

Joan K. Lacy Press Room Q & A

1. Who are you?

My name is Joan K. Lacy. I grew up in the country in Southern California, with horses and dogs and many animals of all types. I guess I was adventurous, but I didn't think about that then. I started drawing in early childhood, first with pencils, then charcoal, then oil painting.

My interest in languages and travel began when I was young, too. I started writing after a working-life with airlines in San Diego, and Seattle, then I worked as a secretary, mostly for lawyers and architects. I loved exploring the United States, and lived in Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Kentucky, Washington State, and Northern California. I've been married to the same man for thirty years, and we're still going strong.

My mission is to offer entertaining stories that capture the imagination. Adventures with sorcerers, magicians, mythical creatures, magic, and a chance to learn interesting things about this world, its people, their myths and legends.

I feel many adults and young people are looking for stories not set in dystopian worlds, or the violence and death prevalent in many novels today.

I hope you enjoy my Alex Cort Adventures.

2. Where did you grow up?

I was born in George, and I'm proud to be a Georgia Peach, though I didn't live there very long because my father was just there in training as a Marine pilot. The rest of my family is from Iowa, but I didn't live there long, either. My home is San Diego, and that's where I grew up, with what I now know to be a magical childhood. I didn't appreciate it until I went away to college at UCLA. I've kept trying to leave over the years, but I always came home, which is surprising to me since I always loved travel, and visiting new places, different countries. I always thought I'd settle some place far away.

3. Since you love to travel, do you speak any other languages?

I studied French and Spanish through high school. I lived in Mexico City for a summer and attended school there, in Spanish. After four years in school, I could conjugate verbs, but I really learned to speak Spanish when I had to make myself understood, one way or another. I studied Swedish at UCLA, and lived in Europe for a year. I learned Italian at a course for "foreigners" in Florence, and making friends with the local Italians after class. With French and Spanish, Italian wasn't difficult,

but I was told I speak Italian with a Spanish accent! I can get along in French, and German I learned as I traveled, making friends along the way. I know a few words of Greek, Russian, and Chinese.

4. Where do you get your ideas?

I enjoy research, so I do a lot of that after I am inspired by the location of a new story. Besides research, I use my imagination, and personal experience.

5. What do you like to write about?

I have always been interested in travel and foreign languages. I am intrigued with myths and legends from all over the world, and I love a good adventure story. I put them all together and write about that.

6. When do you find time to write?

I have the great good fortune to have the time now to pursue my hobbies. I love to write about the adventures of Alex and Andrew, and Angel. They take me to interesting worlds full of magic. It's always a fun ride. I've completed three Alex Cort stories, and have ideas for three more Alex Cort adventures.

7. What are your next books about?

A Shadow Away, the first book, is an adventure in Brazil linked to the legend of El Dorado, but with a twist. In the second, All Under Heaven, Alex time-travels to ancient China, to the time of Qin Shi Huang, to save a ghost who must recover the First Emperor's missing Ninth Cauldron. Third, is an alternative to the legend of Atlantis, and three sorcerers who have plans of their own for thirteen crystal skulls. The fourth book will involve fairies and legends from The Otherworld. Fifth, will be a prequel to the time in Egypt when Alex and Andrew first worked together. And the sixth story in the Alex Cort Adventures series will begin in early Mexican history, then time-travel and teleport through Europe to solve a supernatural mystery.

8. What are your hobbies?

Besides writing the stories about Alex Cort's adventures, I love to play the banjo. I play Earl Scrugg's three-finger style. I sculpt two-dimensional bas-relief portraits of exotic and domestic animals. I used to sculpt lost-wax style bronze zoo animals, but I found their faces were more interesting to me, so I switched to portraits. I play the piano a little—a shame after so many years of lessons! I play Irish fiddle, and intermediate-level violin (same instrument, different attitude). And I love to spin alpaca fiber into yarn. After all my wool is spun, I will make hats and socks to donate to the Veterans Hospital.

9. What do you do in your spare time?

Don't have much of that anymore. Writing, and everything else that goes with publishing, is taking most of my time these days.

10. How much do you like writing your stories? Is it a joy, or an effort?

I must say that writing the stories is the easy part! I love being immersed in the adventure. I have a vivid imagination, so as the story comes to me, I can picture the whole scene. The characters come alive, and the dialogue flows naturally. I just listen, and write down what they say as fast as I can.

11. How did you create your characters?

I started with Alex, who at first was more like me, an observer. On the advice of friends and editors, over time I made him more pro-active, a strong character I hope people will relate to. Archaeologist Andrew Seaton, allows me to share all I have learned over the years with my long-time interest in archaeology. His approach is scientific, but he loves legends and superstitions, so he adjusts to magic pretty easily. Angel became part of the team by teaching the other two her kind of magic. She allows me to share all I have learned from the study of metaphysics for most of my life. I think the three make a good combination for the stories I want to tell.

12. How do you come up with answers to a glitch in the plot?

The most amazing thing happens when I am stumped for a solution. Time and again, it's one of the characters who comes up with the answer. Another solution for me, is to reverse the scene, or characters, or plot problem. Seeing it from a different perspective sometime provides the clue I need for a solution.

13. Who are your favorite authors?

I like Agatha Christie and Ernest Hemingway, of course; Mary Stewart, Dick Francis, James Herriot and I read a lot of the new authors on Kindle.

14. What genres do you read?

I like reading stories with adventure, a good plot, and not much violence. I like mysteries, and stories that take place in other parts of the world. Right now, I'm enjoying Patricia Sands' books about Provence.

15. What do you want to accomplish with your stories?

I want to take readers on an adventure. I draw pictures with words to draw them in and lose themselves in another, magical world. I'd like them to come to love the characters, and be sorry when the story is over. I wanted to write entertaining adventure stories for everyone who'd like to learn something interesting about this world, its people, and their myths and legends. I also wanted to write adventure stories with positive adult role models for the younger readers who enjoy a good adventure.

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To learn more about Joan K. Lacy and the Alex Cort Adventure series, visit her website at www.JoanKLacy.com