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Interview with Suspense Author Peter Abrahams

By Jennifer Minar

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by: **Jennifer Minar**

Peter Abrahams is the author of thirteen novels, including "The Tutor," (Ballantine Books) "A Perfect Crime," (Ballantine Books), "The Fan" (Fawcett Books), and most recently, "Their Wildest Dreams" (Ballantine Books).

Known for his sharp wit and incredible gift for keeping readers on the edge of their seats, Abrahams has been entertaining readers for more than two decades—spinning multi-layered tales involving ordinary people who find themselves in horrific situations. Nominated for the Edgar Award, and known for his memorable, unique characters, colorful writing style, and non-stop suspense, Peter Abrahams seems to have it all—even the praise of horror author Stephen King.

Here is what he had to tell Writer's Break.

THE INTERVIEW

WB: What formal training did you have before becoming an author?

Peter: I had little formal training. My mother—who wrote television drama—taught me a lot about writing when I was very young. For example—don't use linking words between sentences (however, nevertheless, etc.), but use linked ideas, mood, rhythm.

WB: What's a typical writing day like for you?

Peter: Typical writing day—I drive my daughter to school, hit the gym, then breakfast and finally the office, where I work from about 10 to 5. Late in a book I sometimes do more after dinner.

WB: How long does it typically take for you to complete a novel?

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Peter: The actual writing of a book takes me 5–6 months if everything is going well. I wouldn't call myself fast, just steady.

WB: What inspired you to write your latest novel, "Their Wildest Dreams"?

Peter: I don't know if inspired is the word. I've often got little ideas drifting around in my mind. In the case of "THEIR WILDEST DREAMS," I was thinking a struggling woman and a Russian immigrant and a heist gone bad. Then, on Don Imus's radio show, I heard Delbert McClinton singing a song called When Rita Leaves. Most of the story—Mackie, the southwest, the dude ranch, Buckaroo's—came to me in the next five minutes.

WB: How did you decide to become a full-time novelist? What were you doing before?

Peter: The short answer is that I finally started doing what I was designed to do. The long answer isn't that interesting. Earlier, I worked in radio. Before that, I was a spearfisherman in the Bahamas.

WB: What would you say is the "best" and "worst" aspects to this job?

Peter: The best is that hard-to-describe pleasure that comes with making something out of nothing. The worst? A toss-up between the business aspects and the solitary nature of the job.

WB: Who are some of your favorite authors?

Peter: Lots of dead favorites, and a few living ones, including Stephen King and Saul Bellow.

WB: What can fans expect from you next?

Peter: My next book, "OBLIVION," comes out next year. It's my first detective novel. I think I can safely say that the detective, Nick Petrov, faces challenges unlike any previous fictional detective. I'm also involved in another new thing for me—a young adult mystery series that I'm really excited about.

WB: Do you do a lot of research for your books?

Peter: Research—it depends what you mean. A lot of it just comes from living. But as for all the little facts, I do what I have to to get them right. I visit places I write about—some, like southern Arizona in "Their Wildest Dreams," have a deep effect on me.

WB: What would you like to do if you weren't a novelist?

Peter: If I wasn't a novelist, I'd like to be a musician.

WB: What advice would you give to aspiring writers?

Peter: My advice to writers, at least those of the narrative kind: Don't watch TV. There's nothing for you

there.

Jennifer Minar is a freelance writer in the health & fitness and writing markets. She is also the founder & managing editor of Writer's Break (

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creative non-fiction writers. Jennifer can be contacted at

Crazy Interview Questions

By Joel Vance

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If you want to get that amazing new job, you are first going to have to learn the answers to common job interview questions. The majority of the interview questions that you have thrown at you will be typical interview fare, but a company may decide to throw you a curve ball in the form of a crazy job interview question. This is starting to happen more and more, it is becoming quite a trend actually, so you need to take some time to learn what these interview questions might be so that you can answer them quickly and in a manner that leads to you getting the job.

There is a method to an employer's madness when they use an 'out of the ordinary' job interview question – and that's to get you thinking fast. In most cases the employer is testing you to see if you can think on your feet or if you are creative enough to work well in this job position. If the interviewer doesn't think you have what it takes because of your answers to the job interview questions, then you will not get the position.

Before you go into any job interview try to keep an open mind. Prep your imagination a bit to get it flowing freely just in case you get some of these crazy job interview questions asked of you. You can't afford to freeze up during an interview; because if you do, it is all over. So go in prepared, or at least as prepared as you can be.

Here are a few of the strange and yet rather common job interview questions that you may run across:

Q) If you were an animal what kind of animal would you choose to be?

Choose an animal that is efficient at everything that it does and one that is often very busy.

Q) What kind of fruit would you be?

You should choose a fruit that tastes good in a fruit salad along with many other fruits. This can be used to show that you are a team player who works well with others all of the time.

Q) What would be the very first thing that you would do if you won the lottery?

This is a gauge of your priorities. Whatever you do don't say you would quit your job.

Think about the answers to these sorts of job interview questions before you go into the interview. This way even if these particular interview questions don't get asked you will still have an idea of the types of answers that you should be giving.

Joel Vance is a Human Resources 17-year HR expert who's taught at 4 major universities around the country and currently has a best selling book on interview questions at

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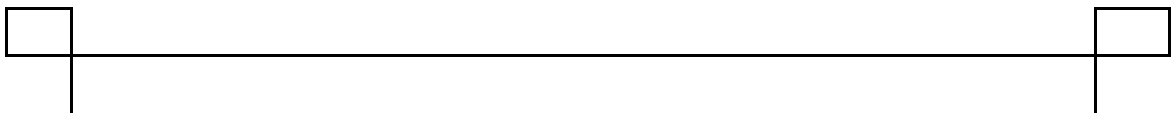
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