

HYGIENISTS IN PRINT-RDH PLUS- FICTION & NONFICTION—Lois Foster Hirt

TREASURE HUNT John Lescroart Forty five year old Wyatt Hunt is the owner of the Hunt Club PI business in San Francisco. Some employees include 27 year-old ex cab driver Mickey Dade who handles some subpoena services & drives everyone around & his sister Tamara, who works at the front desk & does a little interrogation work.

Mickey slept outside a lot. One morning he's at the Panama Pacific Exhibition where a stand off between cops and protesters is happening. It's all about moving ducks to Foster City due to a renovation on the lagoon. As Mickey leaves the park, he spots a dead man in the water. Once Mickey informed the cops about the body, the ducks were forgotten. The dead man was activist/big charity person Dominic Como, who had been missing for 4 days. Como's death wasn't from natural causes.

Hunt Club business has been off due to the publicity of 1 bad case. Wyatt informs Mickey that he'll be closing up shop. & needles Mickey to pursue his aspiration to be a chef. Mickey is staying to help no matter what. At his cooking class classmate Ian Thorpe exposed Mickey his sister Alicia worked for Como. Ian urges Mickey to help find the killer to take pressure of the cops thinking Alicia may be a suspect. Maybe a reward could be put up, & the Hunt Club could handle the reward hotline. His idea is embraced, & the Hunt Club can stay in business.

DENTAIL THRILLS-1. “Mickey had actually been out on real work, serving a subpoena on a dental hygienist named Paula Chow who had worked in the offices of Bernard Offit for six years, ending her employment with him a couple of years before. It seems that while treating female patients for TMJ or, in layman's terms, clicking of and pain in the jaw, Dr. Offit had developed a technique that including massaging the breast of those women. Eventually, fourteen victims of this questionable treatment came forward and pressed charges. Dr. Offit's defense attorney, contending that this technique was indeed not just defensible but therapeutic, needed to call witnesses, such as Ms. Chow, who would testify that Dr. Offit was a fine man and a good boss and would never have done anything so tawdry for his own sexual gratification. And, more particularly, that she had seen him administer this treatment, and that none of the patients had complained at the time, nor had there been any sexual component to it.” “Mickey found Mr. Chow at her new place of employment at a dentist's office on Clement Street, and served her for a court date the following week.” After talking to Ms. Chow, Mickey called Tamara at work. She informed him he had to contact a crazy lady, who had just called, about some info and the reward. [[Lescroart disclosed, “I have a friend in California's central valley who was the lawyer in a case just like the one I describe here. Without divulging any names, he kept me informed of the details of this very interesting case. For my book, I needed a witness that Mickey Dade would have to locate and serve a subpoena on for the dentist in question, and I figured the most obvious witness, and likely a supportive one, would be his hygienist.”]] 2. Each street sported an abandoned storefront or two, some fast food, usually a bail bondsman's office, a Chinese dentist or acupuncture....,[[“This dentist inclusion came when I did some “on the ground” research, and actually walked a few blocks in the area I was describing. Wanting to be accurate, I noted the businesses in the area, among them a Chinese dentist.”]], 3. “she is so beautiful she'll make your teeth bleed.” 4. Hunt had successfully found the daughter of a Piedmont dentist. [[This is another of those references where the Piedmont dentist just appeared without any planning. Hunt must have other clients in his world, people who count on him to find missing persons, and this Piedmont dentist must have been one of them.” 5. One statement included is an inmate had died from having a pulled tooth. [[“The inmate dying from a pulled tooth is an actual event that happened in one of California's prisons over the past year or so. I found it to be an especially unusual and interesting cause of death.”]]

REAL LIFE= Cameron Douglas, Michael Douglas' son, was in jail for drugs in NY in August 2009. His girlfriend Kelly Sott tried to sneak in 19 vials of heroin inside an electric toothbrush. Makes it sound like at least she was thinking of his dental health.

THE CLEANER by Brett Battles Protagonist Jonathan Quinn's job is that of a cleaner. He simply gets rid of dead bodies, for the good guys. In Colorado he's instructed to probe into a possible case of arson where a scientist died. Here he meets Nate, his apprentice. However, nothing is simple including his “handlers” not giving him total support. There's a reason for that. When Quinn is almost killed, he & Nate go to Vietnam, thinking they are safe. Not so. Quinn has to enlist the help of Orlando, a woman he has known & worked with. Trying to outsmart & stay ahead of people out to kill them, isn't easy. Then they head to Berlin.

