

HYGIENISTS IN PRINT-RDH PLUS-DENTAL PERSONNEL===== FICTION & NONFICTION—Lois Foster Hirt JUNE 2010

Author's answers in [[]]

INDEX TO MURDER Jo Dereske The protagonist is Bellehaven, Washington, librarian Helma Zukas.

Librarian Ms. Moon breaks her leg falling off a stool, claiming she was looking for material for the mayor. Helma discovers the stool was steady. Her artist friend & sleuth partner Ruth has 2 paintings stolen & 1 damaged at her place. Two male painters depicted in those works were murdered. Then Helma's apartment building is for sale & at another complex, trees were planted over night. What is really going on?

DENTAL DOS-1. "Helma was flossing her teeth with a new "professionally engineered" green ribbon floss with an overt spearmint taste the dental hygienist had given her at her last cleaning & thinking it was hard to improve on plain white flossing string, when her phone rang." 2. "She paused, floss held between first and second molar. The digital clock on her bathroom counter read 10:02, so she waited. After seven rings she left off flossing and answered the telephone " 3. Helma glanced at the numbered squares and in the weak light was able to read a few faded numbers: temperatures and rainfall, plus an appointment for a teeth cleaning with Dr. Frier, her own dentist, which raised her estimation of Meriwether Scott." The dental appointment is mentioned again [[Her real DDS' name is Frere.]]

My questions were 1. Why have the RDH give her the floss, 2. & special floss, & 3. why the prophylaxis?
[[Jo disclosed: "As to your questions, I feel there is something in the mention of "teeth" that makes a reader sit up & take notice, & often feel vaguely uncomfortable. Teeth are menacing in dangerous situations. ("bared his teeth," etc.) The state of a character's teeth gives the reader's a lot of info on what kind of character is being portrayed. And don't we ALL feel guilty about how we have or haven't taken care of our teeth over the years?! So yes, I often include flossing (the ultimate in showing Miss Zukas's character) & several references to teeth. The scene about the new dental floss was written (truly!) right after I'd come home from having my teeth cleaned, carrying my new dental floss & free toothbrush." She added in # 1. "Miss Zukas and the Library Murders, there's a rather naughty reference to a teeth cleaning implement & also a crucial scene that happens on the way to the dentist."]]

She remembers at an authors' event "a lengthy & very memorable chat with a mystery-loving dental hygienist who was collecting info on books that included dental mentions & who also suggested that more be included. "I have thought of that conversation every time I've included a dental mention in one of my books & have probably included more because of it."

HIGH CRIMES ON THE MAGICAL PLANE—Kris Neri

In LA protagonist scam psychic Samantha Brennan ends up pairing up with a real Celtic goddess who is also FBI Special Agent Annabelle Haggerty probing to root out who murdered actress Molly Claire..

DENTAL SIGHTINGS: 1.- "Hell, even the bright white teeth in the stand-in's big smile looked so much like Molly's, I figured they'd had their veneers done by the same dentist." 2-"I got one kid a good job as a records clerk in the office of some dentist to the stars in Beverly Hills." 3—When he smiled, his lower lip dropped as if on a hinge, displaying thick, square teeth." 4.-"He simply unhinged his lower lip to produce what I took to be a threatening smile, but which looked more like the display I imagined they used in dental school." 5.-"He pointed to another picture." And I placed this young fella as a records clerk with a big Beverly Hills dentist." 6.-"Lisa has dental record." 7.-It's a match." 8.-"We will have my finding verified by a forensic dentist, who'll compare the two sets of x-rays.Miss Claire was a celebrity-she took excellent care of her teeth. And her dentist kept accurate records. The body's teeth-they matched the x-rays precisely. ... Wait. Dental records? That means there was no other way to..." 9. "That pattern was so cavity-forming cute." 10. "She had been trying to top them again, as she did with Molly Claire's dental records." 11.-"Thanks to my sweetie, who encouraged one of his boys to take a job as my dentist's records clerk, After that it was a simple matter to convince my stand-in to use the same dentist so our x-rays could be switched..." They also had to bribe or coerce the medical examiner to limit his identification of the body believed to be Molly's to the dental x-rays.

