

## Wild on Books

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Interview



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**Interviewed By:** Jennifer A. Ray

### **Interview Questions:**

#### **QUESTION 1.**

**Jennifer:** Hi Eden! Thanks for agreeing to interview with Wild on Books. I have personally enjoyed every one of your stories I've read so far, and it is a pleasure to interview you.

Many authors say they find their inspiration in dreams, from music, or from people-watching. How do you find inspiration for your novels?

**Eden:** Music always inspires me, in that I use it a lot to set a mood while I'm writing. And I have dreamed the premises for two of my books. But ultimately, my story ideas and characters seem to spring out of nowhere-it's a mystery to me. As long as it doesn't stop happening, I'm fine with that!

#### **QUESTION 2.**

**Jennifer:** What determines whether the story will be a full-length novel or a novella? Do you prefer one over the other?

**Eden:** At this point in my career I have to contract two books (full length novels) at a time with Bantam, so that determines the kind of ideas I have to come up with, to some extent. Some stories lend themselves to longer or shorter length. My characters for a novel usually have to be more complex. I don't write 'plotty' books-mine are almost entirely character-driven, so for me, that's the crucial element.

I do still get to write novellas once in a while, and I love that! Condensing a full story into a shorter length is challenging, but I really enjoy doing it. There can be an intensity to a shorter story, like my novella, THE ART OF DESIRE, in my recently released anthology, HOT NIGHTS, DARK DESIRES. Those characters are actually very complicated people, and the relationship is extremely intense from the first moment they meet-in a novella, you have to jump right into the action!

#### **QUESTION 3.**

**Jennifer:** Do you have 'soundtracks' for your stories while you are writing them with songs that embody the mood of the book?

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**Eden:** Absolutely! My soundtrack for THE ART OF DESIRE was a lot of heavy rock and grunge music-dark, moody stuff, which is some of my favorite music. I was listening to a lot of Alice in Chains (one of the greatest bands of all time, IMO), Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Godsmack, Nine Inch Nails, Faith No More...

### QUESTION 4.

**Jennifer:** Your stories are usually in the romantic BDSM genre, and show a very intriguing side of BDSM. What, if any, boundaries do you have when you write a BDSM love story?

**Eden:** My first two novels, THE DARK GARDEN and THE DARKER SIDE OF PLEASURE, as well as my novella, SANCTUARY, in the Berkley Heat EXCLUSIVE anthology, and my novella with Phaze ([www.Phaze.com](http://www.Phaze.com)), BREAKING SKYE, are all BDSM-themed books, although I do write other themes. But I love the powerful dynamics between people within a relationship exploring BDSM. For me, it's about the power exchange, which brings an intensity to the relationship, and forces people to be incredibly vulnerable with each other. I think the boundaries are set by the characters and what the dynamic is between them. But as far as the actual fetish practices, I'll explore bondage, pain play, slave psychology. I'm comfortable with pretty extreme material, although that's not necessary to telling a good story. My only real boundaries are those set by the BDSM community credo, which is that all behavior must be Safe, Sane and Consensual.

### QUESTION 5.

**Jennifer:** Your latest release, **THE ART OF DESIRE**, in the anthology **HOT NIGHTS, DARK DESIRES** centers around a couple's shared passion for tattoos. I know you have some ink yourself. What tattoos do you have now? Do they have a special meaning for you? Are you planning any new tattoos?

**Eden:** I have several tattoos-I'm a bit obsessed with body art. I have a tiny cherry blossom on my right ankle (the only one that hurt!), some Kanji (Chinese symbols) down the back of my neck, and this year I had an incredible cover piece done. Originally it was a pegasus on my left hip/upper buttock, which I had done when I was 18. It was terrible work and I'd been looking for years for the right artist to do the cover work. I finally found my artist, a woman in San Francisco who also tattoos my friend, author Lillian Feisty. My new tattoo is a Hindu goddess, the White Tara. It's a large piece and incredibly detailed. It's not quite finished yet-I go back in August to have the color done. You can see pics of all my tattoos on my blog: [www.EdenBradley.blogspot.com](http://www.EdenBradley.blogspot.com) on the May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008 post. All of my tattoos have some personal meaning for me-they have to, since they'll be on my skin for the rest of my life! Do I plan to get more? Well, I'm pretty well inked already, but never say never!

