

## In Conversation with Jennifer Oneal Gunn, the Poetess and Story Writer from U.S.A.

**Jennifer Oneal Gunn**, born on January 2, 1979 in Carthage, Missouri, U.S.A, grew up learning and knowing her imagination, it was pretty evident that there was something always inside her waiting to get out. Today, Jennifer writes a plethora of different things from hard core horror that induces nightmares to soft loving poetry. Her titles include *Mystik Legends*, *Devil's in the Details-Reboot*, *Fire, Ice & Blood-The Story of Jake and Holly Book 1 (Revenging the Evil Series)*, *In the Shadows of Darkness (Poetry)*, *The Heart of a Woman (Poetry)*, and other numerous short stories in anthologies for one of the companies she publishes through. She's studied the art of how to write for over twenty years now, which spurred her on to become an editor for a few companies. After a few years, Jennifer is now the Editor in Chief of a company she owns with two business partners named Vigilante Publishing Group LLC.

**Dr. Ajit Kumar** has interviewed Jennifer Oneal Gunn on June 26, 2014 through online mode. She explains her experience being a poetess. She shares her views about her ideas in her poetry and stories. She frankly shares the consequences that exist in her poetry. She also shares her history in the business of Indie writing as well as what she's done in the business itself and her love of Indie artists and writers. She answers each question with great patience.

**Dr. Ajit: Could you please share your early days and education?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** Absolutely. When I was a child, I used to get into trouble for my day-dreaming habits in school. I could stare out window all day, therefore, my education in writing was a slow one, but my love for stories, even in my head grew and grew. As a teen, I really began to love reading, writing, and poetry. I did it almost as habitually as I drew, which was something I loved doing and still do. In college, the grades I made in most of the classes depended on my writing, so I gained loads of practice there and made mostly A's and B's because of it. I am thankful for the learning experiences I gained throughout my life with writing.

**Dr. Ajit:** When did you start writing?

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** When I was a teen it all really began to take shape. At the age of fourteen, I started not only writing poetry but my first novel as well. My first novel isn't published because I don't know if I will ever be happy enough with it to stick it out there for the world. It's a romance novel. Maybe one day though, who knows what the future holds? I know I don't.

**Dr. Ajit: What about reading as a background?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** I have read everything from Shakespeare to Stephen King. I didn't know back then that there were so many Indie writers I would love also, so when I discovered them, I began there, too. The talent I've found out there is amazing. I am also an avid lover of Edgar Allen Poe, Charles Dickens, and many other classic authors. Once you finally get into *A Tale of Two Cities*, it's very worth the read. I got to pick what I wanted to read for my College English Lit class for one of our assignments. We also read Vonnegut, Keats, Tennyson, and many others. Writing as an art form took on new meaning

to me around this time as well. Not all good art is perfect or for everyone.

**Dr. Ajit: How do you view today's literature? What is the recent trend in poetry?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** I think today, at least in America, we have a trend. People don't always use all of their words. I love words, I use them a great deal in my work. More people are more plainly spoken these days and it just doesn't have as much affect as if they were writing in years' past. So, sometimes, I try to see myself in a world older than my own. (That might be strange, but if you believe in past lives, maybe not.) Sometimes, I see myself in many worlds, many time periods, when having such a vast imagination, you tend to live in these places rather than the real world.

**Dr. Ajit: What do you feel about the fiction being turned out today? Does it share the same virtues as earlier in times?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** It depends on who writes it. There is a lot of talent out there, just finding it, is the issue. As you are probably well aware, the market is flooded with people who believe they have a story to tell. While that isn't always the case, I do love finding those gems of writing that pull me in. I do think the market is too wide where it shouldn't be quite so much, but it does leave a wider door than it used to for people who do have talent just not a huge name to go with it yet.

**Dr. Ajit: Should the readers acclaim Jennifer Oneal Gunn as a feminist after the publication of her collection of poems, *The Heart of a Woman (Poetry)*?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** No. I wouldn't say I was a feminist. Really what that anthology is about is a little empowerment, but there is nothing wrong with that. I'm not saying go burn bras in the streets. I'm saying, women should be allowed to show their emotions and be free to do so without shame. There is nothing wrong with a woman's emotions. If I were to give women advice, I would tell them to find a way to express what they feel and not hold it. Doing so can be dangerous and unhealthy. Poetry is one way I let it out when I need to.

