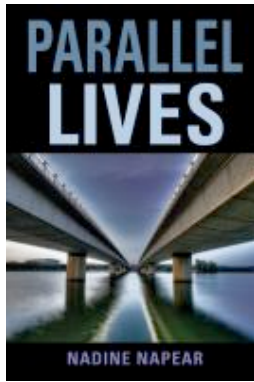


PARALLEL LIVES



NADINE NAPEAR



Two women - two seemingly different lives. A reporter interviews a woman accused of murdering her husband and her stepson/lover's girlfriend. Elizabeth enters the prison believing Judith Ann Bancroft's past created a killer, something that could never happen to her. But, when circumstances put her in a perilous position and she has to act in a way she never could have foreseen, she realizes the two women have lived parallel lives.

Parallel Lives

Order the complete book from

[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com)

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/7940.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**

Your free excerpt appears below. Enjoy!

PARALLEL LIVES

NADINE NAPEAR

Copyright © 2015 Nadine Napear

ISBN 978-1-63490-258-8

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Bradenton, Florida, U.S.A.

The characters and events in this book are fictitious. Any similarity to real persons, living or dead, is coincidental and not intended by the author.

Printed on acid-free paper.

Booklocker.com
2015

First Edition

For Michael Patrick Sullivan, a very funny man, from Chicago, IL
Because he asked for it

Also for Stephen Crum and Claudia Jones
My first readers and huge fans.
Thank you for your support.

For Jan Green. Taken too soon.

A special thank you to Mary Kozur for her invaluable assistance.
And to Daniel Hanuka for his legal advice.

Also by Nadine Napear
"Journey of a Killer"

Find me on the web @ www.nadinenapear.com
E-mail me @ pineislandwriter@gmail.com

Parallel: having the same direction, course, nature, or tendency.
The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, 1968

"ALL CASES ARE UNIQUE, [YET] VERY SIMILAR
TO OTHERS."
T.S. ELIOT (1888-1965)
THE COCKTAIL PARTY 2, 1950

CHAPTER 1

The story you are about to read is true. Judith Ann Bancroft told it to me while in jail awaiting trial for murder, grand theft larceny, possession of stolen goods, and assault with intent to do serious bodily harm. The only condition of our meeting, dictated by her attorney, was that it could not be printed until the trial was over. I agreed because as the owner/editor for the newly created magazine, *America Weekly*, I recognized a newsworthy story when I saw one.

I had originally assigned this task to Justin Roberts, expecting him to turn in his first draft within a few days. Instead, I was bewildered when he knocked on my office door, distress etched into his Romanesque face.

"What's up?" I asked, as he sauntered in and plopped down in one of the two green leather chairs in front of my desk.

"She wants you."

"What do you mean, 'she wants me'? Who wants me? For what?" Ambiguity is not what I wanted or expected from my writers. Thankfully, he wrote better than he spoke.

"Judith Ann Bancroft. She won't see me. She'll only talk to you." He handed me a piece of stationery I recognized as having come from our office. On the bottom of the request to interview her, Judith Ann had written, 'I consent only if the interview is done by Elizabeth DelaRosa.'

I returned the paper to him. "What does this mean?"

"It means exactly what it says. She wants you to do the interview. Only you."

"Did you talk to her?"

"I tried, but like I said, she only wants you."

"Stop saying that." I was tired of his rhetoric. He was one of my best reporters; that's why I gave him this plum assignment. "Did you explain that I don't do that kind of work anymore? That that is why you were there?"

"Of course I did. She kept saying she wanted you. That you were fair and sympathetic to your subjects and that was why she would only talk to you."

"What did you tell her?" I rifled through the files on my desk, looking for the one with her name on it. I located it, pulled it out, and opened it. Her booking photo was stapled to the left inside cover, opposite her charge sheet.

I looked up and he flashed me one of his sly smiles. "That you'd do it, of course."

I could see why he was such a successful interviewer. His easy smile and brilliant teal eyes could make any subject feel comfortable. Like a big brother they could tell their troubles to. And they usually did. That was why I was so surprised that Judith Ann wouldn't meet with him.

"What's the matter, Justin? Where's all that boyish charm you're so famous for?"

He threw his head back and laughed. "I lost it I guess." When he was laughed out, he looked at me. "Or maybe she just likes women." He laughed again as he stood up. "Either way, I guess this ball is in your court."

"Thanks a lot. I'll remember this."

"Oh, I bet you will." He left, leaving me holding the piece of paper with Judith Ann's scrawl on the bottom.