[[**Kris exposes her dental inclusions:** "I can't really explain why I have those dental references. When I create a character, I simply try to see what he looks like, & that's what came to me for those characters. I also believe on drawing on whatever the strongest, most telling trait is in describing a face. Too many authors rely on the eyes exclusively, or perhaps the shape of the face. But doesn't a hinge-type jaw, & big over-sized teeth say more about someone's appearance than just the color of his eyes? I guess I also like describing the way people smile, since we can bring such different qualities to it; not all smiles are friendly, they can just as easily be menacing. Every writer tries to show, not tell, and I think I can show more with the particular nature of a character's smile. I just try to be as descriptive as I can. But there are also critical plot points in HIGH CRIMES ON THE MAGICAL PLANE related to dental work. It would give too much away to describe it (but you read it, so you know), but the Beverly Hills dentist and the presence of dental records play a critical role in the unraveling of the story. As to how I thought of it, I simply don't know. I suppose the synchronicity of a couple of plot elements came together with that unknown Beverly Hills dentist."]]

ROLLING THUNDER—Chris Grabenstein = Sea Haven, N.J cops/protagonists John Ceepak & Danny Boyle have Memorial Day duty at the opening of the Big Paddy Rolling Thunder roller coaster owned by Paddy O'Mally & Bruno Mazzelli. (I always say 1 reason my husband married me is because I had the stomach to go on rides.) Someone yells stop the ride. They call 911 & go to the top of the ride where it is too late to help Mrs. O'Mally, who supposedly had a heart attack. The thing is she never liked these types of rides so why was she on it, even for opening day? The O'Mallys are 1 dysfunctional family. There's another thread running through the book with John's father showing up. He's not a nice man & is suppose to stay away from the Ceepaks. Throw in the murder of Gail Baker where nerdy Marvin Hausler, DDS is a suspect. He appears throughout. His alibi was that he was doing a root canal on his date with a hooker who needed 1.

[[RIDE WITH THESE DENTAIL THILLS- Chris injected –“And because of you -- I made a dentist a prime suspect in the next Ceepak mystery!!!!”(ROLLING THUNDER)]]

1. We don't live together or anything but we have passed the sixth date mark & I now know that she she stows her toothbrush in a souvenir Pocahontas glass from Burger King.” 2. “I can't believe this, Dr. Marvin Hausler, DDS-whose face reminds me of the glasses-wearing chimp you'd see on a monkey calendar-is using recycled Carpenters' lyrics from 1971 to hit on Gail Baker? What do they teach these guys at Dental School?” 3. Dr. Hausletr storms off after her. Maybe hewants to give her a few flossing tips.” 4. Every renter gets a “Welcome to Sea Haven” bag. “A free dental exam at the Sea Haven Smile Center (two x-rays included)” is part of the inclusion of goodies. 4. There is a whole scene at Dr. Hausler's office which includes a receptionist who is told she could go home. Dr. Hausler claims he has an alibi for the night Gail was murdered. He says he had a date with Amber who works for an escort service. They ended up doing a barter situation because her tooth hurt her & he was in the office until 3 or 4 A.M. doing a root canal on her.. “Number 15 on the upper right. The pulp chamber had seriously deteriorated & she desperately needed a root canal. So, we came here.” “Why do I think Dr. Hausler gave Amber all the nitrous oxide she wante?” 6. “A disgruntled dentist who drills hookers for free,” 7. Gail was probably killed with “a Lenox twelve-inch, thirty-two-teeth per inch, bi-metal hacksaw blade wit their Tuff Tooth design.” 8. “We know it wasn't a leaf rake. Teeth were too far apart.” 9. When Hausler tells someone he only charged the insurance company for the Baker's root canal, the guy says you probably claimed you did 2 or 3.

DIAMONDS FOR THE DEAD Alan Orloff Protagonist Josh Handleman is divorcing his two-timing wife Dani in California. He gets a call that his father Abe has died in Virginia. He fell down the steps. He goes back to bury him & take care of things. In the house he discovers he father let an elderly Russian man, Mr.Kassian, live in the basement. His father's friend, Mr. Yurishenko, claims Kassian killed his father. His father left Josh the house & its contents, some jewelry to his aunt, & 7 million dollars to the Reston Hebrew Home. He had no idea his father had that kind of money. He also got a safe deposit box that was empty. It evidentially was suppose to contain diamonds. Where are they? The big question is did his father fall or was he pushed down the steps? Throw in a little romance.

