

## THE MAKING OF . . .

MANEATER was never meant to have a sequel. Some reviewers and readers suggested the novel's "open ending" set up a follow-up. But it wasn't my intention. I just like that kind of ending. I had nothing more to say about Laura Greenacre, John Thorn, or the Templeton family.

When Snowbooks asked if I'd be writing a "part two", I said that although I'd never say "never", I wasn't planning to. I was into *Skarlet* by then, which was the first part of a trilogy, a long book, so I wasn't really thinking about *Maneater*. It had been published, I was overjoyed, and I'd moved on to the next project.

But Snowbooks' query planted a seed in my imagination. While writing *Skarlet* I did start to think about Laura, and Thorn, and Ruth, and Procter – the characters that still seemed to have something to say after *Maneater*.

And by the time I'd completed *Skarlet* in September 2008, I'd decided to seriously think about *Maneater Part 2*.

I like to have a good setting for a novel. Characters and story are the most important factors, but setting's up there, too. I like to use real places most of the time. I think it's useful to do that when you're writing in a fantastical genre such as horror. Seeing werewolves run amok in Trafalgar Square is more authentic than having them run around a made-up square in a made-up city, I think. Watching a vampire hang off Big Ben is more real than if the landmark is fictional.

So I chose New York. Not for any reason other than it was a great city with lots of wonderful landmarks that I could use.

*Maneater* ended with Ruth Andersson/Templeton finding Lawrence Procter in Moscow. She gets injected with Laura Greenacre's blood and is likely to become a werewolf. I had to start the sequel there, really.

My Russian hero, Lev Dasaev, is named for two great Soviet-era goalkeepers. Lev Yashin was the intimidating black-clad keeper regarded by many as the best goalie ever. He played for the Soviet Union in the 1950s and 1960s. Rinat Dasaev was one of the world's great goalkeepers of the 1980s – *the* finest at that time, I think. But he is best remembered for a goal he let in – Marco van Basten's astonishing volley for Holland in the final of the 1988 European Championships.

The plot of *Prey* came quite easily. It stemmed from Ruth's lust for vengeance. I did find it difficult to bring John Thorn into the story at the beginning. During much of the first draft, he was sat in his smallholding in the Welsh mountains waiting for something to happen – and nothing much did. It was only when I put him and his daughter, Sophie, in peril that his story started to develop.

I started writing *Prey* on January 12, 2009, and completed the first draft ten weeks later on March 20.

My first drafts are always rough. I usually take my outline and write and write, ploughing on, not stopping for mistakes, not stopping to check facts – I just fly through. When the first draft was done, the real work started. It's like chiseling at a piece of concrete, hoping you'll get a nice shape out of it at the end.

Well, it took nearly three months of chiseling until I had something that I could think of sending to Snowbooks. And now, you're holding it in your hands. A book, really, that was never meant to be.

I think the story of Laura and Thorn is at an end now. There's nothing more to say. I can't see another sequel. But, like I said, "Never say never."