I had to laugh & thought here is a book called THE CLEANER with a cleaning mention. Hygienist humor!
“Quinn's thoughts returned to Borko. He was a problem, & not just a small one. It was like going to the dentist for a cleaning and being told you had to have multiple root canals right away. Quinn thought, then quickly changed his mind. *More like going to the dentist and being told all your teeth have to be pulled out.*” [[“I do, now, remember writing the part about getting all your teeth pulled out...I was trying to think of the thing most people would cringe at hearing, and could potentially happen to anyone (but hopefully not!) We all have an inherent fear of Dentist, mainly, I think, because we have all had tooth pain at one time or another. Plus the thought of someone DRILLING in our mouths, especially while we are awake can bring chills to people...the idea of doing that just seems like it should be wrong! Me, I've been lucky so far. I've never had a cavity. But maybe that makes the idea of dental work all the more scary, since in large part it would be a new experience for me. Here's hoping I don't have to worry about that for a long, long time.”]] 2. “He hadn't shaved in a couple of days and he was looking pretty scruffy. A plastic shopping bag sat on the floor near the sink. Inside were toothbrushes, toothpaste, a comb, deodorant, a hairbrush, razors and shaving cream, some first-aid stuff. Quinn pulled out a razor and the cream and gave himself a thorough shave. He wiped away the excess foam, then opened one of the toothbrushes and brushed his teeth.”

[Brett said he had forgotten about the dental in the book but remembered why it is there.

Protagonist Poke Rafferty is an author & now is writing travel guides. He goes to Bangkok & stays. While there he meets Rose a former go-go dancer who keeps refusing his marriage proposals & finds street urchin Miaow that he wants to adopt. Miaow wants Poke to take another older street urchin named Superman. He agrees. It is thanks to Superman that there some dental mentions since he is a biter. Meanwhile Poke is asked to root out an Australian woman's uncle & uncovers a porn ring & accepts a payment from a woman to find a blackmailing thief. This puts him & his "family" in danger.

Hallinan added to my dental questions. "Absolutely astonishing. I feel like a writer who's just had a critic explain his work to him."

Travel thru the dental with 1.p. "His jaws have been clamped open with a stainless-steel device designed for root canals. When it was forced into the guard's mouth, it dislocated his jaw, which sags to the side like something in a funhouse mirror. Whatever it is the guard is trying to say, the dental appliance turns it into one long, agonized vowel" [Hallinan's reasoning for the root canal device: "I'd recently had a root canal, and it struck me as a good way to prevent someone from closing his mouth. Also, I liked the idea that they were questioning him while he was wearing something that made it impossible for him to answer. Madame Wing is a very, very not-nice lady."] 2.- "Wrapping himself in the ersatz-silk robe Miaow bought him for his birthday, an unsettling pink the color of healthy gums and adorned on the back with a fey dragon lispng fire, he pads into the empty living room and then the empty kitchen." 3. Chapter title-A Triumph of Veneers and Inlay [(Hallinan) I swear I saw no dental in this chapter, but being a hygienist, I thought dental!" At this point, I'm not surprised.(that is because of all his dentids tidbits I told him about in all the books.) 4. "Two strokes of the hammer drive the edge of the crowbar into the space around the upper drawer, and three good, back-wrenching pulls buckle the drawer in a rewarding fashion. It juts forward like a broken jaw." 5.- "Two of his front teeth have been broken. When he pronounces an I, he whistles." 6."Miaow has not come home from school yet, and the boy is off somewhere. Probably sharpening his teeth." 7. "When he has finished vomiting the beer into the toilet, he washes his mouth out with Listerine and brushes his teeth hard enough to make his gums bleed. His mouth still tastes foul."

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THE FOURTH WATCHER Timothy Hallinan- - Poke Rafferty series. I enjoyed reading the NOTE Tim has at the end of the book. Rose, who is still only engaged to Poke, is in a cleaning business, as in places not clothes. This time things get dangerous for not only Poke, but Rose, Miaow, his policeman friend Arthit & his wife.

Frank Poke's father drills his way in along with another family member he had no clue about. Poke isn't happy seeing Frank again. The big problem that Poke deals with is counterfeiting that leads to his other big dilemma. Its interesting the way Tim bridges North Korea, counterfeiting & the CIA. One of Rose's partner gives counterfeit money to a workers that brings in police involvement.

