

SIDNEY SHELDON ONE OF THE FAMOUS AMERICAN WRITERS

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Abstract:

Sidney Sheldon is one of the representatives of modern American literature. His works are very interesting and attract the readers. His novels were translated into 51 languages among them the Russian translations are also known to Uzbek readers.

Key words: his biography, literary activity, nominations, his best works, femininity,

Try to live the Earth a better place than when you arrived.

Sidney Sheldon

Sidney Sheldon was born in Chicago Illinois on February 11 in 1917. He began writing as a youngster and at the age of ten he made his first sale of poem for \$10. During the depression, he worked at the variety of jobs and while attending Northwestern University he contributed short plays to drama groups.

A master storyteller, Sheldon regarded his becoming a writer as something of a miracle. "I was born in Chicago during the Depression and both my parents were third grade drop-outs," he recalled. "My father never read a book in his life and I was the only one in the family to complete high school". At seventeen, he decided to try his luck in Hollywood. The only job he could find was as a reader of prospective film material at Universal Pictures. At night he wrote his own screenplays. During World War II he served as a pilot in the Army Air Corps. After the war he established a reputation as being a prolific writer in the New York Theatre community. The musicals which he wrote at this point of his career were "Merry Widow", "Jackpot" and "Dream with Music" which he wrote for Broadway stage.



His success on Broadway brought him back to Hollywood where his first assignment was “The Bachelor and the Bobby-Soxer” which earned him an Academy Award for best original screenplay of 1947. In the early 1960s when the movie industry was hurting because of television's popularity, Sheldon decided to make a switch. "I suppose I needed money," he remembered. "I met Patty Duke one day at lunch and stated producing "The Patty Duke Show," (that starred Duke playing two identical cousins). I did something nobody else in TV ever did at that time. For seven years, I wrote almost every single episode of the series." In 1969 Sheldon wrote his first novel “The Naked Face” which earned him a nomination for the “Edgar Allan Poe Award” from the “Mystery Writers of America” in the category of “Best First Novel”. His next novel, “The Other Side of Midnight”, climbed to #1 on “The New York Times Best Seller list” as did several ensuing novels, a number of which were also made into motion pictures or TV miniseries. His novels often featured determined women who persevere in a tough world run by hostile men. The novels are full of suspense and thrill. The readers cannot take off from finishing the novel as the novelist grabs the entire attention of readers. They contain a lot of devices to keep the reader turning the page:” I try to write my books so the reader can't put them down," he explained in a 1982 interview. "I try to construct them so when the reader gets to the end of a chapter, he or she has to read just one more chapter. It's the technique of the old Saturday afternoon serial: leave the guy hanging on the edge of the cliff at the end of the chapter.

Most of his readers were women. Asked why this was the case he said: "I like to write about women who are talented and capable, but most important, retain their femininity. Women have tremendous power — their femininity, because men can't do without it."

His protagonists were usually women, and often had revenge in mind. His books were called 'trashy' or 'melodramatic' by critics, but were always best-sellers. In “The Other Side of Midnight” a woman spends years plotting vengeance on a man who betrayed her; in “If Tomorrow Comes” a woman seeks revenge after being convicted of a crime she did not commit; in “Rage of Angels” a female attorney is falsely accused of being involved with organized crime. Sheldon also tried science fiction with “The Doomsday Conspiracy”.



Books were Sheldon's favorite medium. "I love writing books," he commented. "Movies are a collaborative medium, and everyone is second-guessing you. When you do a novel, you're on your own. It's a freedom that doesn't exist in any other medium."

Sheldon's books including titles like "Rage of Angels," "The Other Side of Midnight," "Master of the Game" and "If Tomorrow Comes," provided him with his greatest fame. They featured cleverly plots with sensuality and a high degree of suspense.

"In Rage of Angel", I let a little boy die and I began to get hate mail. One woman was so upset that she wrote to me from the east and begged me to call her. She said she couldn't sleep and wanted to know why I let the little boy die. It got so bad that when I did the miniseries, I let him live."

"The part of my writing I find the most rewarding is when people write to me or speak to me in public to tell me how his or her life has been changed by my books. I received a letter from a girl in a hospital telling me that she had suffered a massive heart attack at the age of 21 and had felt that she just wanted to give up and die. She wouldn't see her parents or her boyfriend. She just wanted to get her life over with. Then someone left a copy of "The Other Side of Midnight" on her bed. She picked it up and began to read. She got so caught up in the characters and the story that she forgot about herself and felt ready to begin facing life again."

Sheldon had few fans among highbrow critics, whose reviews of his books were generally reproachful of both Sheldon and his readers. Sheldon however remained undeterred, promoting the novels and himself with warm enthusiasm.

A big, cheerful man, he bragged about his work habits. Unlike other novelists who toil over typewriters or computers, Sheldon would dictate fifty pages a day to a secretary or a tape machine. He would correct the pages the following day and dictate another fifty pages continuing the routine until he had between 1,200 to 1,500 pages. "Then I would do a complete rewrite 12 to 15 times," he said. "Sometimes I would spend a whole year rewriting."

