

A CONVERSATION WITH MATT COYLE about *BLOOD TRUTH*

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF, HOW AND WHEN YOU STARTED WRITING.

I've read crime fiction my whole life and always had the goal of becoming a writer. It just took me a while to actually start writing. I finally did about fifteen years ago when yet another one of the golf companies I worked for went under. I told myself I had to either take the time off to write a book or quit talking about it forever. All the years of reading crime made the choice of genre easy. The rest was hard, but after five months I'd written the first draft of my first novel, *Yesterday's Echo*. About six drafts and ten years later, it was ready to be published.

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE YOUR NOVEL?

My father passed away a few months before I started this book. It was a difficult time and I reflected back on his life and our relationship. My protagonist, Rick Cahill's, father had died when Rick was just a young man, but the true reason for his downward spiral had never been revealed. I felt it was time for Rick to uncover the truth about his father and the proximity to my own father's death made this book very personal.

ANYTHING AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL IN YOUR NOVEL?

Nothing dead on, but there is a scene taken from an event in my life that is blown way up. As always, while the story is fictional, the emotions come from real life.

ARE ANY CHARACTERS BASED ON PEOPLE YOU KNOW?

To a very small extent, Charlie Cahill is taken from my father, in that they both served in their county in the Navy. Other than that, everything else is pure fiction.

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE OR MOST SYMPATHETIC CHARACTER? AND WHY?

My favorite character in *Blood Truth* is Moira MacFarlane. She's had smaller roles in the last two books and I didn't intend for her to have a much larger one in *Blood Truth*, but she barged her way in. She serves as a hard-edged voice of reason for Rick. Even though he rarely takes her advice, she forces him to look at himself and his decisions in a different light. She proves to be a catalyst for his (limited) growth.

WHAT PART OF WRITING YOUR BOOK DID YOU FIND THE MOST CHALLENGING?

Writing dueling plots as opposed to one main plot and a major sub-plot and having them tie together in some way. At times, it was difficult to decide when to switch from one to the other, but, ultimately, I think it came out just right. Having the unifying theme of family helped.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE THAT READERS WILL TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR BOOK?

A time well-spent and a greater understanding of Rick Cahill. Hope for Rick's chance to be happy.

WHAT WRITERS HAVE INSPIRED YOU?

Ernest Hemingway for delivering so much in so few words.

Raymond Chandler for beauty of language.

Robert Crais for storytelling and showing a neophyte writing how to engage with readers.

WHAT IS THE WRITING PROCESS LIKE FOR YOU?

A mess. I don't outline and listen to my subconscious lead me. Sometimes a line will come to me out of the ether and I write it into a scene. I call this dropping anchors. Sometimes the true meaning of the line will come to me right away. Other times, the meaning can come to me a hundred pages later. Sometimes, not at all. When that happens, I have to go back through scenes and pull up anchors. Mostly, the anchors lead to a deeper understanding of what I'm trying to convey in the story. I've learned to trust the process.

WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE ABOUT WRITING THAT YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

Get your ass in the seat.

WHAT IS THE WORST PIECE OF ADVICE ABOUT WRITING THAT YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

Haven't heard it yet. There are many ways to write a book. Find what method works for you and trust it.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR YOU? ANY NEW BOOKS IN THE PIPELINE?

Just about to start book five in the Rick Cahill Crime Series. As usual, Rick will have to confront the repercussions of a decision he made in the last book. Other than that, I'll be dropping anchors.

ANY FINAL WORDS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY ABOUT YOURSELF, YOUR NOVEL, OR LIFE IN GENERAL?

Get your ass in the seat.