

## An Interview with a Devilish Fiction Writer



**Rachel Green** is a 40-something writer from the hills of Derbyshire in England. She lives with her two female partners, their two kids and their two dogs. She was the regional winner of the Undiscovered Authors 2007 competition and her book *An Ungodly Child*, which is about Jasfoup (with a bit about Harold as well), is available here: <http://tinyurl.com/5rxve6>

When she's not writing, Rachel can usually be found learning how to hurt people in interesting ways, or else discussing philosophy with her partners.

TheRightEyedDeer caught up with Rachel at St. Twinings' Tea Shop in Laverstone, UK. TheDeer had lots of questions and kept a decent distance between himself and the Japanese sword.

DEER: *Who are Jafoup and Harold? And can you tell us about the first time you met them?*

RACHEL: I met Harold first, in a dingy little second-hand shop in a prompt from the LiveJournal community 'Musemuggers' in 2003. I wrote a short story about him taking a holiday in the past – 12<sup>th</sup> Century England – by means of tricking a demon into the travel. When I first came across him, Harold was a combination of Harold Steptoe and Lionel Rossiter's 'Rigsby'. Jafoup was a traditional, rather stupid demon. It was a one-off story and I left it to go to other themes but about a month later another prompt encouraged me to return to Harold and his friend the demon Jafoup and write another story, and another. Jafoup developed into the erudite dilettante he is now, and dragged Harold up-market with him.

DEER: *That Japanese sword you brought in here ... what's the fascination?*

RACHEL: I used to be in a group of rapier combat enthusiasts but, after a disagreement with the wife of the sub-instructor, was thrown out. Looking for a new weapon, I took up the study of kobudo – the art of Japanese weapons – many examples of which adorn my walls (between the bookcases). One of those weapons is the katana (the study of which is iai-jutsu), and I found I loved the weapon even more than the rapier. The one you've seen is an antique hand-made sword I had imported, though I use a modern one for practice.

DEER: *I've heard that you write copious quantities of words every day. How did that start? And how many DO you put down on an average day?*

RACHEL: I write as much as I need to. Every day I start with three poems: a cinquain, a haiku and a tanka. I keep up three blogs so I also write 100-500 words for JASFouP's Diary and another 100-250 words for Laverstone Tales. Add in a poem and a picture post for the Dogs Bite blog and a 'what I did today' for my personal blog. If I'm writing a novel I'll also write 2,000 words of that. It started by my taking on too many online writers' forums and writing huge amounts for those. I've dropped it to about six forums now, two of them poetry ones.

DEER: *Philosophy, huh? What's the most difficult philosophical conundrum you've come up against in a conversation?*

RACHEL: The eternal question of religion. The household hides when secular pairs come to the door, for I generally know far more about the bible than they do and will generally lead them away from their 'safe place' into Leviticus 18:22: the anti-gay clause. If they agree with that, I'll ask them about tattoos (19:28) and shaving (21:5) and move on from there.

Actually, I find door-to-door religion useful. When I was writing my pro-Lucifer version of Genesis (*Mourning Light*) I had the Jehovah's Witnesses searching for material for me. Not that I told them why.

DEER: *Have you ever been given any useful writing advice? If so, what was it and who was smart enough to give it to you?*

RACHEL: I used to have a terrible problem with 'its' and 'it's'. After someone patiently pointed out all the incorrect ones in one of my 2,000 word stories, I went away and read several grammar books.

Probably the best advice I've been given, though, was from Terry Pratchett, who said that to be a writer one must write at least 400 words every single day. Sage advice.

To keep up with Rachel, Harold and JASFouP, please visit:

[www.leatherdyke.co.uk](http://www.leatherdyke.co.uk)

<http://leatherdykeuk.blogspot.com/>

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