

Q: Most of my questions about Ryo and Dani have been asked, and were written much better than I could have done. I wanted to tell you how much I love LOVE reading about them and what you are giving us. I trust you, and honestly I can already see how much he loves our girl, and my heart swells. I get so emotional because I see it, and it's intense. I can't help but ship them together, and I hope Dani will have a HEA that involves Ryo. I was wondering if Ryo is only capable of fucking, and that's why he pushed Dani away? Does he think he can't be gentle with her?

A: Thank you. You're asking me for insight into Ryodan's intimate thoughts on a message board, I'm lucky when I get them in a book. When I do get them in a book, you will also get them. I couldn't be more excited about the new book I'm writing. I'm electric with it. Channeling. Taking dictation from the muse in the best possible way. Me and Dani are on fire with each other and I'm in bliss.

*I also want to add something here to set expectations. This is very much Dani's journey. She is flawed. She will make mistakes. She will do things that make you want to tear your hair out. She's human, she's brilliant, she's emotionally young. She's REAL. If you're looking for this perfect kickass heroine that does all the right things all the time, you may want to read someone else's book. The beauty of the journey to me is the evolution. The mistakes, the growth. The pain, the joy. Good bad and ugly. Dani lives out loud and in color. Her non-heroic actions are every bit as bodacious as her heroic ones. I want you to stumble with her, to suffer her emotions, to stand with her. And finally to 'rise.' But it's not going to be easy. Nothing in her life ever has been.

Q:Karen Moning do you foresee you venturing more into Mac and Barron's in the future. I'm a Ryodan girl all the way but love me some Barron's and especially Lor haha.

A: At the Q&A I spoke a bit about my writing process. It requires complete trust in my gut, in the muse, even when things seem incredibly hard for me, even when things don't necessarily make sense to me. Trust spawns abandon, abandon spawns full immersion, full immersion spawns truth in the moment. I follow that. If abandon to the story leads me to Mac and Barrons again, I will honor it.

Q:Did you know that Jo would die or was that just how the story unfolded as you were writing? Did you find her death or the book eating her more difficult to write about?

A:Jo was always meant for death like the ensign on the bridge of Star Trek who's name we don't know but who has family and a life just starting. It comes sometimes, on cat's paws in the early morning fog when we least expect it. I made her as happy as I could before I took her. Kindness or no? As for the eating, it was logical for the Book to consider that if eating Unseelie flesh endowed strength, why not see if eating human flesh would also? It's violence, curiosity and quest for power

was escalating.. The scene was neither pleasant nor unpleasant to write. I was in the Sinsar Dubh's head.

Q: Dancer always seemed like he didn't belong in Dani's world--too small and fragile as compared to everyone else--so I wasn't shocked that he died. Did you ever consider making him something else? Or was his role set in stone the second he walked onto the page?

A: His role was very clear to me from the beginning. Still, it was so difficult to let him go.

Q:My question is regarding Dani and Ryodan (of course. Haha.) I agonized over their state of relationship at the end of Feversong, and want to know how Dani feels toward him now? Does she still love him? Is the possibility of her falling in love with him still on the table?

Ryodan says that he will wait until she gets tired of all her lovers and is ready to settle down to be her last forever love. If this is his mentality, how could there ever be any romantic progression between them in the next two books? Please help put my worries to rest (I know I'm looking at these books from a romantic pov, but please indulge me, lol)

A: You're asking me to venture in story as yet untold and I won't. But I think on a deeper level you're asking me for the assurance that--because you ship Dani and Ryodan-- I will give you a traditional romance HEA between them. I can only give you these assurances: I love Dani, I don't write traditional romance and haven't since 2003 and I, more so than perhaps anyone, want to see Dani fully formed and happy.

Q:Karen Moning do you foresee you venturing more into Mac and Barron's in the future. I'm a Ryodan girl all the way but love me some Barron's and especially Lor haha. Also will you be coming to New Orleans next year?

A: At the Q&A I spoke a bit about my writing process. It requires complete trust in my gut, in the muse, even when things seem incredibly hard for me, even when things don't necessarily make sense to me. Trust spawns abandon, abandon spawns full immersion, full immersion spawns truth in the moment. I follow that. If abandon to the story leads me to Mac and Barrons again, I will honor it.

Q:Are any of your characters inspired by someone you know? A favorite teacher, friend, etc?

A:Rowena: the principle at ICA that threw me out.

Q:KMM why did you have to be so cruel to my girl and take her nerdboi away from her so soon?

A:One of my favorite plays of all time is Edward Albee's "The Zoo Story". In which he says:

I have learned that neither kindness nor cruelty by themselves, independent of each other, creates any effect beyond themselves; and I have learned that the two combined, together, at the same time, are the teaching emotion.

Q: I felt an overwhelming sense of sadness when the relationship between Zara and the Unseelie King came to an end. I know in a way their love story has transformed (or regenerated)? into Mac and Barron's love story but now the Unseelie King has become human, is his plan to go to Zara on the world where she lives and live out a human life span with her?

By the way I adored Iced. Thank you for the Fever series.

