

Vicki Delany

"one of Canada's most promising new practitioners of the crime genre" Dick Adler, the *Chicago Tribune*

One of "Canada's top ten mystery writers to watch." Quill and Quire

Vicki Delany began her writing career as a Sunday Writer. A single mother of three high-spirited daughters with a full-time job as a computer programmer, Sunday afternoon was – and at that, only now and again – the only time she could find in the middle of a packed week to devote to herself, with a single candle on her desk for a bit of atmosphere, a Bruce Springsteen tape in the tape deck, and a nice cup of tea at her elbow. When she felt like really letting loose, the tea might have turned into a glass of wine.

The years passed, as they tend to do, and the three daughters eventually, somewhat hesitantly, flew the coop; the tape deck was replaced with a CD player (although the Boss remained!). Vicki managed to get more writing done, although she continued working as a systems analyst at a major Canadian bank. In 2007 she was fortunate enough to take early retirement. She moved to bucolic Prince Edward County, Ontario where she rarely wears a watch. Writing is her full time job, and she can write whenever she feels like it!

Vicki says, *"I am living my dream."* She has advice for anyone who wants to write but just can't find the time in their busy lives: *"Take it from me, who's been there, everyone's life changes as time passes and jobs get easier and kids grow up and the dog and the husband learn to feed themselves. If this isn't your time, then jot down notes about what you want to achieve and wait it all out. Your time will come. In the meantime, remember that reading is the foundation of writing, so read as much as you can."*

Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Vicki was raised mostly in Ontario. As a young woman, fresh from quitting Carleton University in a huff in the middle of her final year, she travelled to South Africa where she promptly met a man, married him, and produced the aforesaid three daughters. Eleven years later, Vicki returned to Canada. Of her experiences in Africa she will only say that it gave her an insight into to the politics of power and oppression that few Canadians get to experience.

Vicki's first attempt at fiction began more as an exercise in escapism than as a novel. Her creative writing class was asked to keep a journal for a week. At this time she was having some trouble with one of her teenage daughters, nothing out of the ordinary – just normal teenage girl angst, but she didn't want to write about her own feelings. Instead she wanted to turn her back on her problems and escape into that mythical, always beckoning, Canadian wilderness.

Which she proceeded to do. In her imagination. Rather than write the class exercise, Vicki wrote the first chapter of what became her first novel, ***Whiteout***. The story, roughly, begins as follows: middle-aged computer professional flees the fallout from a troubled teenage daughter and quits her job, cashes in her savings,

and rents a falling-down old cabin on the outskirts of a no-hope town in northern Ontario. It is the middle of winter, and the climax takes place in a snowstorm, thus the title.

Following ***Whiteout***, Vicki was fortunate to place her next novel, ***Scare the Light Away***, with the prominent American mystery publisher, Poisoned Pen Press. ***Scare the Light Away*** was received with critical acclaim, including the *Chicago Tribune* which declared: "Delany does everything right", and called Vicki "one of Canada's most promising new practitioners of the crime genre."

Scare the Light Away was followed by ***Burden of Memory***, set in a cottage on Lake Muskoka's Millionaires' Row. The *Globe and Mail* said of ***Burden of Memory***, "*This is, obviously, ideal reading for a weekend at the cottage, or as a hostess gift for visitors. Read it under the trees and see every page come to life.*"

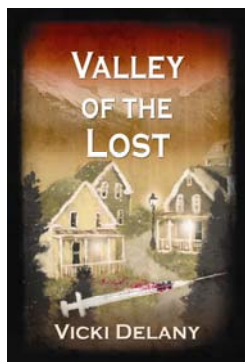
The previous novels were all standalones, and all set in Ontario, with a dual narrative format – something that happened in the past is affecting events of today. Vicki decided it was time for a change. Her favourite books are modern English police procedurals (the works of Ian Rankin, Peter Robinson, Susan Hill, etc) so she decided to try her hand at a Canadian police procedural.

Where to locate the series was an important consideration. It has always been important for Vicki to set her books in places she would like to be. If she is going to spend long hours there, metaphysically speaking, she wants to like it. And the Constable Molly Smith series began, set in a small town in the British Columbia Interior.

Vicki Delany created a beautiful, idyllic, Canadian mountain village within the pages of her 2007 mystery, In The Shadow of the Glacier. And then she threw a dead body into the mix. Now this quiet village is once again in trouble in Valley of the Lost (February, 2009), and—as usual—it is up to Probationary Constable Molly Smith and Sergeant John Winters to sort out the crime before the villagers turn on each other.

For a complete change of pace, Vicki also writes a light-hearted historical mystery series set in 1898 in Dawson, Yukon during the Klondike Gold Rush. ***Gold Digger: A Klondike Mystery***, the first in the series will be released by Canada's Rendezvous Crime in May 2009.

Vicki is a member of Crime Writers of Canada, Capital Crime Writers, Writers Union and sits on the board of the Wolfe Island Scene of the Crime Festival. She is no longer a Sunday writer.



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