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Office of University Communications

September 8, 2011

Margaret Falcon's Murder-Mystery "Triangle" Keeps Readers Guessing Until the End

By day, she's Annette Spurling, secretary for the communication studies and social sciences departments at Gardner-Webb University. But by night, she's Margaret Falcon, horror-movie fanatic and author of the new murder-mystery "Triangle," published last month by iUniverse, Inc. A gripping suspense thriller that keeps readers guessing until the very end, "Triangle," Falcon's first novel, is the product of nearly three decades' patience and perseverance.

Falcon actually wrote the first draft of the novel in 1984, a project to keep her mind occupied during her long hours as a security guard in a four-by-six guard tower at Reliance Electric. "I was bored out of my tree," she jokes, "and as these characters came to life, they just started bugging me to put them on paper."

"Triangle" is the story of Kevin, Karen, and Tina, three college friends embroiled in a triangular relationship of danger, desire, and deceit. Kevin has loved his girlfriend Karen since they were high-schoolers, but Karen, as Falcon puts it, "has trouble being faithful." Meanwhile, torn between love and loyalty, Karen's roommate Tina is forced to hide her affections for Kevin, even while guarding the secret of Karen's illicit affairs. Soon, rumors begin to fly, tensions begin to mount, and students who interfere with Kevin and Karen's relationship begin to mysteriously drop dead, each of them brutally murdered. As Tina desperately tries to keep her secrets long enough to stay alive, Falcon keeps readers asking "who's next" and "who did it" with every terrifying turn.

Falcon says she started writing at age 10, but was devastated when a teacher carelessly lost a draft of her story, and showed no remorse for her mistake. "I was absolutely crushed," she remembers. "I couldn't bring myself to rewrite the story, and I was disappointed that my effort was taken so casually by a teacher." She was reluctant to write stories for a while afterward, but "took to keeping journals" in her free time until her passion for writing was reunited during college. She points to Margaret Mitchell and Stephen King as her favorite authors and biggest influences.

But it was her passion for 1980s horror films that really sparked her interest in writing a novel. "I was a fanatic for horror films in the '80s, and I knew all the little tricks to make people jump, to keep them looking over their shoulders. I especially loved those films that mentally jerked the rug out from under me, that maintained that suspense and kept me guessing," Falcon says. "I wanted to create my own story, and to use all those tricks that I enjoyed in those films."

Just as her writing was an escape for her in the guardhouse, Falcon says the horror genre offers an exciting escape for readers as well. “These stories are a place you can go to get that rush, to feel that intense fear that only real danger can create, but yet be safe. You get the creeps, you fear the things that go bump in the night, but you’re ok. And if the story can make you forget, just for a moment, that you’re outside the story, and if you become a part of the action, then that is quality writing. I hope my book gives people that thrill.”

For more information about “Triangle,” or to read a Kindle preview or purchase the book, visit margaretfalcon.com.

Located in Boiling Springs, N.C., Gardner-Webb University seeks a higher ground in higher education – one that embraces faith and intellectual freedom, balances conviction with compassion, and inspires in students a love of learning, service, and leadership.