I picked up the phone and asked Rosemarie, my assistant, to call the warden of the Maryland Correctional Institution in Jessup where she was being housed pending trial.

CHAPTER 2

Three days later, I was escorted into the prison's interview room. At first, the sun streaming through the barred window high on the wall illuminated the small area, making it appear large; but once my eyes adjusted, I saw it for what it was - drab, and confined. The sour odor of hundreds of prisoners hung in the air. I closed my eyes, and swore I could feel their suffering and hear their desperate cries for freedom.

The slam of a door and the scraping of metal along the aged linoleum shook me from my thoughts and I looked up to see a woman shuffling in, her hands and ankles shackled. I was shocked at her appearance. The twenty-nine year old was dwarfed by the football-sized guard who accompanied her. After securing her to the bolt in the table, he sat down in the corner of the room, and began reading a magazine maybe left there by previous occupants.

Judith Ann looked pastier and more haggard than in her newspaper photographs. Prison life had definitely aged her. I also noticed that her once meticulously manicured nails were bitten to the quick. And minus the perfectly applied makeup, she looked plain and unassuming.

But even in her orange prison garb, her voluminous breasts threatening to spring from their confines, she emitted a charismatic charm that made it easy to see how she had been able to wrap her stepson, an impressionable and vulnerable young man, around her finger.

"Hi Judy. I'm Elizabeth DelaRosa, with *America Weekly*."

Her eyes downcast, she replied in a soft, whispery voice, "I know who you are." She lifted her gaze to meet mine, squared her shoulders, and took a deep breath, thrusting her breasts out even

further. "And it's Judith Ann, if you don't mind," she added as she exhaled and returned her eyes to their former position.

"Okay. Sorry, Judith Ann. I want to thank you for meeting with me. But I have to ask, 'Why me?' "

Though it was difficult to maneuver with bound hands, she nevertheless managed to twirl her scraggy, shoulder-length, jet-black hair around her index finger. With her head still downcast, she said, "I've read some of your interviews, and you seem fair."

"Yeah, that's what you told Justin."

She glanced at me. "Who?"

"You know, the handsome blue-eyed reporter I sent."

"Oh, him."

"Yeah, him. Why did you decline to let him do the interview?"

As I stared into her large Hershey chocolate eyes, I caught a glimpse of the young, beautiful vixen she'd been portrayed as. Even I, a trained reporter, was mesmerized by her apparent magnetism, which was also evidenced by the guard's furtive glances. "I didn't like his attitude."

"His attitude?" I was surprised. The feedback I received on his inter-viewing skills was nothing short of dazzling. "What did he do to upset you?"

She lifted her head and stared at me. "It wasn't so much what he did; it was how he looked at me. Like I was some sort of monster, guilty of horrible crimes."

I had to admit I was confused by this. "Aren't you?"

She declined to answer. Instead, she said, "Why don't you wait until you hear my story, and then you can decide for yourself?"

"Okay," I responded and removed a tape recorder from my satchel, placing it on the table between us. "Is it okay if I tape our conversations?" I looked at the guard who nodded his assent, then raised his magazine.

"I guess," she replied and again lowered her head. "Where do you want me to start?"

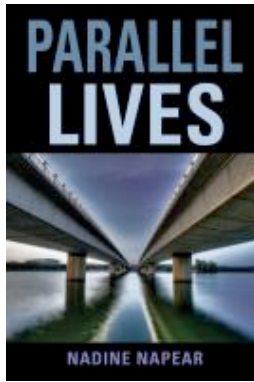
"Anywhere you want," I answered.

Funny thing. I once thought the thrill of this job was gone. That was one of the reasons I had quit being a reporter and went to work

on the business end of the magazine. But meeting Judith Ann Bancroft changed all that. The excitement and rush I once felt was back and I couldn't wait to hear what she had to say. To hear how she could possibly justify her actions.

"Okay," she said, raising her head to meet my gaze, "I'll tell you everything, but it's important for you to understand how it all began."

"I'll listen to anything you want to tell me," I replied, pressing the 'Record' button. "I'm eager to hear your story."



Two women - two seemingly different lives. A reporter interviews a woman accused of murdering her husband and her stepson/lover's girlfriend. Elizabeth enters the prison believing Judith Ann Bancroft's past created a killer, something that could never happen to her. But, when circumstances put her in a perilous position and she has to act in a way she never could have foreseen, she realizes the two women have lived parallel lives.

Parallel Lives

Order the complete book from

[Booklocker.com](http://www.booklocker.com)

<http://www.booklocker.com/p/books/7940.html?s=pdf>

**or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.**