A: Thank you, Kristina. I felt the sadness as I wrote it, and appreciate that it transferred in the words. Again, this was something I left for the reader to paint the way it left them satisfied. I may or may not address it in future books.

Q:Did Cruce survive because he was in the white mansion? My thinking is this: the white mansion is not in the earth dimension, so if the Book never left, it, too, would have survived. The song was to heal only the Earth dimension. Not the infinite dimensions in the silvers. The silvers are portals to other worlds/dimensions, not just Earth and Faerie.

A; This is a terrific question and pleases me because I wanted to leave you wondering this. A good story leaves you chewing over thoughts and ideas for days. A story that answers everything, for me, lacks the verisimilitude that makes art resonate with life.

Q: If Ryodan and Barrons are brothers, who kept Ryo in the hole and where was Barrons? It also says he was some kind of child, were he and Barrons and the others all born different to start with and that's what made their transition to the 9 possible?

A: Half-brothers.

Q: I love Lor and Dani's interactions ♥ I love the Honey's so freaking much! [re: if there would be more of that]

A: You guys know how much I love writing Lor.

Q: Karen, how much of McKayla Lane is really KMM ? We all have our inner beast but wondering if Mac came out of nowhere or if she is a compilation of parts of your life ? (not really a spoiler

question but I've got most of my answers on those already - but has anyone asked about what happened to Kat's baby

A: I have fought many of her battles.

Q: Hi Karen! One more question... Is Dani one of the easier characters to channel?

A: Yes.

Q: Karen, when you first started this series, did you know the exact route these characters would go? Or are they speaking to you constantly and telling you what to write? For instance, did you know this grieving southern girl was going to end up changing into the queen?

A: Fascinating question. Again returns to the writing process. When I was young my mom taught me to make cut off jean shorts from old jeans. She showed me how to make a small slice to find a thread, then tug gently on it to follow the weave, thereby proving a road map to the cut that holds cohesion and integrity. Writing is like that for me.

I could write a small book on this topic. Maybe I'll do a future note on my FB page about it.

Q: Hi Karen! As always you have given us a magnificent journey through the Fever world. My question goes back to the very first pages of Feverborn. Who is narrating to us?

A: If I put a name at the beginning of the entry, I've chosen to identify them to you. If I didn't, I chose not to. I rarely change my mind.

Q: I went into the Fever series thinking that it was an Urban Fantasy with some romantic elements and I was really happy with that. What I'm even happier about is that I seem to have come out of the other side of it feeling like it was a beautiful exploration of mental health, female-rage, the power of the togetherness of women, the loneliness of being different and the unknown terror that comes along with that. Some really heavy subjects were explored and I'm not sure how I missed all of these themes this whole time but it really hit home for me in Feversong. I'm kind of awestruck by it all. Did you always intend to go this deep or did the series start out as an Urban Fantasy with some romantic elements for you too?

Thanks for Feversong -- I adored it! I'm ready for Dani now like I never was before!

A: Thank you, Vicki. I began writing this series before the phrase 'urban fantasy' was coined which is a large part of why my publisher didn't know how to market it. I didn't write it considering it to be any genre. It was just a story I needed to tell.

Q:I want to know if Cruce knew he wasn't really going to die when he finally gave Mac the song, or if he did expected to die, and did it anyway.

A: Cruce was fully aware that he might very well die.

Q: You mentioned trying to publish 2 books a year; one Fever and possibly one unrelated to the Fever world. Can you give us anything on the "new" world you may be sending us into? Will it be stand-alone books based in the same world, or a lengthy series? <Don't get me wrong - I LOVE the Fever world, but any world you build is somewhere I'd like to explore!

A: Not a word on the second project. I have a fierce need to keep births private while I bask in the possibilities and tease out the trajectories.

Q: I am thinking back to all the convos we've had about, "What is Dancer?" Then we find out this bombshell.

Ms Karen, is this the direction you were always going with him?

A: Yes. All of it was contained in my original 2010 outline and there was foreshadowing.

Q: Hey Karen,

I have a couple of questions. :)

How will Shazam react to having to share his yiyi with someone else in the future?

Did Ryo watch/read batman cause Dani got mad at him in Iced for lying?

Is Ryodan still going to be having breakfast after Feversong?

How does someone go about getting a second chance with Dani O? ;)

Also will we find out more about Dani's black hunter hand and Shazam's other form in the next books?

A:Ah, you're asking me to tell you future stories and give you future assurances. That I won't do. But I love that you're eager to discover what the future holds!

Q: I read your spoiler q&a. And you were right, it took me a long time to pick up Iced because of some buzz words around it.

Did that hurt your feelings/upset you or did you expect it to some degree?

You asked if we were finally ready for Dani, did you contemplate keeping her from us?

I didn't like Dani when she was first introduced, mostly because she did what Dani does, punch right through a grown up story and mess things up. Then my heart broke for what she had to go through in the silvers. And I cried when she made love with Dancer. So if you thought of keeping her to yourself because of the reaction to Iced, I'm so glad you didn't.