### QUESTION 6.

**Jennifer:** Speaking of **HOT NIGHTS, DARK DESIRES**, can you tell us a bit about your story in that anthology?

**Eden:** My story is THE ART OF DESIRE. Since I'm so obsessed with tattoos myself, I'd wanted to write a character with the same fascination for a long time. Sophie has had a repressive upbringing and she's trying hard to break free from those restrictions. A writer of vampire and ghost stories, she's lived a gypsy life, moving from one place to the next. When she moves to New Orleans, she falls in love with the city. And that's

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where she meets Tristan, a tattoo artist with a shadowed past. The attraction is immediate, intense, and she can't fight the urge to be tattooed any longer. But Sophie's fascination with tattoos runs deeper than even she ever imagined. She doesn't want to stop-being tattooed, or being with the sexy and mysterious Tristan. Is it a real connection with Tristan? The magic of New Orleans? The force of her own desires finally being brought to the surface? Or the irresistible combination of it all?

#### **QUESTION 7.**

**Jennifer:** What kind of research do you do for your stories?

**Eden:** I love to do research and can get lost in it for hours! I write a lot about fetishes and have done quite a bit of research, which includes reading books, searching out information on the Internet, talking to people involved in different fetish lifestyles and visiting some... interesting...places.

In my upcoming October novel, *FORBIDDEN FRUIT*, my heroine, Mia Rose Curry, is a sociology professor who teaches a class on alternative sexuality, so I had to be accurate in the theories she addresses in the classroom. I spent hours reading Freudian and Jungian theories on sexuality. I'd studied sociology, cultural anthropology and psychology myself in college, but I needed a refresher course.

Of course, some of the things I write about come from personal experience, like my tattoo story. I've always had a fascination with some of the more unusual and extreme lifestyles, and have led an interesting life, so there's a pretty good pool of experience to draw from. I think everything we do in life: traveling, meeting people, hobbies, all turns up in our writing, so life experience is the best research source.

#### **QUESTION 8.**

**Jennifer:** Do you have any advice for readers curious about experimenting with BDSM?

**Eden:** Yes! Learn all you can about it before taking that first step. Always put your personal safety first. There can be both physical and emotional consequences, even from mild bedroom play, and this can happen whether you want to be a Top or a bottom, so learn enough to know what to expect. There are some excellent resources on my website.

#### **QUESTION 9.**

**Jennifer:** I see that several of your books will be translated into German and Romanian. You must be very excited to garner such international exposure. Are you planning any events such as book signings in those countries to publicize the release in those languages?

**Eden:** I wish I could! My great grandmother was Romanian and I'd love to visit. I hear it's a beautiful country.

I'm very excited about the book translations and can't wait to see what they do with the covers. Of course, I won't be able to read any of it!

#### **QUESTION 10.**

**Jennifer:** I have to say, you've had some beautiful covers, but my personal favorite is for ***THE DARKER SIDE OF PLEASURE***, which is the one with a woman's hands tied together with a pink satin ribbon. It is intriguing, sexy, and alludes to the BDSM theme without

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being overt. Do you have a favorite cover? How much input have you had into your book covers?

**Eden:** I've had no input on my covers at Bantam-luckily they have an amazing art department. THE DARKER SIDE OF PLEASURE, which is my second Bantam book (a three-novella BDSM anthology), was probably my favorite for a long time, too, but I have to say I'm in love with my cover for my October release, FORBIDDEN FRUIT-which everyone can see on my website.

I'm a huge art geek, so I'm very emotionally invested in my covers. I've been incredibly lucky!

### **QUESTION 11.**

**Jennifer:** What do you like to read? Do you stick to the romance genre, or do you read other fiction as well?

**Eden:** I read almost everything!

I'm an old sci-fi fan and recently I've been reading Elizabeth Bear-an incredible writer! I read women's fiction and literary fiction-I like the gritty stuff! But I also sometimes need a break from the drama-my own writing included!-so I read a lot of chick lit. My critique partner of 6 ½ years, Gemma Halliday, writes hysterical stuff, and I'm just finishing a Jane Porter novel and loving it!

