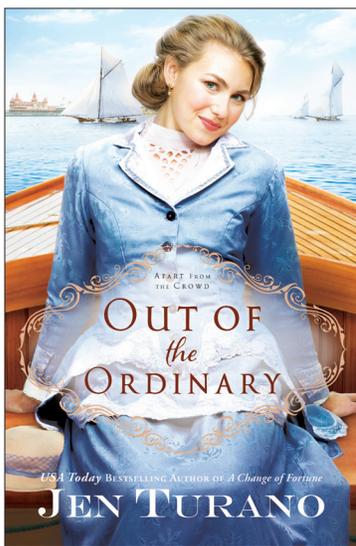


QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH JEN TURANO



Out of the Ordinary

APART FROM THE CROWD
by Jen Turano

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1. Mr. Harrison Sinclair clearly suffers from colorblindness. Why did you give him that particular problem?

Half the men in my family are colorblind, and it's always been fascinating to me to think about how they see the world. Where I see yellow, they see green, and they're horrible at matching their clothing, which is why I think most of them prefer wearing jeans because there's not much matching involved there. By having Harrison see colors in a most unusual way, it made for some interesting and hopefully amusing scenes.

2. Miss Gertrude Cadwalader is a paid companion to Mrs. Davenport, but she's expected to perform tasks that aren't common for paid companions. Why does she continue to work for a woman who has such unusual habits?

Both Gertrude and Mrs. Davenport have issues from their past that they need to address in order to move forward in their lives. But even though Gertrude is expected to cater to a woman who dabbles in questionable pastimes, she truly does care for Mrs. Davenport and does believe that by accommodating the woman, she's keeping her employer out of jail and out of the scrutiny of New York high society.

3. At one point in the story, Harrison, along with his good friend, Mr. Asher Rutherford, resort to perusing romance novels in the hope that those romance novels will assist Harrison with winning Gertrude over. Where did you come up with that idea?

I've always read a lot of romance novels, and some of those novels, especially the older ones, would have these over-the-top romantic gestures in them. I've been meaning to include some of those over-the-top gestures in a story, and Harrison just seemed perfectly suited for that. By having him pair up with Asher, it allowed me to delve into the male point of view regarding romantic gestures, and, well, those were fun scenes to write.

4. The Manhattan Beach Hotel is the setting for a ball. Was that a real place?

The Manhattan Beach Hotel was a real place. I stumbled on some old pictures of it about four years ago and knew I needed to use it at some point. It catered to the socially elite and offered 150 guest rooms. It also had numerous restaurants within the hotel, as well as ballrooms and shops, and what I found really cool was that it had over 2,300 single bathing houses located right on the beach for guests who wished to take a dip in the ocean.

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5. Were there any scenes that didn't make the final edit?

There were, but the one that I was really disappointed to cut was a scene I had at the Long Island Home Hotel for Nervous Invalids—another real place back in the Gilded Age. The name alone can set a scene all by itself, and the pictures I uncover give a distinct sense that this was a place people came to heal. It wasn't a horrible asylum; it was located right off the beach, and fresh air was thought to be beneficial to the patients, which is why they allowed all the windows to remain open—although I'm not certain how they were able to do that without having numerous escapes. Activities such as gardening and painting were encouraged, and I think it must have been fascinating to watch that type of setting, compared to an asylum, evolve. The reason I cut that scene was simply due to the fact I had too many mysteries going on and thought I was making the story too confusing. But I do intend to use the Long Island Home Hotel in a story in the not-too-distant future.

6. Is there a theme to *Out of the Ordinary*?

This book is all about forgiveness—giving forgiveness and receiving forgiveness, and the characters have to go through a lot of different trials before they finally realize that.