SOME DENTAL HAPPENINGS –1. “Then his cracked lips parted, revealing a mouth half full of stained, crooked teeth.” 2. Josh is given a key to his father's safe deposit box & he asks Eric/lawyer what is in it?” Eric doesn't know. “Probably family photos or birth certificates or baby teeth. Something with sentimental value.”[[“I wanted something that was sentimental & didn't have any material value, so Erik could imply there probably was nothing of real value in the box (certainly not a diamond collection!). I think I've kept a couple of my kids' baby teeth.”]] 3. and smiled, the first I'd seen from him. Despite his rotten teeth, it was a pleasant one.” 4.-“Except for the teeth, Peter's were perfect.” 5. “Like pulling teeth.” 6. “The thousand watt smile.” 7. “.a gap-toothed husband...” 8. “If you do not believe me, you may call my dentist, Dr. William Brock. I will even give you his number.” His stare challenged me. “Or would you prefer to see the crown he worked on?” Lev began to open his mouth, taunting me.” [[“I don't know exactly why I used a dentist for Lev's alibi. Maybe because it could be fairly easily verified. And he could taunt Josh by asking him to open his mouth to look at his crown.”]] 9. “Called information for Dr. Brock, Lev's dentist. “Hello, Dr. Brock's office. Can you hold?” An officious voice switched me over to Muzak without even waiting for my reply.” “Dr. Brock's office. How may I help you?” 10. “He was in a few weeks ago, & I was double-checking what day that was...” “Please hold.” No question. Too busy for questions.” “The receptionist returned to the line.” “Yes, My. Yurishenko. Your father was here that morning. Is there a problem?” [[“Dr. Brock is purely fictional.”]] 11 “He had an alibi-the dentist. But if wasn't airtight. He could have kept his appointment after murdering my father.” 12 “Terrible Teresywzki got his teeth into him & wouldn't let go.”

Orloff inlayed: [[You sure found a lot of dental references! I wonder if I have some sort of oral fixation or something.”]]

SO HAPPY TOGETHER Maryann McFadden --Claire Nobel had a baby when she was a teenager in NJ. She never married the man. She moved out of her parent's house when she became a teacher. After a big argument, her teenage daughter Amy leaves for a few years. In her forties, Claire, caring for her aging parents, gets engaged to Rick Saunders, who wants to move to Arizona. Claire, has a flair for photography & has been accepted for a photography class in Cape Cod. She has moved her parents into an assisted living place. Just as Claire is about to go to Cape Cod, Amy shows up unexpectedly, pregnant & unmarried. Claire forgoes the class when her granddaughter is born. At the same time, a man who is doing an article on the canals in her area, asks her to be his photographer. Opportunity knocks again. Will she be able to answer that knock?

DELVE INTO DENTAL WITH 1. “AT TEN O'CLOCK, just like every other night at the same time, Fanny slowly trudged up the long flight of stairs to go to bed, the throb in her hip like a toothache now.” [[That was included because, “I thought people could identify with that kind of pain, it is more familiar to younger readers, the steady throb of a toothache, and can imagine it in the joint.”]] 2. “Fanny washed her face, took out her teeth and set them into the plastic cup, and watched the liquid fizz.” 3. “I just want to get it over with. This'll be like going to the dentist.” 4 “IT WAS WORSE THAN THE DENTIST, Claire thought, as they were driving back three hours, later.” [[For 3 & 4 she used the dentist comparison, “Because as a kid, I had my teeth damaged from Tetracycline and so had lots of dental problems over the years. Hence, I dread going, and used that for my character.”]] 5. “Normally he'd be pumped, but he looked like he was going for a root canal instead.” [[She said the root comparison was there because, “Again, it's a common humorous comment when dreading something, so identifiable.”]] 6. “Rose got her first tooth. It just popped through. On the bottom in the middle.” “Wow, that's young. You were seven months when you got yours.” “Jared said he got his really young, before five months.”

[[Maryann doesn't think she has written any other dental & didn't realize how much was there.]]

HOOKED ON MURDER Betty Hechtman---Protagonist Molly Pink is event coordinator for Shield & Royal Books & More in Tarzana, L.A.'s valley area. The Tarzana Hookers, a weekly crochet group, meet there & are working on a special quilt. Molly is the 1 who finds the group leader murdered. Their complicated past makes Molly the number 1 suspect.