A: because my publisher and I already knew Dani's end game was Dancer, not Ryodan, in this story arc, none of us expected anything of the sort. It seemed, to us, to come completely out of the blue.

Q: Hello Karen!!! Thank you for giving us this world. I adore this series along with the Highlanders.

I have many questions, but will ask only one. What did Cruce need with the 4 hours?

Thank you!

A: Hi! If I was going to tell you that, I would have done so in Feversong.

Q:Mac calls Shazam a Hel-Cat... She's not always right on things..lol.

Is he really a Hel-Cat or could he possibly be a Ka-lyrra?

A: Careful, he's probably listening...;)

Q:Hi Karen!! I have 2 questions..

Is Shazam inspired by your real life cat?

Is Ryodan feeling at all territorial w Dani while sending her off to Dancer? At first when he pushed her away during the kiss I thought he was angry /jealous that she was thinking of Dancer. But it was Bc he realized she was a virgin and sent her to D.

Thank you for amazing stories! I think your writing is BRILLIANT! I adore how your characters are always true to themselves and how intricate and 'smart' your plots are. Thank you for answering our questions:

[Follow up comments]: I always got the impression he was jealous/territorial. he says it'll burn him to feel Dani having sex and loving others. Dani couldn't find Ryo when Dani and Dancer were kissing at the 'party' (when she went to tell him bye). Not claiming her for himself was INCREDIBLY hard for him. He's torn between selfishness and true love.

He loves her so truly and deeply to give her up because it's better for her, than to keep her for himself.

KMM alluded to a lot of this in some of her answers in other posts.

A: The way Dani sees her world and its occupants in Iced is from a 14 year old, unfettered, melodramatic, unreliable, highly self-engrossed, bombastic, peppered with self-denial, drenched with joie de vivre POV. So you, too see the world and its occupants that way. The way she sees it now is from a very different vantage. You, too, see it from her vantage. Perhaps Ryodan never changed. Perhaps Dani's ability to see is always the issue.

Shaz. How I love him. My Little Monster is pure overblown drama. If I bump the tip of a whisker she falls over in hurt and dismay and needs immediate tummy kisses to feel better from the nudge to her

delicate skin LOL. If she gets down to the last half cup of food in her bowl, she paces anxiously around it until I fill it again. The sky is always falling here

Q:As I meander through the questions and answers from this morning on here, I find myself repeatedly saying, "Oh my god!" And grabbing screenshots. Karen is a wordsmith beyond comparison, and her answers slay me!! Also, I can't wait to read what comes next (Dani!!! 🙌)! My only "beef" is, with the release dates being moved from January, we have to wait even longer until our next party!

A:Don't be nervous. I'm trying as hard as I can to simply answer what I can. There's unfortunately so much I can't answer. I'd like to take moment to tell you all how much I'm thoroughly enjoying getting to mingle with you again. You inspire me to write smarter, try harder, be bolder, push farther.

Q:Could the source of the mural be an official KMM question, or was than answered already somewhere?

A: I've bypassed this question a few times but should say, It's not one I'll give more information on in a Q&A.

Q:The sweeper wanted to "fix" Dani's broken parts. Aka her heart. . .

in FeverSong Dani says she has new parts thanks to her love for Dancer. I was wondering if she's now fixed in that regard? Will the sweeper still want her?

I know she's heartbroken over Dancers death, but still she loved and felt love. And Shazam gave her peace saying Dancer was happy. So I'm thinking her heart has healed?

A: Dani's definitely got some issues to deal with. It might help to remember that I'm going to show you it all--the good, the bad and the ugly. If I don't engage you in my characters flawed moments, their triumphs fall flat. I sometimes think this is where I can irritate some folks--I make you feel their failures, their weaknesses, their moments of indecision and self doubt, so I can make you truly feel their joy and healing....but for that time when you're seeing them struggle, it's hard on you. It's hard on me, too.

Q: 1- Do all sidhe-seers have a glassy lake like the clear one Mac has?

2- What did the concubine/ex seelie queen do to Mac so that Mac was able to receive the True Magic?

Cannot wait for your future books and hopefully a book release party in Dublin 😊

A: Thank you! I won't circumscribe my future stories by addressing 1. Maybe so, maybe not. Haven't written myself to that place yet. 2. She passed it. That was all

Q:How invested are you in Shazam? He's a huge part of Dani's story now, so I'm assuming (you know what they say about assuming!) we'll get much more Shazam in the future. Will we learn more about his origins and why he's so bi-polar? Will he have a backstory about how he became the last Hel-cat?

A:Very. But you should know by now I'm not big on divulging origin stories. More into the present.

Q: I like that we got to hear some of the good memories that Dani had from her time with her mother even if they were short lived.

A: Thank you! Those four passages: Betrayed, Caged, Invisible, Landslide were utterly effortless to write. I enjoyed that 'voice'.

Q:Karen Moning Also is there any inspiration for where your characters come from? I live extremely close to Lawrence, KS and have always wondered if I'm living close to a real life Chloe.