### **QUESTION 12.**

**Jennifer:** Of course, that last question brings me to ask who your favorite authors are?

**Eden:** My favorite author ever is Tanith Lee. She writes sci-fi, horror and erotica. Her work is dark and so sensual and beautiful-she's had a lot of influence on my own writing voice. In romance and erotic romance I love Jennifer Cruisic, Megan Hart, MJ Rose, Nalini Singh, Portia da Costa-so many it's hard to know where to start!

### **QUESTION 13.**

**Jennifer:** Who or what inspired you to begin writing?

**Eden:** I come from a family of writers. My father did some screenwriting and my mother was a freelance journalist. They were also huge readers, as was my grandmother, so books have always been a big part of my life.

I took a creative writing class in the summer between third and fourth grades, and that's when I wrote my first stories. I had a wonderful teacher, Mrs. Eddy, and she was so encouraging, so part of the credit must go to her!

### **QUESTION 14.**

**Jennifer:** When you aren't writing or reading, how do you like to spend your time?

**Eden:** Does shoe shopping count? I can spend hours on Zappos.com! But I do get out of the house occasionally. I love to go to the beach and lie on the sand reading a good book, and to visit museums and galleries. I also love to travel and hope to do more of it-I need to see Greece and Italy in the worst way!

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I also developed a new hobby last year, making ATC's (artist trading cards). These are small pieces of mixed media art-I'm crazy about it! And through that I've discovered altered books, which I'm dying to try as soon as my writing schedule loosens up a bit.

#### **QUESTION 15.**

**Jennifer:** Do you write full-time or do you have a 'day' job as well?

**Eden:** I'm a full time writer. I'm very lucky!

#### **QUESTION 16.**

**Jennifer:** What awards have you earned? What do you feel has been your greatest accomplishment so far?

**Eden:** My debut novel, THE DARK GARDEN was a Romantic Times Top Pick and a Reviewers Choice nominee, and was a Golden Quill finalist. My other books are too new for anything yet!

Honestly, my greatest achievement is just writing a book that I love, and that my agent and editor love enough to get it published.

#### **QUESTION 17.**

**Jennifer:** How is writing erotica different from writing romance?

**Eden:** For me, writing erotic fiction is about more than just writing sex. The sex itself is almost a sub plot which moves the story, the character arc and the relationship forward. While I think any love scene in any sort of book should accomplish the same things, it's a crucial, underlying element in erotic fiction.

#### **QUESTION 18.**

**Jennifer:** Are there 'rules' you adhere to in your stories?

**Eden:** Every scene must serve a purpose-nothing extraneous, and that includes the sex scenes. If something doesn't work, doesn't do it's job, it gets cut, no matter how in love with it I may be.

#### **QUESTION 19.**

**Jennifer:** Your upcoming release, **FORBIDDEN FRUIT**, sounds very tempting... What can you tell us about it?

**Eden:** FORBIDDEN FRUIT, which will be out October 26<sup>th</sup>, is my food fetish book, and it was a lot of fun to write! It's a sensual tale, and the research was definitely interesting-there was a stash of strawberries and whipped cream in my house for months...

I am totally in love with the hero, Jagger James. He's modeled on Lenny Kravitz, although I'm sure readers will develop their own image of him. He's very laid back, very cool, very sexy. I love all my heroes, but he's become a favorite.

Here's the blurb:

*Sometimes the forbidden...  
is irresistible...*

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*One taste is never enough.*

For university professor Mia Rose Curry, it was all academic: her course in alternate sexuality was a safe, socially-acceptable way for her to talk about the things she desires most—but has never let herself experience. And while students crammed into her class to learn about fetishes, bondage, voyeurism and much more, Mia kept her own raging desires, and her most private fantasies, carefully under wraps...until one student undressed her with his eyes...