**Dr. Ajit:** In your poetry, you explore many ideas through dreams and imagination, don't you?

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** Some of them. Some of my work is just my emotions at the time of sitting down and writing, which helped get those powerful emotions I was feeling out of my system. Occasionally, we have to express ourselves. I sometimes am just in my head, it's hard to say, but sometimes we just have to sit back and think our thoughts in such a way as to come across as a true spirit, a person who is real, human and sometimes similar to others who feel happy, sad, angry, depressed and occasionally tortured and destroyed only to come back strong and full of the life we were meant to lead.

**Dr. Ajit:** What ideas have impressed you a lot for writing the collection of poems *In the Shadows of Darkness (Poetry)*?

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** That anthology is a dark one. Also fused with the darker side of emotion. I know some people aren't brave enough to let the dark side out. It has to come out though. I find poetry different than fiction. It isn't false at the time of writing. When I write it, I feel the emotion I feel whether it's darker emotions or lighter ones.

**Dr. Ajit: Do you feel poetry as the best form for expressing ideas?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** No, not always. I write fiction for that reason also, it is a form of expression in itself. When I write a novel, I get to create a whole world to live in sometimes. And when I'm writing, I live there as much as my characters do. Building worlds is the greatest mental escape I've ever found.

**Dr. Ajit: How do you feel being a poet and writer in U.S.A.?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** I love it. Every day could be a day of expression if I choose for it to be. An artistic, poetic soul just lives and breathes their art in whatever art form they have chosen to express themselves. If our freedom to express ourselves ever gets taken from us, like I've seen in the history books in so many great countries, it will be a sad day.

**Dr. Ajit: What made you want to write the collections of horror stories like *Mystik Legends*, *Devil's in the Details-Reboot*, *Fire, Ice & Blood-The Story of Jake and Holly Book 1 (Revenging the Evil Series)*?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** *Mystik Legends* and *Fire, Ice & Blood* are novels. *Mystik Legends* is technically my first book because it's my first one published. *Fire, Ice & Blood* is part one of a five book series I've been working on for a couple of years now. *Devil's in the Details- Reboot* is a collection of my short stories, written mostly while I had an agent and was waiting to get my first book published. Horror has always been a subject I felt very comfortable with. I know a lot of people think, she's a woman, why would she dare tread where she doesn't belong? I love horror, it's been a fascination of mine for many years. When writing the dark stuff I get to be free to do what we are

scared to do in real life. I get to not hold back the feelings I've felt when something bad happens in life. When it does, I pour it into my writing and just let it all loose. It's my therapy for when life isn't so pleasant, I guess you might say.

**Dr. Ajit: How your own son and daughter view their mother as a writer of horror collections of stories?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** My son is a very 'go with the flow' kind of person so to him it's cool, he just doesn't react much. His friends react more to my writing than he does. He used to be scared of all things that were even remotely scary. My daughter, on the other hand, I think her being only nine is a factor but, she loves it that I have introduced her to some of the elements that made me begin my love affair with the darker world. I have told her stories about how her lullaby used to be *The Phantom of the Opera* (2004) so she loves to watch that. And we occasionally watch some of the cult classic horror movies on TV now that she's old enough to get into some of it. Some of them I still won't watch with her yet.

**Dr. Ajit: Any other idea you view in near future for writing?**

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** I have many ideas and I don't plan on vanishing any time soon. I have a few things always on the back burner that hopefully will one day gain my attention and I can finish them, get them edited, and in front of readers. I have at least one dystopian tale set after the end of the world in 2012 that picks up in the future, in a different type of life for my characters. If I ever get it finished I would call that one a dark fantasy, it has fairies and dragons and magic in it. I love the fact that one writer can explore many different genres of writing, because I have had the pleasure of doing this myself over the years and it's pretty fun.

**Dr. Ajit:** Any message would you like to give to your readers and young writers?

**Jennifer O. Gunn:** Keep reading. The world needs more readers in it. One of the reasons I do what I do, is the joy of helping taking someone out of the real world and thrusting them into a new one, even if for just a little while. I not only hope to entertain but to help a reader in knowing there are other worlds out there, all you have to do is open the book. Thank you for having me in today, it has been a pleasure and an honor. I hope your day is well and that you have a blessed afternoon or evening.

**Dr. Ajit Kumar** holds his Ph.D. on Doris Lessing from Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, India. He has got his many research papers published in National and International Refereed Journals and Anthologies of English Studies. He has presented good number of research papers in National and International Conferences and Seminars. He has completed his two edited books on British Female Authors and Doris Lessing. He has written Introduction and Textual Notes of Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* too. He has also been honoured with Best Research Paper Award in World Conference AIAER-2010. He has four years teaching experience at University and college level.