A: Not so much in my Highlander novels, no. But Mac was based on a woman I knew while I lived in Madison GA in 2004. She doesn't know I used her for fodder. I won't ever tell her.

Q:Dancer Elias Garrick... Initials D.E.G.????

Q: [follow up comment] I honestly don't know what to make of that. Did Mac truly just come up with the term 'Dreamy eyed guy'? If yes, then do the initials hold any significance? I would have thought not, but Karen always surprises me.

I do hope Dancer was truly who he appeared to be as I cannot imagine a better character. Currently, he is my favourite and I love him just the way he was.

A: sometimes guys, I just dick with you. I hope you don't mind too much. Dancer was human.

Q:Karen, if you could jump into your books and be any character for 24 hours, who would you pick?

A:None of them. I'm God of all things fictional as the writer. I shudder to think what I might do to myself if I got stuck in one of my books.

Q: My question is this: What was Barrons about to say to Mac when he got interrupted? A lot of folks are thinking that's the big "I love you" moment, but I can't see him saying that in such a critical moment (or ever, really). Maybe a "With you, I need no breath," since it is Barrons and he expresses everything in a much deeper and meaningful way.

A: I love this question. Sometimes I just can't resist teasing you. If I was going to tell you what he said, I would have. I think the beauty of some methods of writing is that it allows each of you to paint in the color of the house you most wish to see.

Q: Karen Moning, I just have one question. Has Barrons or any of the Nine ever told you what they are? I'm not asking you to tell me what they told you, just if you know. 😏

A: I know every detail of the origin myth of the Nine. I will never tell you it. If you think about that, you'll understand why.

Q: Dearest Beautiful, Amazingly Talented, Brilliant-in-all -the-ways-she can-be Karen, What part was the hardest to write? Was there anything in this last book you weren't planning on and then BAM! it happened and you rolled with it?

A: LOL, thank you! There was nothing in Feversong that wasn't planned. But it was both the most difficult and the easiest book for me to write. The greatest hell and the greatest joy. Writing Dancer's death SLAYED me. Killed me. I cried ugly

Q:Karen: Will there definitely be 2 more books in the Fever series to come?

Do you see this series being brought to the screen/tv anytime soon and how much input would

A: There will be 2 more Fever books but I will not set expectations for either of them until shortly before they're released, as I did with Feversong. I'd personally love to see the series become a TV/HBO/Netflix/Showtime/Whatever series and would very much like to be involved.

Q: Will any of the next two books be from Dageus or Chloe's point of view?

A: Imao :) POV becomes apparent as a tool when I need it. Can't answer this. POV is one of the most powerful tools in a writer's toolbox. Much of my time 'writing' Feversong was spent staring into space building a mental structure in my head comprised of endless scene/POV --with much re-arranging and nudging--until I thought I would drive myself mad. I had to perfect the mental structure piece by piece, using every tool at my disposal. Until I sit down and begin that meticulous, vast process, I don't always know which tool I'll choose.

Q: A couple years ago, you said: "One last note about Ryodan: He will eclipse Barrons. Blot him right out of your soul's sky. That's the challenge I've set for myself as a writer."

After reading the books following Iced and especially considering that Ryodan did not have much of a presence in Feversong, I was wondering what made you change your mind about having Ryodan eclipse Barrons? It seemed like he was well on his way with Iced, but the following books took a completely different direction. Thanks for your time! I can't wait for Dani's book!!!!

A: Not sure where you're getting that from so I'll start by clarifying.... It seems you're saying: "KMM said Ryodan would eclipse Barrons but in my mind he didn't so clearly KMM changed her mind." If you reduce that statement to elementary symbolic logic and create a truth table of it, you'll find the statement neither valid, nor true. That you don't feel he has, or has the potential to, does not mean I changed my mind. I didn't. However, what *I* think makes Ryodan spectacular may not be what *you* think does. Everyone has different ideas of what real, satisfying love is. I'm creating precisely what I set out create with Ryodan and have never wavered.

Also, I said this on another post: The way Dani sees her world and its occupants in Iced is from a 14 year old, unfettered, melodramatic, unreliable, highly self-engrossed, bombastic, peppered with self-denial, drenched with joie de vivre POV. So you, too see the world and its occupants that way. The way she sees it now is from a very different vantage. You, too, see it from her vantage. Perhaps Ryodan never changed. Perhaps Dani's ability to see is always the issue.

Q: Was there a point to BB&B having different levels at different times?

A: I can't imagine we won't be visiting BB&B again at some point in the future. I can't imagine never banging through those doors again. I get homesick if I don't get to write the occasional scene there.

Q: May I say it seems the sex is toned down in these last two books. I don't mean quantity, haha. I just mean graphic detail. Is there a reason for that? Sales, target audience?