You have to love Miaow's bravery.. Saving his family involves Frank who had ties to the people holding Rose & Miaow & Arthit's wife.

Some dental biting remarks are 1. Elson smiles. His front teeth are uneven and pushed in slightly a characteristic Rafferty has always associated with thumb suckers. 2. His lips have vanished completely, baring the thumb sucker's dent in his front teeth. 3. chapter title and line, Ping, Rose, Milk Shake, Tooth, Gun, 4. The pencils have Rose's tooth marks on them, 5. The whole world wants to get its teeth into Frank Rafferty. 6. There is Colonel Chu asking 1 of his men to show him his teeth. "The man peels back his lips to reveal two crooked lines of teeth. Then Chu uses his gum to crack one of the man's incisors. The man & his broken tooth breaks into the story in a number of different ways. [Hallinan used that because "I needed something violent and painful that (a) I hadn't seen a hundred times already, and (b) would hurt Ping, and continue to hurt him, without incapacitating him, since Chu is actually understaffed, so to speak. Also, I liked the idea that Chu could hit him so precisely -- not even split his lip.]

BREATHING WATER, Timothy Hallinan a Poke Rafferty book = Poke has problems. He won the right to write the biography of billionaire Khun Pan, who was a criminal & has political ambitions. Now someone doesn't want Poke to write the story. He is between a rock & a hard place, especially since he, Rose, & Miaow are threatened. Throw in a baby-selling ring involving young girls & the reappearance of Superman.

Dive into dental with Poke agreeing to meet a reporter in a safe place-his dentist's office. [Hallinan's reply to using a dental office: "Don't know why a dentist's office. I don't plot in the conventional sense, but Poke needed a meeting place that a lot of people could go into without anyone suspecting that they were going to meet each other, and a medical office seemed like a good bet. By the way, my dentist has pumpkin-colored chairs." "She is seated in regal state on one of the two pumpkin-colored chairs in the corner of the dentist's waiting room." 2. "When this is over", Rafferty says, "I'm going to pull your teeth one by one and shove them up your nose." 3. "He starts to push between two of the men in front of him, but the one to his left, a short, wide, dark-skinned man whose teeth stagger drunkenly across his mouth, leaning in all directions, reaches around the side of Rafferty's neck and digs an iron thumb into a spot behind Rafferty's jaw, just below his ear." Poke calls the man Captain Teeth, & he appears numerous times & so do his teeth. [Captain Teeth got his name because "When I (Hallinan) read the book to my wife, she got confused because there were too many crooks and they all had Thai names. So I gave that guy bad teeth and an English name to help the reader keep him straight. And later, as you point out, a witness' description of his teeth is important to Poke -- it confirms that Ton had Elora killed. So the teeth did double duty and served as a clue." "He got teeth like he ate a grenade. They go all over the place." 4. Poke has his hand bashed in & doesn't want to go to the doctor to see if his fingers are broken. Instead he goes to Dr. Pumbhang, his DDS. [Hallinan reason for using the dentist: Well, I'd already introduced the dentist's office, so it was a location the reader knew. And I thought the X-ray technique was funny. I do a lot of stuff just because it strikes me funny.] "She tells him, "the machine can only photograph a small area at a time. I'm going to have to take a dozen pictures. She continues with, "Put the hand down carefully, fingers as close together as you can get them, palm flat, if you can do it, and *don't mess up my film*. If you move the pieces around, I; have to do the whole thing over again, and I'll probably think better of it." There is 3 pages on all of this. She even offered him painkillers. Later someone asks him who bandaged his hand, & he replies, "A dentist.." 5. "Razor wire spirals its silver teeth along the tops of some of the fences." [Hallinan didn't have any reason for

just what occurred to me. Buildings have "faces," like people do, and teeth are the things most likely to be missing. And it's kind of a spooky image.]

A DATE YOU CAN'T REFUSE—Harley Jane Kozak Wollie Shelley is a greeting-card artist. What one doesn't do for family. The FBI has given her the offer of letting her schizophrenic brother to stay in the federally subsidized halfway home if she goes under cover in a media-training company that may be into video piracy.

