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Popular Novelist Finds Romance in Text to Speech

For Writer Carolyn Jewel, NextUp's TextAloud Provides an Essential Finishing Touch to the Novel-Writing Process

CLEMMONS, NC and PETALUMA, CA – California native **Carolyn Jewel** is the successful author of such historical and paranormal romance titles as *Shards of Crimson*, *A Darker Crimson*, *The Spare*, *Lord Ruin*, and *Magellan's Witch* (upcoming in 2008 from Grand Central Publishing). She is also a fan of Text to Speech, and chooses the *TextAloud* program near the end of the writing process as one of her most important proofing tools. Easy, affordable, and a breeze to use, *TextAloud* is a Text to Speech program from **NextUp Technologies** (<http://www.NextUp.com>) that converts text into spoken audio files for listening on a PC (or a wide variety of popular portable devices).

"At various times during the process of writing a novel, I use *TextAloud* to read my chapters to me," she comments. "This allows me to catch typos my eye has missed, or to find places where I need to tighten or clarify the language and dialogue." As she's listening, Carolyn keeps her chapter open in her word processing program at the same time, so that she can pause *TextAloud's* read-through in order to make instant edits. It's now become an essential part of her process for finishing each one of her books.

"Lots of writers recommend literally reading one's work aloud because it's a great way to catch clunky phrases and repetitive bits," says Carolyn. "I tried that once, but it's pretty hard on the voice, and it still doesn't solve the issue of your eyes and brain conspiring to 'fix' typos for you." She adds, "What I really wanted was for someone else to do all that reading! So, I tried out three or four text readers, and *TextAloud* proved to be the easiest to use, not to mention the most stable."

For the highest-quality listening experience, Carolyn purchased Premium voices, choosing as her favorites AT&T Natural Voices™ Mike and Crystal as the perfect solution. "Using the program is pretty simple. I copy and paste a chapter right into *TextAloud*, keeping my word processing file open to make fixes right away, and then put on my headphones. *TextAloud* doesn't miss those typos, and I'm able to fix them right away -- same with confusing phrases or other awkwardness."

A busy and successful novelist currently under contract for four more titles, Jewel is now working on her next historical romance, titled *Scandal* (for Berkley Books, with a tentative release date set for December 2008). "In the next month or so, I'll be at a point where I'll have *Scandal* read back to me as well," she comments.

Text to Speech can be a surprisingly strong tool for writers like Jewel, and even more so for writers working with unusual words and character names. "Several of my titles included some characters with unusual names (my hero in *A Darker Crimson* was a vampire named Tiberiu Korzha, for example) so I used the voice editor to tweak the pronunciation of his name as well as some others," comments Carolyn. "That way, the names fit with how I imagined they'd be spoken." She adds, "The most important thing is that *TextAloud* reads exactly what I wrote, mistakes and all, and that I can pause the reading to insert missing words or to fix typos. Hearing the work read aloud keeps me from supplying meaning that isn't really there."

Carolyn runs *TextAloud* on her laptop, a Dell Inspiron 8150, and her favorite aspect of the program is how unintimidating and easy to use it is, no matter what the level of expertise. "When I'm on deadline, I don't have time to fuss with figuring out how to do something," she comments. "I just need to be able to do it, preferably without wasting time that I should be spending finishing the book."

Carolyn is already at work on several titles to come, and *TextAloud* will be a part of that. "Having my work read back to me is a truly valuable tool."

About *TextAloud*

Highly useful for writers, business people, students and people from all walks of life -- *TextAloud* has been featured in *The New York Times*, *PC Magazine*, *Writer's Digest*, on CNN, and more. Hailed by critics and users alike, *TextAloud* is priced at just \$29.95, and is compatible with systems using Windows® 98, NT, 2000, XP and Vista. The program is available for fast, safe and secure purchase via <http://www.NextUp.com>.

About NextUp.com

NextUp.com, a division of NextUp Technologies, LLC, provides award-winning Text to Speech software for consumers, professionals, businesses, educators, and those with visual or vocal impairment, or learning disabilities.

In addition to *TextAloud*, NextUp.com markets other innovative Windows software designed to save time and deliver vital information. *NewsAloud*™ is a talking personal “news agent” that finds the stories users want, and then reads them aloud or to portable audio files.

WeatherAloud™ is a weather application that lets users select and listen to personalized weather forecasts, while *StocksAloud*™ reads stock updates and related news headlines aloud for specific companies of interest. NextUp *Talker* is an easy and affordable program that allows people who have lost their voices to use the latest in high-quality computer voices to communicate with others. Most recently, NextUp introduced a new text reader, *AbleReader*, available with the AT&T Natural Voices™ for use on Mac computers. Information on *AbleReader* is available at <http://www.AbleReader.com>.

NextUp.com also offers *TextAloud* with optional premium voices from **AT&T Natural Voices™**, **NeoSpeech®**, **Nuance®**, **Acapela®** and **Cepstral®** for the most natural-sounding computer speech anywhere. Available languages include U.S. English, U.K. English, Indian Accent English, Scottish Accent English, French, Canadian French, Latin American Spanish, Castilian (European) Spanish, Mexican Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, European Portuguese, Russian, Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, Korean, Japanese, German, Italian, Dutch, Belgian Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish, and Arabic.

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud* are available upon request. For more information on NextUp.com or *TextAloud*, or for other case studies involving users ranging from firefighters, doctors and lawyers, to truck drivers, musicians, and more, please contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or via Admitchell@Nextup.com.

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