

# Book Club – Until Proven Guilty by J.A. Jance – November 9, 2022

**Note: the author was with us at our discussion!**

Q. Can we get your Bio?

A. Born in S. Dakota/ moved to Bisby Az at age 4. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade was “rewarded” with reading books when work done. Discovered OZ books & decided to become a writer. Attended U of AZ as an English Major. Just before Jr. Year met creative writing teacher and asked to be in his class – was refused because “only men are writers”. Don’t make writers mad – you end up as a character in a book. Got a degree in Library Science, worked 10 years in life insurance sales. Husband was writer and said only 1 writer in the house – she agreed – he was never published and she divorced him. Began writing. 1<sup>st</sup> book was 1,400 pages, never sold.

**Until Proven Guilty was written in 1983-84 and released in 1985.**

Q. Where do characters come from?

A. Organic writer, No Outline. Books start with a dead person and then the story just flows. Uses location in the book. For Until Proven Guilty, wrote 1<sup>st</sup> line from POV of detective and it worked. Now 25 Beaumont books

In 1970’s several family members were involved in a cult. Also, J.A. was molested as a 7 yr old by her grandfather. Was concerned that her family would recognize themselves in the book but they were blind to it and loved the book. Spoke at a HS Assembly and was asked “Where did Ann Corley come from”. At her grandfather’s funeral, she and her sisters did NOT attend because they had all been molested. 28 years old and finally told her Dad what had happened – he said he would have shot him back then if he’d known. Judy was Ann Corley – Adult Vigilante. The stories are personal

Q. How do you come up with the “clues” or “foreshadowing” into stories?

A. They are not planned. They just come out as the story is being written.

Q. if someone asked which book to start with – what is your recommendation?

A. Depends on your location – if WA – Beaumont, AZ – Ally Reynolds.....

**Btw J.P. Beaumont has the same birthday as J.A. Jance so she could keep track of his age.**

Q. Was the statement “would you do it again” (kill if necessary) planned so that Ann could say it at the end?

A. No, it just came out that way.

Q. Would you consider a prequel? Maybe about Ann Corley

A. No, her story gets told eventually – Second Watch

Q. What do you read?

A. I like Thrillers. I don’t read much anymore – it makes me confused with my own characters.

Q. What did you think of Tom Cruise playing Jack Reacher?

A. Silly! The TV series actor was better.

There are a lot of personal experiences in all the book. There will be a new book in March 2023 – Ally Reynolds. Also Blessing of the lost girls – a Walker series will come out in the fall. Very proud of the Walker family books – they are set in AZ

Q. Do you have a favorite?

A. 2<sup>nd</sup> Watch – Beaumont

Unfinished business – Ally

Day of the Dead – Absolutely NOT!

Q. Was the Peters family Cult based on the Cult in Eastern Oregon in the 70's?

A. Yes

Q. Liked the reference to the Dog House Grill

A. Likes adding local references

Q. Would you consider making a series (TV?) from the books?

A. No – They want to buy all the books for a series and it's not enough money.

Q. Don – Foreshadowing

A. Not Planned – ex, Joanna Brady books – 1<sup>st</sup> book conversation is still alive in book 18.

Q. Do you ever get Writers Block?

A. Sort of. Get tired of characters. 9 Beaumont books then switched to Joanna Brady. By alternating, no real blocks. Editor gets involved as well. Asked to write a book in 6 months – May – due Jan 1. Nothing came to her until Mid October. Watched news in AZ and favorite Anchor was gone. Found out she was fired for “being too old” = Ally Reynolds. Book done in time.

Has different publishers for different series. Negotiated a deal between 2 publishers so Beaumont and Ally could visit each other in books.

Only had 3 major issues with editors in total – one was about time zones.

Q. Who would play the parts?

A. Don't have idea of current actors.

Suggestions.....Liam Neilsen, Keneau Revees, Ann Hathaway.

Q. Do you socialize with other writers?

A. No, mostly family.

**Lastly – a repeat – It's a bad idea to make a writer mad – you'll end up in a book as a bad character!**