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Kent alumni publishes first book

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Written by Joseph Langan

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Inspired by Josephine Tey's "Daughter of Time", and conjuring new stories of Richard III, Karla Tipton set out to write her own novel on the English king. Her debut book, "Rings of Passage", is a cross-genre romance released Aug. 19 by Lazy Day Publishing.

"I've always been interested in English history," Tipton said. "I wanted to write a time-travel novel, since I was so into the history and doing research on Richard III."

Her fondness for the time period allowed her mind to wander into possibilities, revamping the setting into an alternate history.

After graduating from Kent State with a degree in journalism, Tipton left the comforts of her Ohio town to take an internship with Antelope Valley Press in California. She went on to work for them as a staff writer and editor for 14 years.

However, shifting gears from journalistic to creative writing wasn't easy for Tipton.

"When I first started writing fiction, I had to get away from the factual side of it," she said.

Halfway through the writing of her novel, to help cement historical accuracy, Tipton planned a trip to England and stayed there for a month, walking in the shoes of her protagonist, Anise Wynford, and visiting the locations Anise goes through in the novel. Tipton's journey led her to Middleham Castle and through Bosworth Field, where Richard III was slain in battle.

"That was very emotional, going to the place that he died," Tipton said.

Her book follows 21st century Anise as she stumbles from Massachusetts into a medieval forest, where she awakens in the presence of a gallant knight. Their love is instantaneous, but tender love turns sour when Anise realizes this knight is really Richard III who is destined to die in the Battle of Bosworth Field. She's then confronted with the ultimate question: If she chooses to save her lover's life, will the course of history be altered forever?

Among her literary inspirations, Tipton lists Charles Dickens, as well as fellow Kent alumni and fantasy author, Steven R. Donaldson.

Tipton is a member of Romance Writers of America and is currently polishing her next novel, "Dangerous Reflections", set in Edwardian England in the year 1910. She calls her next work "Harry Potter, but for adults."

Beyond her novel, Tipton said she plans to make her future more successful.

"I think a lot of what has happened in the publishing industry is e-books are becoming more available on devices and people wanting to read them on devices has really helped writers," Tipton said. "They don't have to rely on New York publishing houses deciding you fit into one particular market that they think they can sell."

Tipton offered a few words of encouragement for aspiring writers.

"You never know what will happen," Tipton said. "Keep writing and keep at it."

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