Jagger James is everything Mia wants and everything taboo, yet Mia can't help imagining drawing closer and closer to this forbidden fruit. She soon discovers how much Jagger wants her, demanding she abandon every inhibition with him. Now, they are about to take a dangerous step, tempting each other's flesh, savoring every touch and breaking every rule in the book—knowing that this dazzling, sensual feast is only a taste of something more to come...

**QUESTION 20.**

**Jennifer:** You have books published through several different publishers. What is different about working with each publishing house? What is the same?

**Eden:** Each editor has their own style of working, and some are more hands-on than others. My Bantam editor is nothing less than brilliant. I always have revisions, but everything she says makes for a better book—I've learned so much from her. So, while it's a difficult process and I may have more revisions than I would at another publishing house, she's made me a better writer, so I can't complain about it.

The biggest differences have been between e-publishing and print publishing. Print takes so much longer to get a book on the shelf, and the revision and editing process has been more intense for me. But you also have a bit more freedom in e-publishing as far as content—the e-pubs can afford to take more risks, which is always fun for a writer.

I've worked with some wonderful publishing houses, both print and e-pub, so the commonalities are attention to detail, good editing, and I've had wonderful experiences in both arenas.

**QUESTION 21.**

**Jennifer:** Your upcoming release, **FORBIDDEN FRUIT**, sounds very tempting... What can you tell us about it?

**Eden:** (repeat of question #19)

**QUESTION 22.**

**Jennifer:** Can you tell us anything about your other works in progress?

**Eden:** I just finished my next Bantam novel, currently titled **A 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY COURTESAN**. This book was really different for me. It's written in 1st person, which can be wonderful and difficult at the same time. But because my heroine is a high class call girl, I felt 1<sup>st</sup> person was necessary in order to let the reader right into her head. Strangely enough, there's a lot

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of me in this character-not that I've ever been a prostitute! But some of her issues, her personality, are very much me.

A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COURTESAN is about Valentine Day, a modern-day call girl who serves the wealthy elite of the world. There is a secret to her success, one which keeps her in this lifestyle long after the allure of the money begins to fade. But when she meets Joshua Spencer, her world comes crashing down around her, and she can no longer continue the life she's known for almost ten years.

It's a deeply psychological book-my heroine even goes to therapy. It's also extremely intense emotionally and sexually. This is probably my favorite book of mine!

Next up is another Bantam novel about Shibari, the Japanese art of rope bondage-and it really is an art. I'm looking forward to writing fetish material again and really getting into the power play. I've done my basic character outlines for this book, but that's it so far, so the adventure begins soon! And in between I'm going to attempt my first male/male erotic romance, a short novella currently titled GYPSY.

### **QUESTION 23.**

**Jennifer:** Do you usually write with a critique partner, or is your editor the first to see your stories?

**Eden:** I've been working with my critique partner, chick lit mystery author Gemma Halliday, for 6 ½ years. I've also begun to work with Lillian Feisty this year, an amazing erotic romance author. And I have a few beta readers, including author R.G. Alexander, who just read A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY COURTESAN for me. I know I'm not objective enough about my own work to see everything, so I don't let anything out the door until they've looked at it. I don't know what I'd do without them!

### **QUESTION 24.**

**Jennifer:** What would your fans be interested or surprised to learn about you?

**Eden:** Hmm...I'm pretty open about everything, so there's not a lot left to tell! Maybe that despite the consistently dark tone of my work, my tattoos, my experience with the BDSM lifestyle, I'm actually a very cheerful person-I've even been called perky! And I have a really strong Valley Girl accent, so it's pretty hard for people to see my dark side when they meet me in person. There is just nothing serious about a Valley Girl accent.

### **QUESTION 25.**

**Jennifer:** Is there anything else you would like to share with us today?

**Eden:** Thanks so much for having me!

If anyone wants news and updates about my books, appearances, or the odd things

currently happening in my life, they can visit my website: [www.EdenBradley.com](http://www.EdenBradley.com)

my blog: [www.edenbradley.blogspot.com](http://www.edenbradley.blogspot.com)

or my MySpace page: [www.myspace.com/edenbradley](http://www.myspace.com/edenbradley)