Dental 1. Why would I object to wearing a dead person's clothes. I asked myself while trying on trousers. Especially the ones still sporting price tags? How many things in our lives-antiques, for example-belonged to dead people? Not that someone with Chai's wardrobe owned dentures...No dentures, then." 2. He had one hand over his mouth and when he removed his hand and stared at it, there was blood on it. He looked at me, horrified. 'What are you doing?' He reached inside his mouth and pulled out something too small and/or bloody for me to identify. 'My veneer!' he cried. 'It's only six months old.'...Vidal was too occupied with his teeth to notice." 3. "Did I see blood on his face before I hit him? A head butt. I think it's called. I knock out one of his veneers." 4. "I closed my eyes and fired my first shot. I had no idea where it landed, nor did I care. What I noticed was that even with the earmuffs on, it was excruciatingly loud. It made me think of being at the dentist with the drill going full blast in your mouth. Not painful---assuming there's Novocain involved-but not a lot of fun either." 5. "The blacktop parking lot area surrounding the church steps was measured and marked with masking tape, creating rows of squares in various sizes. Each square featured the name of its sponsor =, stenciled in chalk across the bottom, everything from Tri-County Court Reporters to the Afghanistan Dental Relief Project, Inc." 6. "Zbiggo grinned bigger, showing me the full glory of his teeth. No state-subsidized dental care in his country, apparently." 7. "You think I'm going to have some bozo watch me floss my teeth?...Trust me, there are no cameras in this house."

Harley commented that she had no idea of the many dental references that were in the book I pointed out to here. She lumped her answers to my dental questions all together. "I've always had strange teeth and lots of cavities, veneers, root canals, 2 extractions . . . as a child, we had to go to this aging alcoholic dentist, who terrified me. My mom knew he was an alcoholic, (I mean, the poor man was breathing on her too) but he never hounded her to pay her (always overdue) bill. She was a single mom with 8 kids, so you can only imagine. Anyhow, my veneers, which are common in Hollywood, were installed by a less-than-gifted dentist (I only know this because my current dentist just shakes his head sadly whenever he peers into my mouth) and used to pop out so frequently during my pregnancies (I'm not sure why) that he finally sent me home with one of those heat-sealing things and some nail polish glue and a "good luck, More recently (2 years ago) I had an emergency extraction far from home in the middle of a writers' conference, and, while holding the cotton in place 2 hours later, MC'd a gala book auction. My tooth karma is now legendary. None of this exactly explains anything or answers your questions, but my suspicion is that my lifelong teeth adventures, my frequent dreams of teeth falling out, and the years spent in dentist waiting rooms, with my laptop in my lap, writing my novels, has produced an inordinate number of dental references in my work. Moreover, from having blogged about my teeth on The Lipstick Chronicles, I happen to know many people can relate to this. Fear of dentists is right up there with fear of spiders, snakes, etc. All of which, paradoxically, makes for humor. Does that make sense?
p.s. A great dental hygienist is to me second only to a great obstetrician. I'd rather go through labor than get my teeth cleaned."

BOOKPLATE SPECIAL Lorna Barrett The town of Stoneham, New Hampshire, is known for its various bookstores & is a favorite tourist place. Look for Lois the librarian & for Libby & Joe Hirt. Sound Familiar? Since Lois was already a character, I became Libby. I have 2 parts & Joe is my husband's name. Yes! I am still smiling. Protagonist Tricia Miles is the owner of Haven t Got A Clue bookstore. Tricia has kicked out her college friend Pam Fredericks after 2 weeks of staying with her. Pam isn't a nice person. Tricia thought Pam would leave town, but it does not seem that way.

Tricia is convinced to go to the opening of Stoneham Food Shelf opened by Stuart Paige, who is part of the Paige Foundation. They are sharing space with Stoneham Clothing Closet. This is how Libby Hirt, Executive Committee of the Food Shelf in Stoneham chairwoman, comes in. These two stores are for people who have money problems. Pam went to the Food Shelf dedication and got kicked out.

Tricia's sister Angelica Miles opened Booked for Lunch restaurant & owns The Cookery, a cookbook store. She also wrote the cookbook Easy Does It Cooking. Without Tricia knowing, Angelica hired Pam to work in the restaurant. Angelica tells Tricia to make up with Pam. She is out back & while doing that to check to see if her new dumpster arrived. It arrived all right & all ready has trash in it. The body of Pam that Tricia discovered. Pam also scavenged for food from dumpsters. Pam never seemed to be working much, but Angelica states that Pam said she will have lots of money to set her up for life. Tricia learns there're freegans living in town. They're people who scavenger dumpsters food to eat that they feel can save them money.

Dental done 1. toothy grin looked menacing, and 2. Tricia ground her teeth together

Check again in April for another column