1. Dentally we discover 1 of Trish's, a woman who wants to join the group, husband was an orthodontist. [[Hechtman mad him an orthodontist because “When my son had braces, his orthodontist was in Encino, I thought of him(the orthodontist) when I

was trying to come up with a husband for Trish.”]] 2. One of the women talks about Trish’s big, beautiful house & says, “She sure knew how to marry well.” 3. Group member & TV star CeeCee Collins talks about her husband, saying everyone thought they were the perfect couple. It wasn’t easy for him being Mr. CeeCee Collins all those years. He was a world-renowned dentist, but nobody ever thought about that. You know, that opera singer Maria Brava flew thousands of miles so he could clean her teeth. But even so, all everyone did was ask about me. So I couldn’t really blame him for having a fling or two with some little nobody who wanted to hear about just him.” & . It turned out CeeCee’s late husband, the world-famous dentist, had been an idiot with money. When he died, she’d found out he’d blown it all. [[Hechtman did the cleaning part because “When I was growing up in Chicago, I had a dentist that took care of Maria Callas’s teeth and she flew from wherever she lived to see him. It was one of those childhood legends that stuck with me and I thought it would make a nice touch for CeeCee’s husband. The real dentist wasn’t an idiot with money and he was very hands on. He did the teeth cleaning himself. I went to him even after I moved to L.A.” BTW- she says a RDH cleans her teeth now!]] 4. Another woman talking about her husband, “Jeremy wasn’t a world-renowned dentist, More like a world-renowned jerk/” 5. Molly’s boyfriend Barry couldn’t stay long at her house. He had to take his son to the DDS. [[Hechtman did a dentist appointment because it seemed more about maintenance than illness.]]

DEAD MEN DON’T CROCHET—Betty Hechtman-- A new Hooker Patricia Bradford has written PATRICIA’S PERFECT HINTS. Molly Pink’s friend & fellow Hooker, Sheila Altman is making extra items to put on consignment at the Cottage Shoppe. She had no problems until the owner Mrs. Brooks died & left the Cottage Shoppe to her nephews, brothers Drew, in charge of the money, & Kevin Brooks. Drew’s been cutting back on her share of the sold items & other things. She has no other place to sell them.

Most of the Hookers converge at the Cottage Shoppe for support when she confronts him. He departs before they can talk. The 2nd time, the Hookers rallied there with her, they meet but still no results. While they’re there, 1 employee discovers Drew dead, his face in a bowl of soup. No he didn’t drown. Sheila is looked at as a person of interest..

Molly is determined to prove Sheila’s innocence. While in the store, Molly notices a bald man leaving, carrying a Harrods’ bag who evidently wasn’t happy with Drew either. He appears throughout, & it isn’t till later that it’s disclosed he’s an orthodontist.

TOOTH NOTES’ 1.Molly is in charge of events, but it seems Adele who handles the kids’ section & is 1 of the Tarzana Hookers leaders, wants to get more involved. One popular children’s author, who has been to the store before is, is Koo Koo the Clown, AKA William Bearly. His new book is KOO KOO GOES TO THE DENTIST. [[Koo Koo has a series of books that are meant to help small children deal with different sorts of experiences. I thought going to the dentist was pretty universal.]] 2. Hechtman implies that Barry, her boyfriend, had things to do so he & Molly don’t have much time together. One thing he had to do was to take Jeffrey to the dentist. [[That line is there basically for the same reason it was in HOOKED ON MURDER. “I picked a dentist appointment because it seemed more about maintenance than illness.”]] 3. At the store, Kevin gives out soup samples. “His samples were generous, too None of those little cups they give you for water at the dentist. He used coffee cups & provided a spoon.” [[Hechtman=“I’m just guessing, but I probably had been to the dentist around the time I was writing that & that’s what made me think of the cups.”]] 4. DDS Arnold Bullard’s wife Pixie tells Molly that the reason she was worried about being stalked is because they have had a few problems. Occasionally there’s been a disgruntled patient whose smile doesn’t turn out quite as they envisioned. It certainly isn’t his fault. The man’s a perfectionist. Nobody works harder or cares more about their patients. Even more so now that our kids are away at college, he’s started keeping evening hours several nights a week to make it easier for his patients who work. [[Hechtman made Bullard a DDS because “I thought an orthodontist might be more likely to recognize that the aged photo was really of Patricia.”]] 5. CeeCee’s late husband, the world-famous dentist is mentioned again. 6. CeeCee’s late husband had been brilliant about teeth and a moron about money. 7. There is a dental office scene but no patients involved. Just Dr. Bullard eating & where he dies. 8. Dr Bullard wife admits he was a good man but was jealous & had a temper. 8. Dr. Bullard was good if he could see that she had an overbite.