Many college students, working men and women like to read the novels of Sidney Sheldon. Once they come to know, that there was a new release of the novel, they immediately purchase the novel and begin to enjoy reading of the novel.



Sidney Sheldon novels are very close to real life. The story line is always close to reality in a way what we see and listen in day-to-day life. Readers thoroughly understand the novelist and cannot give up reading the novels of Sidney Sheldon. Sheldon prided himself on the authenticity of his novels. During a 1987 interview he remarked that: "If I write about a place, I have been there. If I write about a meal in Indonesia, I have eaten there in that restaurant. I don't think you can fool the reader."

For his novel "Windmills of the Mind," that dealt with the CIA, he interviewed former CIA chief Richard Helms, traveled to Argentina and Romania, and spent a week in Junction City, Kansas where the book's heroine had lived. After a career that had earned him a "Tony", an "Oscar" and an "Emmy" (for "I Dream of Jeannie"),

Each of his successive novels, "A Stranger in the Mirror", "Rage of Angels", "Bloodline", "Master of the Game", "If Tomorrow Comes", "Windmills of the Gods", "The Sands of Time", "Memories of Midnight", "The Doomsday Conspiracy", "The Stars Shine Down", "Nothing Last Forever", "Morning, Noon & Night", "The Best Laid Plans", "Tell Me Your Dreams", "The Sky is Falling", and "Are You Afraid of the Dark?" have been mega sellers in both hardcover and paperback. He also wrote a memoir, "The Other Side of Me". Sheldon was an avid crusader against all forms of censorship and has been a strong advocate for freedom of the press.

One of his famous novel "The Other Side of Midnight" is beginning of the "Memories of Midnight". The story focuses on two women: beautiful Noelle Page and shy Catherine Alexander. They both loved one man ,RAF pilot named Larry Douglas. But Larry and Catherine married, unaware of Noelle's plans for vengeance against the man who left her so carelessly. Larry's lies gradually entwine the lives of these two women in a dazzling story of passion, vengeance, power and greed.

Sheldon's one more famous novel "A Stranger in the Mirror" was written in 1976 novel. The novel is one of the earliest Sheldon's works, but contains the typical Sheldon fast-paced narration and several narrative techniques with the exception of a twist ending. The novel tells the life story of two fictitious Hollywood celebrities Toby Temple and Jill Castle, portrays the emotional extremes of success and failure and how people inevitably become victims of time.



Another his work “Are You Afraid of the Dark?” is written in 2004. In this work author described that in four cities across the world, four people died violently and mysteriously. The dead share a single crucial link: each was connected to an all-powerful environmental think tank. Two of the victims' widows—accomplished artist Diane Stevens and international supermodel Kelly Harris—may hold the key to their husbands' demise. Terrified for their lives, suspicious of each other, and armed only with their own wits and guile, they must join forces in a nightmare cycle of hunt-and-kill. At stake is the shattering truth about the tragedies that robbed them of the men they loved...and about an awesome conspiracy whose ultimate target is as big as the earth and as close as the air we breathe.

Sheldon was married for 30 years to Jorja Curtright, a stage and film actress who later became an accomplished and well-known interior designer. She appeared in a Season One episode of "I Dream of Jeannie" and died 20 years later of a heart attack in 1985. He then remarried Alexandra Kostoff, a former child actress and advertising executive of Bulgarian origin, in Las Vegas in 1989. His daughter, Mary Sheldon, became a novelist in her own right.

She graduated of Wellesley College, has followed her father's footsteps into the literary world. A published poet at age eight, her first novel, Perhaps, “I'll Dream of Darkness”, was published by Random House and won the “Brandeis University Library Association Award”.

Sheldon died January 30, 2007 of complications from pneumonia at Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage

His daughter described him such a beautiful words :

“Calm and strong. These are two other things that my father was. By rights, he shouldn't have had either of those qualities — he was by nature very emotional and very sensitive; he rarely slept and he suffered from bi-polar disorder. But seeing him, talking to him, you would never have guessed that there was any angst in him at all. He was a fountain of enthusiasm and ebullience and positive thought. When you asked him how he was, his inevitable response was a warm and heartfelt, "I'm Wonderful." Even in the last year, when he was patently not wonderful, the most he would ever admit to was a cheerful, "I'm Fine."



And what was Papa's own favorite story? What story did the Master Storyteller live his life by? I think it was this one. It's a story about two men in Africa being chased by a lion. The first man turns to the second in a panic, yelling, "What are we going to do?" "Climb a tree," says the other instantly. The first man looks around at the flat grassland in despair. "But there is no tree." The second man smiles at him and says, "You're wrong, my friend. There has to be a tree." My father always found his tree. Many times, he planted it on the veldt himself through his endlessly hard work, and his endlessly wonderful imagination. Many times, he simply trusted luck, jumping up into the air, and, somehow, managing to cling to a branch invisible to the rest of us. Other times, I like to think it was the love of his family which provided a comforting perch away from the snarling lions.

And, in turn, he gave us a tree — himself. Thank you, Papa. For the rest of my life, I know I will find shade and inspiration there.

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