

Question and Answer with Rachel Amphlett, author of *White Gold*

1. What can you tell us about *White Gold*?

White Gold tells the story of Dan Taylor – geologist, ex-soldier, and lost cause. When Sarah Edgewater’s ex-husband is murdered by a radical organisation hell-bent on protecting their assets, she turns to Dan for help. Together, they must unravel the research notes which Sarah’s ex-husband left behind to locate an explosive device which is circumnavigating the globe towards London – and time is running out.

In a fast-paced ecological thriller which spans the globe, from the UK to Australia and back via the Arctic Circle, Dan and Sarah aren’t just chasing the truth – they’re chasing a bomb which, if detonated, will change the future of alternative energy research and the centre of England’s capital forever.

2. Where did you get the idea for *White Gold*?

A few years ago I read an article by a UK newspaper about super-conducted heated metals but from a different angle to what I’ve done in the book. The original article was enough to get me thinking about what would happen if someone tried to do something a little less charitable with the knowledge though, and it went from there.

The story grew in my head until I had an idea of the owner of a powerful company using the technology to scare people away from alternative energy and doing anything it takes to destroy people that get in his way.

It soon turned into an international race against the clock, with a few plot twists thrown in for good measure!

3. Tell us about the protagonist and antagonist in the story – what will readers like about them/hate about them?

The protagonist, Dan Taylor, could be best described as damaged goods – and probably a bit selfish with it. The story takes him from being a broken man to facing his demons and dealing with it. The antagonist, Morris Delaney, is a sociopath whose only focus is how to protect his organisation’s interests – no matter what it takes.

4. What research did you need to do for this book?

I had to learn about how to diffuse a bomb, whether it was possible for a ship to traverse the Arctic at that particular time of year, what it was like being in Iraq as a soldier, what happens when a house is destroyed by an explosion – pretty much everything I wrote about had an element of research!

Luckily, I'm familiar with many of the locations in the book (apart from the Arctic!) and so I could draw on experience for scenes in places such as London, Oxford, Singapore and Brisbane.

I did read an interesting quote by Lee Child on his website that only about 10% of the research you do ends up in your book. I think that's about right for the style of writing I'm doing – I want to keep the pace moving, rather than losing my readers in a bunch of facts.

5. How did you get interested in the crime thriller genre?

I've been reading from a very early age so by about 13 I was bored with what YA fiction was around at the time. My Grandad got me started on the Dick Francis books and then I devoured his copy of Jack Higgins' *The Eagle has Landed* – it's still one of my favourite books today. I've been reading thrillers ever since (although there's plenty of other books I enjoy reading too).

My writing is also influenced by my love of film. I grew up with films like 'Raiders of the Lost Ark' and 'Romancing the Stone', and together with a healthy addiction to travelling, I think that's where the element of international adventure comes from.