BY HOOK OR BY CROOK--Betty Hechtman- The Tarzana Hookers are at a park selling their wares for charity, when a paper bag is deposited on their table When opened, a beautiful, unusual piece of lace & part of a note is revealed. Molly Pink is able to track down the owner, wealthy Mary Beth Wells. By the time she gets to Well’s house, she’s dead in her bedroom. Molly is determined to ascertain what happened since the bag was left on their table. Someone was asking for help. Mrs. Wells had a prominent house in Catalina, & some of the Hookers go there to try to figure out questions they have. On top of Wells’ death, Molly’s parents have come for a visit with a reason & are there 1, 2, or no men in her life?

[[Hechtman said, “I didn’t realize I had so many dental references.”]] **DENTAL ARRIVES WITH:** 1. On p. 94-I Diane talking about how wealthy Camille Rhead Katz, CeeCee’s boss’ wife, is and says to CeeCee, “I bet she has someone to brush her teeth. [[Hechtman: “I made the comment about Camille Rhead Katz have somebody to brush her teeth because it seemed about the most ridiculously pampered thing I could think of.”]] 2. Saliva connected to DNA, 3.CeeCee’s late husband had been a world-class dentist is mentioned again. 4.CeeCee still has her sweet tooth.

KILLER CRUISE by Laura Levine--Jaine Austen is a freelance ad writer & somewhat sleuth. Jaine got a 1-time job on a cruise line destined for the Mexican Rivera for a week believing this is an all-expenses-paid trip. She’ll be teaching a writing class. One big problem, she finds Prozac her cat hiding in her trunk at the dock. She sneaks him on. She is housed with the rest of the crew. Cookie Esposito, a band singer who’s cool with Prozac, introduces Jaine to Graham Potter III, her boyfriend & 1 of the men hired to dance with the ladies. She realizes that she will have to cancel housekeeping so no one comes in to clean & discovers Prozac. Housekeeper Samoa spots Prozac but won’t rat on her if she edits his book.

. Wealthy, 70 year old Emily brought some of her family & personal secretary on the cruise. Over the next couple of days, Graham & Emily seem to be inseparable. Graham is stabbed to death with 1 of the ice sculptor’s ice picks. The sculptor claims there are 2 missing picks. Cookie is arrested because she was heard threatening him for his actions with Emily, & someone thought they saw her when he was killed.

TOOTHNOTES; 1. My salivary glands went into shock. 2. What would Robbie think when he saw me looking like a poster girl for PoliGrip.? [[Levine's response to that line: "PoliGrip. Oh, gosh. It's so age-ist of me (unforgivable when I'm such an old fart myself), but Jaine is embarrassed to be wearing such a matronly dowdy outfit in front of a guy she's attracted to. And I guess (here's the ageist part) that PoliGrip is associated with older people and dentures."]] 3. "The next thing I knew I'd be blacking out my teeth and stomping grapes with my bare feet." 4. I hope you didn't leave any bite marks. 5. he said, flashing her a smile almost as white as his shirt." 6. "What a scam those pendants were. Graham bought 'em by the gross. Gave them out like lollipops at a dentist's office." [[Levine's reasoning for that: "Lollipops at a dentist's office. Wow. Now that you call my attention to it, I realize that's a pretty dated reference. (I told you I was an old fart!) When I was young, dentists would routinely give kids lollipops after a visit, as a consolation prize for having to put up with the drilling. Which of course was insane since those darn lollipops were causing the cavities in the first place. Then again, maybe they knew what they were doing. They wanted to keep their patients coming in for visits. I'm betting dentists no longer do that, or if they do, I hope they're handing out sugarless treats."]] 7. The little Mexican man smiled broadly, exposing a mouthful of what I suspect were store-bought teeth" 8. "but much like a dental patient who can't help probing a sore tooth, I felt myself helplessly drawn to the computer room." [[Levine's includes this because "Dental patient can't help probing a sore tooth. I felt it was an apt description. Jaine knew that opening her emails would cause nothing but grief, just as somebody with a toothache knows it's going to hurt when they poke at it, but they can't help poking at it anyway."]] 9. I am tall, dark, and very beautiful, too. Plus I have all my own teeth." Different types of smiles and breath appear.