A: There are two reasons for the lack of graphic sex in Feversong: 1. It didn't belong in this book. I felt a hot, graphic sex scene would have diluted what I was aiming to achieve with this installment. This book more than any other was about love. 2. I don't write romance novels any more. The sex scenes that I do write have a clear purpose. I don't want to be bound by genre, especially when it's not romance to begin with. I think it does a disservice to the series. Now--if I were writing romance novels--you can bet you'd get those scenes! A caveat--the next Dani book is not a romance novel either. If you're reading it hoping for a classic Ryodan/Dani romance, with the formulaic romantic progression of character with an ultimate mating as the end-all, be-all with lots of graphic hot sex scenes, you'll be disappointed.

Q: When Mac was Priya and delved onto Barron's mind, was the woman he held above all others Mac?

A: I've said before in Q&A's this isn't relevant. I'm not being coy, it simply isn't part of the story I'll add more to in a Q&A.

Q:Had a crazy thought this morning. Imagine there's an alternate ending, where at the end Mac wakes up and says "What a crazy dream...", then gets a cup of coffee and goes off to play volleyball with Alina. Turns out there's no fae and no magic and Alina never went off to Dublin. How annoyed would you be?

A:I'd never do something like that. I consider it a cheat.

Q:What is it about the nine/their form that the shades didn't like/didn't want to eat?

A: Really? :)

Q:Why did Sean turn into a unseelie prince, but Jayne turn into seelie prince? They both consumed unseelie flesh right? Did it have to do with there lifestyles?

A: Yes

Q:Karen Moning, is there anything you would have changed in the books (FEVER SERIES) since they have been published?

A:Everything that happened to me while I was trying to write them. I swear my life has never been so rocky as it was for the last four books. For a long time I regretted how things impacted the way I wrote the final four (ducking away from M&B because of my divorce, being late with Burned because of other issues) but when I finished Feversong I could see the whole tapestry. And I wouldn't change a thing. All the way through, it was the best I could do at the given time. And that's all any of us can do.

Oh, wait, there are a couple damned errors I'd fix. Mac's eye color gaffe, Jo's wrong last name in FS

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A:I've said before in Q&A's this isn't relevant. I'm not being coy, it simply isn't part of the story I'll add more to in a Q&A.

Q:Hey Karen,

How did Dancer keep running into Dani so conveniently all the time? Was he tracking her with the bracelet he gave her? Or were Dancer's meetings with Dani just a lucky coincidence all along? :)

Also I really loved the scenes about Dani and her mother. Will we be getting more insight into the locked places in Dani's mind?

A:Those are things I leave to you to decide...as for the last question, I don't discuss future books. I'll set some expectations prior to release like I did with Feversong. For now I want the next book to be a big fat Tabula Rasa in your minds.

Q:Ok...I just have a fun question for you Karen...My mobile is going crazy with all the notifications and it is a blast because I know we are all getting to chat with you...My question is just this...Are you having as much fun as we are 😊... Honestly, I know so many of us have said this...But thank you, for every word you have given us...For being you and knowing that, as bugfuck as this series has made us, we trust and love you, xx

A:Karen Moning I am, Lyndsey Talton, and I'm thinking that we need to do this each time a book comes out. I'll unjoin on Friday but the next time a book comes out, I'd love to come back and do this again!

Q:In BF, Mac mentions four metaphorical viles* during her torture/rescue beneath the burrens with Mollu. The first was Regret. The second Cowardice. Out of pure curiosity, what were the other two???

*Ch 17 in BF: "I used to have a recurring nightmare when I was a child. A dream of four distinct, subtly varied tastes. Two of them weren't entirely unpalatable. two of them were so vile I would wake up choking on my own tongue. i tasted one of the vile ones now.[regret]"

"I tasted the second vile taste in my mouth.[cowardice]"

I kind of always wondered about the other two tastes even though they aren't of importance. It's the little things that bug me sometimes.

A:I've not tasted them yet. That was actually a recurrnig nightmare of mine when I was a child.

Q:I thought about this series last night, was actually laying in bed and processing what I'd just read. I have so many questions but my main thought was - Wow! I admire writers of any kind but writers who create these fantasy worlds and layers upon layers of characters and races of beings. It just blows me away. The parts in the book where Dancer was using math to create the song made my head hurt! Lol. I mean, how does she keep all this straight?!

A:Thank you! If I don't give my brain something big to chew on, it chews on itself. I learned that young. I love that you guys love the puzzles I make!

Q:Karen,

it is mentioned that the king made the silvers and over time they changed to what they are now. while reading Feversong with the pending doom of the world ending i wondered if the silvers would

be destroyed by the SONG, at the end of the book we know that they weren't destroyed. Is it because they weren't made using a SONG (imperfect or otherwise) but some other UK/FAE Power? Same with the White Mansion.

A: Karen Moning The Silvers and the White Mansion are just fine

Q: Was there a point to BB&B having different levels at different times?

A: I can't imagine we won't be visiting BB&B again at some point in the future. I can't imagine never banging through those doors again. I get homesick if I don't get to write the occasional scene there.

Q: I would like to get an insight on your Muse. Many artists speak of their Muse so I know that each one functions differently from person to person. For some artists, it simply inspires them. For others, it takes them over but only at rare seemingly random moments. From reading what you say about your own Muse, it seems to take you over until you are done writing the book? You pride yourself on staying consistent with your Muse, and if it plays such a lead, I cannot imagine you ever having writers block. Or other little moments that plague artists. You seem so confident and unwavering in your ability (love that).

