

A Q&A WITH LORI FOSTER...

**When You Dare, May 2011 (Now on sale!)
Trace of Fever, June 2011 • Savor the Danger, July 2011**

Much of WHEN YOU DARE is set in Kentucky. What part? Why this setting? Does the area have special meaning for you? For your family?

I rarely specify a “real” area when writing books, because I find that too limiting. However, when I set stories in Kentucky, I’m usually thinking of Williamstown because that’s where I spent most of my summers growing up. Being on the lake, boating, skiing, swimming, sunning myself and just plain having a great time, are some of my best memories. My parents had a fishing cabin there—one bedroom, small but open space for eating and sitting—and I loved it. No air conditioning, no heat, but who cared? I learned to ski when I was six, and our routine was to put on our jammies for bed, and in the morning we changed back into bathing suits. Not much else was needed.

Being on a lake makes everything better—especially coffee in the morning. You stand on the deck and watch the fog rise off the lake, and peace just settles around you. It’s perfect.

Where have you lived? How long?

I’ve lived in Ohio all my life. My husband and I grew up here, went to school here, got jobs here, and now we’ve raised our sons here. Actually, though hubby and I didn’t meet until the 3rd day of our sophomore year of high school, we always lived near each other. I love Ohio, especially the suburbs with the small town vibe. I can’t imagine ever moving away from my family. We’re all pretty close—and I like it that way!

Did you enjoy school?

I was not a great student. That is, I got good grades, but never, ever enjoyed school. As an energetic daydreamer, it was an almost painful thing to have to sit still during class. When I hit high school and could pick most of my own classes, I had several writing courses like horror fiction, humor literature, and composition. And I went nuts on art class. Every study hall or free period was spent in the art room. I had an amazing art teacher— a wonderful artist and an eclectic teacher, which was perfect for me.

Have you had other jobs in addition to your writing?

I’ve worked as a cashier at Kroger where one of my jobs was also to clean the break room and bring in carts from the lot – through rain and snow and blistering heat. I worked on an assembly line at Procter & Gamble. I’ve also been a babysitter and house cleaner. In comparison, writing is a dream come true! Sure it’s difficult at times, and it really soaks up the hours, but always, with past jobs as a comparison, I feel so blessed to be able to do what I love, to share it with others, and to be compensated too!

Motherhood—you were able to stay home with your children. How important was it to be able to do that?

I’m one of those women who would have gone stark raving mad if I’d had to turn my kids over to someone else. I’m the supreme mother hen and a world-class worrier. When I think of what other mothers have gone through—many who didn’t have the same opportunity to stay home with their children—it breaks my heart and again, makes me feel so fortunate and blessed. When the kids were younger—before I’d ever published—my husband and I lived on a very tight budget to make it possible for me to be home, but I’ve never regretted that. .



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Do you ever “steal” attributes from your boys or your husband and give them to your characters? What, if anything, have you learned from living in a houseful of men that has helped you develop your men protagonists?

My kids are hilarious—they get that from their dad. They’re also very physical guys, athletic and protective and outspoken. Alphas for sure. So yes, I’ve often stolen lines, actions, or attitudes from them to use in books.

Living with all guys...well, our house drips testosterone, but it’s so fun! They’re forever amusing, and give me the perfect opportunity to witness “guyness” and to appreciate male traits for how they differ from mine.

The family you grew up with—do you have brothers, sisters? If so, are you close? Do they live nearby?

I have an assorted family—which maybe helps explain the less-typical families I write about. I have a sister, step-sister, and a half brother, but none of us thinks in those terms. My stepfather—who passed away recently—was my Dad in every sense of the word. I miss him terribly.

Hubby and I are all about keeping family together and close, so most of the family gatherings happen at our house. We get both sides of the family together as often as we can, which is usually four or five times a year. Depending on nieces and nephews, who has a date and who doesn’t, we can get upwards of 60 people at a time. And we love it! You can never have too much family.

What attributes do you share with Dare and Molly? Of course, Molly is a successful writer, so you have that in common. Anything else?

Molly actually came about because of some reader mail I’d gotten—threatening me. I know readers get very invested in stories, and I’m thrilled that they care so much. Occasionally they write me with their frustrations over something that didn’t go quite how they wanted it to, or because they want a character to have a book, but I don’t have a book for that character. That’s fine—I enjoy hearing from them. But threats? Well, I’ve had a few that crossed the line. That’s not the typical reader, and it can be worrisome.

After one particular threat, the idea for Molly and the elements of the storyline dealing with one of her readers as a suspect took shape in my mind.

I love hearing from readers, whether they liked a book or not. But, just like Molly, I think my privacy is important, too.

How did the first Reader & Author Get Together come about?

Dianne Castell and I wanted to do a “thank you” to the community of readers and writers, and we envisioned it as being very small. We thought if we got a dozen people, we’d be happy—but our first year, we got around 100 attendees.

From there, it’s grown like crazy! We love to visit with other readers and authors, and we know they enjoy it too, so we’ve worked hard to keep the laid-back, easy atmosphere of the event so that lots of chit chat is possible, while at the same time doing something really worthwhile—like donating our raffle money to great local charities and bringing in agents and editors so newer authors can pitch their work to them in person, and longtime readers can get questions answered.

By dipping into our own pockets, and thanks to donations from publishers and agencies, we’ve kept the price a very affordable \$50. This year is our seventh Get Together here in the Cincinnati and Dayton metro area and it will benefit One Way Farm’s Children’s Home. Information is on my site and registration ends May 19th. If you’re reading this in time and want to attend, hurry! And Saturday’s big book signing is open to the public. Come by and see us! <http://www.lorifoster.com/community/readergettogether.php>

What is your professional schedule moving forward?

Currently I’m hard at work on another single title, but ask me in a week or so and that answer could be different. 2011 has been wonderful so far with an anthology in March titled, The Guy Next Door, and then a new single title series out May, June and July—When Your Dare, Trace of Fever, and Savor the Danger, with some part of the hero’s name in each title. (P.S. There’s a bit of a link between The Guy Next Door and my three new novels. Although the books tie together by characters, each can be read alone.)

Also in June is another “benefit anthology,” which is a pet project of mine where proceeds from the anthology go to a local charity. In 2011 the anthology is The Promise of Love and, as do the proceeds from the Seventh Annual Reader & Author Get Together, it will benefit One Way Farm, a home for abused and abandoned children.