

Behind The Scenes

Here are my thought processes and life experiences that've gone into the eBook "Loose Threads."

I drove a taxi in Vancouver, BC for 27 years. The night shift began in midafternoon and ended in the wee hours of the morning. I'd wrestle the rush-hour traffic to get folks from point A to point B.

As the night deepened the traffic thinned. My customers forgot about day jobs and turned their minds to recreational frills. They looked forward to "live" concerts, laughing with friends, candlelight dinners or getting high as kites. Some folks would swear they had a wonderful weekend, even when they couldn't recall a thing. After midnight the odd loser would fall asleep or even get belligerent.

Luckily I was never seriously injured from psycho customers or errant vehicles, considering the number of times my cab was totaled by drunk or berserk drivers.

Ladies of the night taught me the shortcuts and back-alley routes. Their motives were to save money on the meter. I gained more over the long run since I earned the fine points that made me a better cabdriver.

Hookers were honest to a fault. They didn't always tell the whole truth, but they didn't outright lie. They couldn't afford to, because they worked in a graymarket that society keeps "under the rug." Without standard price tags or government seals of approval, hookers have only themselves to trade.

One night I drove across Vancouver's busiest bridge. I trailed the car ahead. Its brake lights flashed. The passenger door opened and out tumbled a body. The driver slowed but never stopped. After two somersaults, the body stood up and waved

frantically. I pulled to stop and learned she was a hooker on a bad date with no money. She begged me to take her to an apartment where she promised I'd get paid. When we arrived at the place, it turned out her boyfriend was out, but she got the apartment manager to fork out the cab fare.

Here was a young woman who'd gone through a traumatic ordeal, who feared getting molested by a bad date, enough to jump out of a moving car. Some folks would've given her free cab ride, and I didn't expect to get paid. Yet her word was her bond, and she made good on it.

I've gotten stiffed by con artists, young punks, lawyers, registered nurses, financial tycoons, even a standing judge. I've had to fend off a few attempted robberies. But I've never gotten the run-around from hookers. If they couldn't pay the fare they told you upfront.

"Loose Threads" is my way to salute the young women who service the sex trade. The main character is Nyssa Persson who got caught under the thumb of a Tokyo pimp.

The narrative doesn't linger over the sex trade. The story covers the aftermath where Nyssa must adjust to new freedoms and challenges. She faces same problems that soldiers face as they return from the battlefields. They must forget wartime madness and resume the petty routines of normal society. All the while lethal flashbacks plague them like stalking ghosts. Nyssa must go from a serflike regimen to an informal society with unfamiliar choices.

Nyssa finds it's possible to thrive in a society without adverts, without income inequity, without politicians, without bureaucratic rules and regulations. However, she also learns that utopia comes with a price.