I am probably confusing you. The question I would appreciate if you could answer is, why do you consider it hard work to write when you're simply letting your Muse reign? I hope that doesn't sound rude, I really don't mean it rudely (I am sure there is a kinder way to ask this, but I am not that good with words :P). I read somewhere that writing takes 110% of you, why? Again, you have this Muse to follow and it hasn't failed you, so why does it take so much of you? I would imagine that having a Muse guiding me throughout my writing would be so much easier than having to sit there wrenching my brain, and strenuously planning things out detail by detail (and I say 'I imagine' because I am not a writer, so I wouldn't know).

If you answer this, thank you! And if you've taken this the wrong way, I am sorry, that isn't my intention.

A: The Muse doesn't do the work, she gives the vision. I have to do the work. I don't have writer's block only because I've learned to recognize that I only get blocked if I've failed to honor my vision. That's part of why I get confounded when a reader claims I wrote a book I didn't want to write. I'm incapable of that. I wouldn't get four chapters out of myself. I'd block down/lock up/shut down so hard you couldn't squeeze a word out of me for anything if it wasn't my vision. It's not like the Muse says, "here write this exact dialogue and this precise scene." Never happens. Never will. The muse inspires...I have to create the product blindly believing in whatever portion of the vision I'm currently tackling. Writing a beginning, a middle, a middle and an end is very unsatisfying to me because - like

you-- I don't see the beauty of the full vision until that last book is done. It requires brutal and exacting soul searching for the right words to capture the vision from my Muse, coupled with endless leaps of faith that it's going to turn out the way I believe it will. You read a book. I read one word. after. another. that. hopefully. make. Beauty.

Q:What was Ryo doing while Dani ate breakfast with dancer? Was he drinking or eating breakfast also?

A:I'll let you guys sail that ship...

Q:Can we discuss Barrons and the scaffold scene in more detail? My mind is blown and people are discussing Cruce and four hours and Ryo/Dani/Dancer and Yi-yi. I have those questions too but hello? Barrons is UK? Did anyone see this coming? I feel like I have to re-read all the books with that perspective! That was a bombshell to me. Also where does the mirror in the mural go?

A:Again, the theme of the series is heavily 'choice.' Everything comes down to that. We all have a wolf. Do you feed it? Do you choose it? I thought the ending was quite clear but then I live inside my head and I can't read the story you do. I read all the deleted scenes I wrote and didn't use. I read all the various plot points I consider and reject. I have backstory you never know. So much of the challenge of writing a series like this lies in figuring out precisely how much to tell to spur the thought I'm trying to spur. Nothing is writ in stone in that end scene. I'm not talking reincarnation. I say "all roles are offered..you choose, live or die, understudy or star." The king was the star. He quit to become understudy. To live a small life. Will a small life be enough for Mac? For Barrons? Where does ego or sense of responsibility come into play? This hearkens back to Mac saying something along the lines of 'when you're the only person who can do something, how responsible does that make you to do it?' These are all individual ethical choices. I think the finest stories give you a solid enough foundation that you can tweak your ending ever so slightly. I think that the story that leaves you pondering and tweaking and imagining...well, as a childhood reader those are the ones I loved best so suppose it's only natural I would write them.

Q:Hi Karen! Glad you seem to be feeling better! I believe you said that you knew all about Mac and Barrons' ending. Do you know how Dani and Ryodan's story will end?

A:Nice line you cast there :) The worm isn't tasty enough.

Q:Karen- I have an oddball question... when you write do you go for the natural pen and paper, or typewriter, or computer? Is there certain pens you use? Also, are there any playlists you would

repeatedly listen to while writing the conclusion to the series? Just curious. Thank you for showing us such a beautiful world. Superbly written

A:Laptop for writing stories. I can't keep up with my thoughts by longhand. But when I journal it's with a calligraphy pen.

Q:Have you read Stephen King's Dark Tower Series? Did you enjoy it? His and yours are the two that stick with me the most, that I spend days, years even, mulling over.

A:Yes and no it wasn't one of my favorites. But I do love Steve King

Q:Probably the only thing that I couldn't work out was Cruce's Cuff. We find out at the end that Dani wasn't compelling him at all. He was playing the group so he could spy etc. So, how did he end up in the vehicle with Dani and Barrons when they were going to the abbey? He was supposed to be powerless because of the symbols that encapsulated him. If he could sift, he would've done that to avoid the Mac/book and getting his wings chopped, right? What did I miss?

A: It worked. But he could have always taken it back.

Q: Just what did the Haven become sometimes in the "underneath" as Kat describe it that was in/from their ancient blood line?

Do they too have a "beast" in them?

What do they become and do they need to become it at some time or other to survive?

A:You're asking for story I haven't told, past that I may one day address and must reserve that open-endedness.

Q:Karen Moning, I noticed a lot of pop-culture references this time and loved them: Harry Potter, A Song of Ice and Fire, and several musical references, as always. How much does pop-culture and current events influence your writing? It fascinates me since the setting is post-apocalyptic.