DEATH OF A TROPHY WIFE—Laura Levine == Jaine Austen's neighbor/friend/ Neiman Marcus shoe salesman is Lance Venable. He has a new shoe client trophy wife Bunny Cooper that's put him over the top with his sales. Lance takes Jaine to a Four Seasons' brunch. Bunny is there with her husband mattress king Marvin. Bunny invites them to her place that afternoon where Jaine discuss business with Marvin . There she meets Marvin & his ex-wife Ellen's daughter Sarah Kendall, a UCLA professor & basically Bunny's age. Her husband Owen works with Marvin. He tells her to come to his office with some ideas, since they did not get a chance to talk. You don't want to want to mess with Bunny.

. At the store Jaine & Marvin still don't speak. Jaine gets another chance at the party Bunny is giving . While everyone at the party, or almost everyone, is watching a fiasco Jaine has created in the bathroom, someone has taken out Bunny. Lance is a suspect. Jaine is out to prove his innocence.

Throw in humor with a one-sided love interest of a guy from Uzbekistan whom Jaine met at Universal studios. Her mother, wanting to see Jaine remarried, gave the guy her email address. He shows up at her apartment unexpected.

A MYRIAD OF DENTAL" 1. "...he had a gap-toothed smile that made Alfred E. Newman look like a Rhodes scholar." 2. "Between the two of them, they possessed a grand total of five teeth." 3. "Then off to the bathroom for a quick splash of water on my face, a gargle of Listerine, & a hasty application of lipstick." 3. Vladimir from Uzbekistan takes Jaine to his aunt's house for dinner. She grabs her chin and "Open wide, she instructed." "Incredulous, I opened my mouth and stood there like a horse on an auction block as she inspected my teeth. "They are yours?" "Yes, I managed to say." "Good. She grunted, satisfied." "Having passed tooth inspection, I followed her and Vladimir into the living room..." [["Aunt Minna inspecting Jaine's teeth was just my way of trying to show how, in this highly fictional Uzbek family, a prospective wife/girlfriend is not judged on the basis of personality or character, but rather on how healthy she is, how well she is going to be able to perform her chores."]] 4.-"Dee-lish, I replied, trying not to chip a molar." 5. "Shoving all thoughts of Vladimir to the dusty corner of my brain reserved for toothaches & IRS audits,..." 6. "My salivary glands sprang into action." 7. Vladimir writes this poem for Jaine: "to me your smile is like a dream---With teeth as white as sour cream---I wish on al the stars above---For huggy kissy in The House of Plov" Oh, barf. I reached for my Plov-tini and -praying it wasn't laced with Sofi's saliva-took a healthy gulp. Yikes, it was strong. I'd be lucky if I still had enamel on my sour cream teeth at the end of the evening." [["I'm so glad you liked that scene. I got a big kick out of writing it. (The favorite part of the book, for me, was Vladimir.) Luckily for me, the rice pilaf dish of Uzbekistan is actually called Plov, which is just a very funny name. So I enjoyed throwing it around (as in Plov-Tini, and Camel Plov, etc.). As for "teeth as white as sour cream," I thought it would be funny to compare her teeth, not to something lovely like pearls, but something distinctly un-glamorous, like sour cream, something I figured might be part of an Uzbek diet. (In an earlier poem, I had him comparing her lips to borscht.)"]] 8."...who rewarded me with a sly pinch and a gold-studded grin." 9."Under the bored gaze of a toothless chef sweating into a vat of plov, Sofi grabbed me by the neck of my sweater and held my face mere inches from hers. If I didn't say anything at the time, Sofi, but if you happen to be reading this, you might want to try the occasional breath mint."

FYI-A new study led by a Hadassah Medical Center nurse has proven that brushing a ventilated patient's teeth 3 times a day can radically cut down the rate of Ventilator-Associated Pneumo