

How do you write a mystery? Where do you begin?

Every writer apparently is different, but for me, it starts with an idea. It can be a message I want to convey, something I feel is important to say, or it can be a idea for a person or crime that I want to explore. Whatever I choose, it must engage me, and it must engage me for a long time.

In my first book, *Development*, I was inspired out of concern for the natural environment. So for that book, there was a message I wanted to convey about society, The destruction of nature is often the price we pay for human expansion, population growth and greed. As we build ever more deeply into formerly untouched corners of our fields and forests, we inevitably harm the beautiful, natural world and especially the animals that live there. Thus the beautiful young girl in my book is a metaphor for ruined innocence and beauty.

In the book I am working on now, tentatively entitled *Traps*, I began with a crime, the abduction of a young girl. I was drawn to explore what sort of person would do that, violate society's norms and laws so blatantly. What is the psychopathic personality really like? How do they think? I hope the book can be an exploration of good and evil.

In this blog, as I work on the book, I want to share the process with you. There are innumerable decisions to be made and challenges to overcome. I hope you will join me as I create my next mystery.