find its way onto the page?

Peary: As I said before, I must have started at least 10-15 novels....but never finished one...The Stephen King book caught me up short and I realized that I was writing in such a manner that I thought you wanted to hear...not as I actually would tell a story...I also realized the value of not editing as I went along...I just wrote it out and then went back...I also did not use an outline....I just thought about what should happen if "A" happened and then went to "B". It isn't hard...just logical.

Juanita: Your book, "Manuel Muldoon," sounds like a TV true-life crime drama. Who would enjoy reading your book "Manuel Muldoon"? And is this story more of a mystery, suspense, and/or adventure?

Peary: You got me there...I don't think it's a mystery since I've told you who the killer is in the beginning....I'd say it was more of a suspense type...and as to who would read it....? Well, oddly enough a lot of teenagers have read it and happened to have liked it...I don't know that I actually thought about who was going to read it....it isn't chick lit.

Juanita: What do you ultimately want readers to understand by reading your new novel, "Manuel Muldoon"?

Peary: That as long as you have hope, you can survive anything....even some dump of a town like Marshlake.

Juanita: Peary, I understand that you've been a writer for many years. Would you tell us more about your writing history?

Peary: 20 years ago, an ex-partner of mine from the Houston Police Dept. vice and narcotics squad, retired and moved to a small town. He got into real estate and got mad at the local paper over some mistake they made in his advertisement. They told him if he didn't like it, to take his business to some other paper. There wasn't one. So, he started one. He called me and asked me to write a weekly column...I did and still do, it's called "Letters From North America" and runs in about 75 papers throughout the country.

Juanita: Do you have any more books in the works? How can readers find out more about you and your endeavors?

Peary: Go to Pearyperry.com. I am about to finish my 2nd book called ..."A Stitch in Time" ...this one concerns a private eye from Houston and his sidekick who get tangled up in a series of murders that take them from Houston to Greece, England and Germany...a couple of professional assassins...lots of action...the story revolves around an event that took place as a result of a legal action put into effect by Julius Caesar in 45BC.....I like this book better and can use the characters for my 3rd and 4th one as well....the 3rd one is called "Jack Be Nimble" and the 4th one is called "The Dead List."

Juanita: Thanks for taking the time to talk with us today Peary. Do you have any last thought for your readers today?

Peary: Yes, first keep a list of your characters as you write....this sounds simple, but you'd be amazed how you might write somebody in and never think of them again, and when you do....then you have to go back and search to see what you have said about them and how to spell their names....secondly...never edit as you go, if you do you will find yourself always correcting and never pushing forward....if you write pages 1-50 and keep editing 1-50, you will never get to page 51 simply because you can always make it better...do the whole thing, then go back....last of all, forget doing outlines and story boards.....they look nice and folks visiting you gush over your project, but they limit you...develop the story in your head and know what you want to tell, but let your mind direct you as you go....it's more fun that way and not as confining...maybe you aren't finished with chapter one when your outline says you should be....just think about what you want to say...say it...finish it when it feels right and move on....everyone I meet tells me they have a novel in mind....I tell them to just sit down and write it....who cares what people think about it? I don't claim to be a Hemmingway or on his level....I just write and think that my second book will be better than my first and my tenth will be better than the first nine.