A: I try not to let it influence it at all because I dislike a lot of pop culture and it does 'date' the book. But every now and then something slips in..

Q: Karen Moning What's more important: characters or plot?

A:No, no, no. :) Neither can ever be more important. But the critical thing is the emotion/authenticity.

Q:did you know when you were writing The Dark Highlander the direction you were heading with the Fever series? Did you know the impact leaving the Draghar memories and spells would have? And

did you always plan to bring Daegus into the Fever world?

A: No I didn't know the Fever Series was coming until I dreamed it in, I think, 2004. I'd have to check my old notes. I knew something was coming that went that way...I just didn't know exactly what.

Q: Karen, thank you so much for the Fever world. I believe that I read somewhere that the Nine are based on previous men in your life. That being said, you have a concrete image in your head for these amazing, hot, sexy men. Are there any guys/pictures out there that we can use as a frame of reference for what/who you are thinking of with any of these characters (Including Christian, Cruce, etc)?

A: I was totally kidding when I said the Nine were previous men in my life. :) I don't really have actors or actresses in my mind because I see them so clearly myself. They don't look like anyone I know. I've recently learned how hard it is to communicate what I see in creating Shazam as a stuffed animal...we're still working on it.

Q: How did the sword and spear get in the world. I thought Adams son had them

A: Again, you're asking for story I haven't told. But to be perfectly honest, it's irrelevant. It's not a particularly interesting story.

Q: Can anyone recall when it went from: Fire to my ice; Ice to my fever" to "Fire to his ice; frost to her flame."? Does it depend on who is saying it (Mac/Barrons) (UK/Zara/Concubine)? Did I miss something? I need to go back and reread them all!

A: I *believe* but I could be wrong (I wrote something like 1.4 million words in this series) that one of the first times I used it it was Mac sensing the concubine's feelings in Shadowfever while with Barrons and the phrasing was "fire to his chill, ice to her flame". Later in Shadowfever Mac says, 'Fire to my ice, ice to my fever.' Then in Burned the UK says "fire to his ice, frost to her flame" in the prologue, then Zara has the thought 'fire to his ice, frost to her flame' in Feversong and finally Mac and Barrons get to where they are at the end of Feversong "Fire to his ice, frost to my flame." So the oddity was the second version "Fire to my ice, ice to my fever." It was all meant to foreshadow what was happening, what Mac and Barrons might be becoming...

Q: Karen Moning, I would love to hear more about how you form your stories. Do they come to you fully formed in dreams? You have often said that you knew about a characters purpose from the very beginning???

A: The Fever Series came in dream. Most of my writing comes from dreams. I think of an idea before I go to sleep. I let my subconscious play with it. I wake up before I'm awake and write in a kind of

fugue. I meditate a lot and indulge in directed lucid dreaming. Mom taught me when I was a kid to play with my brain, that you could find switches in there and flip them on. I think the brain is endlessly fascinating. Read *Incognito: the Secret Lives of the Brain*. I can't tell you where/how the story comes but I can tell you my utter faith and trust in it is implicit and everything. I never question it. Even when it seems to be going wrong....according to some people. But in all seriousness, there are times when even *I* think it's going wrong. And those are the darkest hours for me. During a large chunk of *Feversong* I was convinced I was completely fucking it up. I hated what I was writing so bad I laid on the floor and railed at the ceiling. I couldn't like it for anything. Then I'd pick myself up and write the next frigging scene and hate it, too. Then I refused to even read it. I just ignored it. Then one day I sat down and read it and got chills and went "holy shit." It was exactly what it was supposed to be. Writing is HARD. It requires a complete leap of faith for me. Constant doubt, yet unwavering trust in the muse. It's my greatest hell and my greatest bliss. I hope I get to do it until the day I die.

Q:I finally finished *Feversong* this morning. Karen--I don't know how you did it, but the epic story of Mac & Barrons feels complete now. (Although I would NEVER complain if there were more.) This series is my all-time favorite because its world is more complex than any other I've encountered. I've read the entire thing (except *Feversong*) 13 times now and each time I find something I missed. In typical KMM fashion, I still have so many questions. The possibilities for Dani's future are endless. I need to know more! Where is Karen's brilliant mind going to take her? Also, are there any plans for more Lor? I loved learning more about his savage past in this one.

A:Thank you Laura Lee, it finally feels complete to me now, too. This was what I meant all along when I said Mac & Barrons's story was done. They weren't where they needed to be. And I couldn't walk away and move on until they were. 11 years. Good grief.

Q:I was reading through everyone's comments and was wondering about the 'she-seers'. I remember reading in one of the novels (can't remember which) Mac discovers in some of Darroc's notes on them and indicates that the 'she-seers' are of the Kings making. Shouldn't they all have disappeared when the song of unmaking played? The book disappeared as well as Alina. Wouldn't the she-seers?

A:[fellow fans] He didn't make them in that sense. He messed with their bloodlines. Mixing his blood with theirs. So it passed on for generations.

