

## Q&A with the Author

### What is your book about?

Set in a boarding kennel, *Deadly Ties* is an amateur sleuth's tale of family, friendship, and betrayal in an Ozark mountain community where ties run deep and grudges can linger for a lifetime.

### What type of reader would your book appeal to most?

Anyone who enjoys mystery or suspense fiction without graphic violence or explicit sex. The book will appeal to readers who like to solve puzzles, enjoy regional mysteries, and like to see dogs as part of the story.

### Who is the main character? What does he or she want or what is his or her biggest struggle to overcome?

Maggie Porter returns to her Eagle Cove and her childhood home in the Ozark Mountains determined to reopen the family dog business. She's gambled everything she owns to make her boarding kennel and dog training business successful. She's prepared for long hours, hard labor, and even record high temperatures as the region bakes in a summer-long drought. What she doesn't expect, though, is the trouble that follows when a gossip-loving employee turns up dead, holding an heirloom locket belonging to Maggie's mother.

### What plot line drives the story?

*Deadly Ties* has multiple plot lines woven through the story, and all of them come back to the land and its people. When Maggie starts investigating her employee's death—ruled accidental by the authorities—she finds herself the target of anonymous threats and mysterious break-ins. And when a security crisis puts everything she loves at risk, she's convinced the death was no accident.

The locket, the threats, and the break-ins all appear connected to Maggie's mother, who left Eagle Cove twenty years ago. Determined to discover the truth, Maggie must track her reclusive mother through the world of fine art to unravel the mystery. As the region sizzles in record heat and drought, a "Treasures of the Ozarks" advertising campaign disrupts her quest for answers even as it breathes new life old treasure legends and brings out tourists and treasure hunters alike. With her loyal dogs at her side—a champion Labrador Retriever, an aging Cocker Spaniel, and a Beagle retired from federal service—Maggie must dig for the truth. Along the way she learns that everyone has something to hide, and some secrets are worth killing for.

### How is your book different than other books in the same genre?

You'll find elements of the traditional cozy mystery in my work: an amateur sleuth, a small community, connections to local law enforcement, and a mystery my sleuth is motivated to solve. No coarse language or graphic violence here. There is an eclectic group of characters, a hint of romance, and plenty of plot twists to keep you guessing.

I do push the traditional definition of a cozy, though, by introducing more suspense, more villainy than you might see in a typical light-hearted, whimsical romp. My characters—including the dogs!—are good, bad, and sometimes both. That might be why my work has been called "a cozy with an edge." Whatever you call it, the book is the sort you finish with a sense of satisfaction. Mystery solved, justice served, and the villains get their comeuppance.

### Should readers read the books in order?

While later books in the series don't contain any obvious spoilers (I won't, for example, identify book #1 villains by name in later books), readers might enjoy being part of Maggie's adventures from the start. You could, however, pick up the series at any point.

### Where can readers get your book and when?

*Deadly Ties* is available now from retailers everywhere. You can get a paperback copy from [Independent Booksellers](#) and [Amazon](#) & [B&N](#). Or go digital with the [Kindle](#) edition. Prefer listening? Get the [audiobook](#) and listen using a phone, Kindle, iPad or tablet, computer, or mp3 player. Find "how-to" details and more information at <http://tinyurl.com/l6krqbn>.