
Judy Duarte

Writing Heartwarming Fiction a Walk in the Park



Photo by Robin Gourd

Judy Duarte

*"If there is only one book that you read this year, MULBERRY PARK by Judy Duarte must be that book." —
SingleTitles.com*

Judy Duarte wrote her first single-title novel, *MULBERRY PARK* (Kensington Trade Paperback, April 2008), not knowing it would be on the cutting edge of a trend toward uplifting entertainment. She was

simply doing what she does best . . . writing from the heart.

Judy learned to trust her heart and instincts 20 years ago after life threw her a curveball, in the form of an unexpected divorce. Pulling herself and her four children together, she became determined to survive and succeed and started pursuing her dreams. One of those dreams was a college degree. So, just as her oldest kids hit their teen years, Judy returned to school and ultimately graduated from University of California Irvine.

Another dream presented itself by way of a new, perfect mate. Life was good again, but one dream still nagged at her.

"I always knew there was a book inside me," Judy said, "but putting that book on paper presented a significant challenge. Frankly I had no confidence I could actually become an author. I never liked English in school, and I interpreted that to mean I wasn't good at it."

Still, Judy was a born storyteller. All her life she had been spinning stories—telling tales to her kids as they grew up, plotting and creating characters to fill the time during carpool days and all those commutes back to college.

Committed to learning the author's craft, Judy joined Romance Writers of America (RWA), which helped her fine-tune her writing and her self confidence. As her determination to break into publishing grew, she decided to write the kind of stories that touched her heart—poignant stories about families, second chances, and true love.

“Since I love books and movies in which people must overcome insurmountable odds to win and earn their happily-ever-after, those are the kinds of tales I wanted to create,” Judy said.

Even before she sold her first book, her tales from the heart struck a chord with readers. Her stories won not only the coveted Emily (West Houston RWA Chapter) and Orange Rose (Orange County CA RWA Chapter) awards, but also earned her the status of a double finalist in RWA’s 2001 national Golden Heart competition for unpublished authors.

Judy finally realized her dream when she got *the* call . . .

“I was working as a secretary at my father’s office that Tuesday in May of 2001. It was early afternoon, and I was the only one there to answer phones. A call came in, and Margaret Marbury, now an executive editor with Harlequin, introduced herself. Needless to say, I was floored. She told me she wanted to buy my book, and I had to hold back a gasp and a scream.

“After the call ended, I was afraid that I might have dreamed it all! Other than when my kids were born, that was truly one of the happiest days of my life.”

In March 2002, Silhouette Special Edition released her first book, COWBOY COURAGE. And in July 2005 Judy reached another milestone when she won the

prestigious National Readers’ Choice Award for THE RICH MAN’S SON.

Since then, Judy has written 24 Silhouette Special Edition novels. MULBERRY PARK is her single-title debut for Kensington Books, and a novella, “A *Mulberry Park Christmas*,” will appear in SILVER BELLS (Kensington, November 2008), a Christmas anthology also featuring stories by Fern Michaels and JoAnn Ross. Judy’s second single-title inspirational novel will be published in early 2009.

As the emphasis on feel-good stories spreads, more media outlets are gearing their formats toward inspirational content. The new TV programming darling is “Eli Stone.” On the Internet, www.VirtueRadioNetwork.com, launched the “Words of Faith” show with an interview of Judy and *New York Times* bestselling author, Debbie Macomber.

With her four oldest children grown and on their own, Judy makes her home near the beach in southern California with her husband, their youngest son, and a cat named Tina, whom Judy swears has flying squirrel in her bloodlines.

To arrange an interview with Judy Duarte, contact Nancy Berland,
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Visit www.JudyDuarte.com to learn more about the author.