A [KMM] Yeah, you guys got this one.

Q:Karen, Why does Mac always say that she committed those heinous acts? The Sinsar Dhub is a different sentience using her body, and she knows that. She has absolutely no reason to feel that

way. With all of the JZB influence, you'd think she would know better. But she does it time and again. Is that pink Mac bleeding through or does it serve a different purpose? If so, what is it?

A: Great answers guys. It was all of that plus body memory. There's some fascinating theory out there that despite complete disconnect, the body remembers, the cells hold an imprint. The physical truth is Mac's body killed Jo. Mac feels sorrow, not sadness--two totally different things. She doesn't beat herself up over it, nor wallow in regret yet it is inevitable that one wonders...if I had turned left rather than right....The defining point is what you do with that pointless wondering. Like toss it out in the trash. Mac knows what is - is. Yet because of her Jo is dead. She will find a way to pay that forward in some way.

Q: One of the greatest lessons I've taken away from the entire series is that there is no black & white, only shades of gray. That is reflected in every character, in my estimation, except for two. I don't think that the Sinsar Dubh nor Rowena are redeemable at all--their actions are pure evil. In Rowena's case she is the epitome of Ryodan's definition of evil. Was it intentional to show a very few characters who are the exceptions that prove the rule?

A: Evil exists in its purest form. As does Good. But most things are in between....

Q: What part in the fever series surprised you the most when your characters spoke to you and told you this is what's gonna happen? And which scene hit you hardest?

A: Darroc's head getting popped like a grape by the Hunter. That was so not what I had planned for him! I wrote it then stopped and went, "wait, what?" What the hell just happened there? Then I re-read it and started lmao because it was SO much better than what I'd had planned. It felt like I was just channeling there and it was always supposed to go that way and I simply hadn't clued in. Two scenes were the hardest: Mac's anguish on the cliffs after she thought she'd killed Barrons, and Dancer's death. Also, I'd have to say writing Dani's story in Betrayed, Caged, Invisible and Landslide were somber moments.

Q: what does The Song of Making sound like to you? Is it even describable?

A: No, it's not but I hear it in my dreams. Every note, every instrument, every motif, theme, inversion. And it's....everything and while I'm dreaming, I understand everything and it all makes perfect sense. And I know what I just said probably doesn't make any sense

Q: Karen, is there a reason why you gave Barrons three names? There were no last names given for the other Nine. I realize historically people adopted the names of their professions in the past so last names are more of a modern thing (unless they were royalty). So I understand the middle name.

I got hooked on your books when you only had a few Highlander books out. Its been a great adventure.

A:Thank you! It was just his name. As if he already existed, in completion, and said, "Yo, bitch writing about me, my name is Jericho Zigor Barrons." And that was it. The name was simply there. For the most part, last names (and even first) don't signify to me with the Nine because whatever name they go by is chosen. Reveals only what they intend it to reveal or seem to indicate.

Q:When you take time to read who are your favorite authors?

A:I'm all over the place. Love sci-fi fantasy, fantasy, Steve King, Gaiman, Sarah J. Mass, Pierce Brown, non-fiction on the brain, quantum physics, history, biography....

Q:the man ryodan killed from his childhood, did he do unthinkable acts.....ryodan seemed to be dropping hints that he was abused in more ways than one. Was ryodan forced to do acts upon that man?

A:Untold story...I hope you understand I don't say that to be evasive...just that I'm not going to go into detail about parts of the story I haven't written about in the confines of a Q&A. If I'm going to take details or part of a story further than I have, it will happen in a book not on a facebook page.

Q:Karen Moning, thanks for answering my question about how your stories come to you! I wonder if your muse was trying to prepare you for your trials by having you write about them and fictionally "dealing" with them before they happened to you in real life

A:Yeah, I wondered the same thing after a while. Was hard to appreciate though. Some happened concurrently as if I was being carved deep enough to carve the characters. It was peculiar.

Q:just curious now the series is ended does Barron's still "talk" to you?:D

A:Always. Slow burn in the back of my brain :)

Q:Again from ICED

Just what did the Haven become sometimes in the "underneath" as Kat describe it that was in/from their ancient blood line?

Do they too have a "beast" in them?

What do they become and do they need to become it at some time or other to survive?

A:You're asking for story I haven't told, past that I may one day address and must reserve that open-endedness.

Q:I'm wondering about the incident in Burned when we discover that Mac and Barrons had sex when he came to see her after first meeting. He swiped her memory because she wasn't ready for him. Do we think he was assuming that the existence of the mural with their images meant that things would progress quickly between them and he had to take a step back and allow events to unfold? It seems like he initially wanted to waste no time in getting under her skin but realized that she could not really understand him until her own life had forced her to grow and change.

A:**Thats something for you to chew on and write the way you wish.**

Q:silly, quick question, now that Mac is queen of the Fae, will she be able to read all the texts in the Kelter Library?

A:Your ship to sail...I haven't written about it and don't plan to.

*[editor's note] ^^^Which was pretty much the answer to most Qs LMAO