

Megan Hart

By Michelle M. Pillow

Fiction author Megan Hart has published more than 20 books since first coming on the book scene in 2002. She writes in several genres of romantic fiction, including historical, contemporary, romantic suspense, romantic comedy, futuristic, and fantasy.

Now, she's adding "alternate historical fantasy romances" to the mix with her newest releases, *Pleasure and Purpose* (Berkley Sensation, Sept. 2009) and *No Greater Pleasure* (Berkley Sensation, Oct. 2009).

When asked about her writing career, Megan humorously stated, "I was born and lived for a while and did some stuff, and then I started writing books. Eventually, some got published. Now I do stuff and write books and whatnot."

I suspected there might be a little more to it than that and endeavored to find out . . .

Q: In your book, *Pleasure and Purpose*, you delve into the world of alternate/otherworld history. What inspired you to write about this?

Megan: I've always loved writing fantasy. I like making stuff up! Several years ago, the idea of an order devoted to providing peace crept into my mind.

The idea of a woman telling a man, "I am your Handmaiden. I



A believer in the supernatural, Megan Hart has published more than 20 romantic fiction books in the historical, contemporary, romantic suspense, romantic comedy, futuristic, fantasy, and alternate history fantasy genres.

am your comfort and your grace," emerged from some random conglomeration of events (that's the way most of my stories work), and I slowly built the world from there.

Q: When world-building, did you base your story off of known myths throughout history?

Megan: Actually, I did. Since The Order of Solace is a religious order, I needed to build a faith.

I drew heavily from Jewish mysticism — the concept of tikkun olam, in particular, which basically is

the idea that at the beginning of the world, vessels containing divine light were broken and the good deeds (mitzvot) we perform here on Earth return small pieces of those scattered bits of divine light.

When they're all returned, it will usher in an age of peace. I took that idea and incorporated it into a creation story and gave the Handmaidens their purpose: For every moment of absolute solace they grant their patrons, one more arrow is returned to Sinder's Quiver. (Sinder the being who created the world).

Once the quiver's filled, the

Holy Family will return to usher in the age of peace.

Q: What myths or legends inspired you?

Megan: Tikkun Olam, as I said, as well as ideas about karma and fulfillment. Not myths or legends, exactly, I guess.

Q: Why do you think readers, and society in general, are fascinated by the paranormal?

Megan: Because no matter how much we try, it seems to be unprovable.

Q: What are your favorite paranormal shows, movies, and books?

Megan: I'm a HUGE freak for *Supernatural*. I love that show so much it hurts. I used to watch the *X-Files* and still love that. *Quantum Leap* and *Star Trek* were also faves, along with shows like *Night Gallery*, *Twilight Zone*, *Tales from the Darkside* . . .

Basically, I love scary stuff and science fiction. Clive Barker, Stephen King, Dean Koontz, Robert R. McCammon, Douglas Clegg . . .

Q: Do you believe in the supernatural?

Megan: I absolutely do!

"I believe I was in the presence of spirits."

Q: Have you ever had a paranormal experience?

Megan: I believe I've seen spirits a few times. And yeah, I was scared. I would like to believe I saw a UFO once, but I find it hard to believe

I could've seen it and nobody else did, since it was hovering over the street.

I saw a weird animal up in my tree once, and I'm sure it wasn't a cat! I'm ready and open to the supernatural/paranormal, but I know I'd have an unfortunate and embarrassing physical reaction should I ever have anything really scary happen.

Q: Are there any kind of paranormal creatures you wish you could meet?

Megan: Um . . . none! I'd be askeered, I told ya!

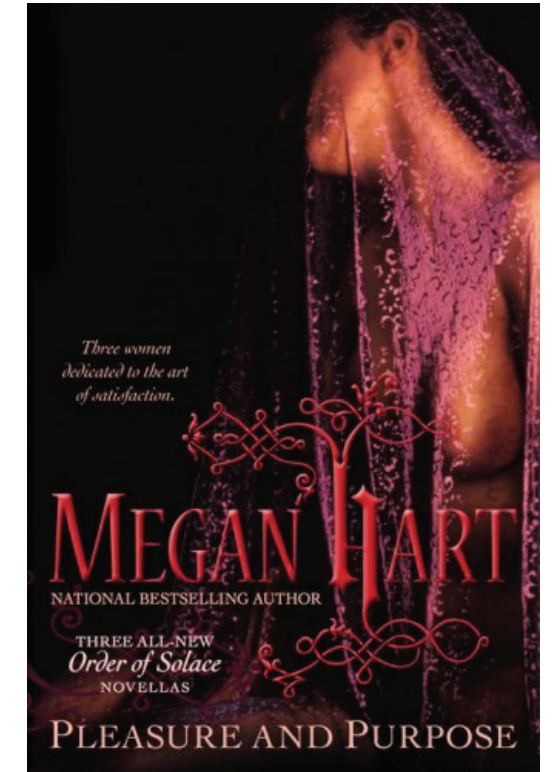
Q: But if you did meet, say a ghost or a vampire, how would you react?

Megan: The time I believe I was in the presence of spirits I was scared. Once, I believe I knew the spirit and its purpose, so I just closed my eyes and let it do what it wanted, which was to see my child. (It was the spirit of a relative who'd died before my daughter was born.)

Vampire? I'd probably faint, and then I have such low blood pressure and I'm pretty anemic, so maybe it would leave me alone!

Q: What does the future hold for the Handmaiden stories?

Megan: I hope to write more Handmaiden stories and explore more of that world and its history. I also have a lot of love for the paranormal



One of Megan's latest books, *Pleasure and Purpose*, was released in September 2009.

and have a book in the works right now that deals with the dream realm. *fingers crossed for that one*

Also, I have started a book about angels and demons, which would seem sort of trendy at the moment even though I started it three years ago . . . maybe I'll get to finish it!

Basically, I love writing sci fi/fantasy and paranormal, and I hope to have the chance to continue!

Thanks for joining us, Megan!

You can learn more about Megan and her books at her Websites, www.meganhart.com and www.readinbed.net.

Interviewer Michelle M. Pillow is an award-winning author of more than 60 published books. She writes in many romance fiction genres and can be found at www.michellepillow.com. ■