

A NEWSLETTER FROM AUTHOR JB CAINE

# THE BUSY QUILL

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# OH THE HORROR!

 @authorjbcaine @realjbcaine

## VAMPIRES AND GHOSTS AND SERIAL KILLERS, OH MY!

### BACK TO WHERE IT ALL BEGAN FOR ME WITH SCARY STORIES...

"Begin at the beginning," said the King in *Alice in Wonderland*, and I shall take his sage advice. The beginning for me, I think, would have to go back to the first paranormal novel I ever read, *Jane-Emily* by Patricia Clapp. *Jane-Emily* is a period piece, set right around the turn of the 20th century, and a marvelous ghost story. It probably would read as a little stylistically dated to modern readers, but I love to re-read it every few years and enjoy the story anew.

It's a story that's written for middle-grade readers, but there are scenes in it that both delighted and terrified me at the same time (I was 10 when I first read it). They weren't gory or violent; they were masterfully-built scenes of suspense and psychological horror, and the delicious joy of being scared and yet safe was something I loved. I couldn't wait to see how the frightening elements of the story would resolve themselves, because I just KNEW they would.

From this novel, I learned the art of suspense, and of sprinkling little clues within the story, punctuated with surprising and scary scenes. I've tried to emulate that technique in all my books, and I think *Arcana Book Two: Rush to Judgement* in particular takes a great deal of influence from Clapp's storytelling style.

### MY FIVE

#### THIS MONTH: HORROR NOVELS THAT INFLUENCED ME

1. JANE-EMILY by Patricia Clapp
2. BAG OF BONES by Stephen King
3. REBECCA by Daphne duMaurier
4. DRACULA by Bram Stoker
5. THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE by Shirley Jackson



# WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH:

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**MY ARTICLE**



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**FEATURED AUTHOR: MARIA DEVIVO**

JBC: CAST YOUR SPELL! GIVE US A BLURB FOR WITCH OF THE BLACK CIRCLE.

MD: During the height of the Satanic Panic, Joephie and her friends discover that sometimes witchcraft is more than just a teenage phase.

JBC: WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR CREATING A WELL- TOLD HORROR STORY?

MD: Some of the essential elements that I think are important for creating a well-told horror story are characters (with believable dialogue), a plot-line that is rooted in realism (even if there are magical elements, the audience needs to be grounded in the world). Creepy elements are also a big factor. It doesn't always have to be about blood, guts, and gore. Psychological horror works just as well.

JBC: WHAT IS IT ABOUT HORROR THAT MAKES IT SO BROADLY APPEALING, EVEN TO FOLKS WHO DON'T "SEEM LIKE THE HORROR TYPE?"

MD: I think what makes horror appealing is that people are naturally curious. There's also an adrenaline rush from being scared. So while it's frightening in the moment, there's that spark of energy/curiosity that often makes people seek out more.