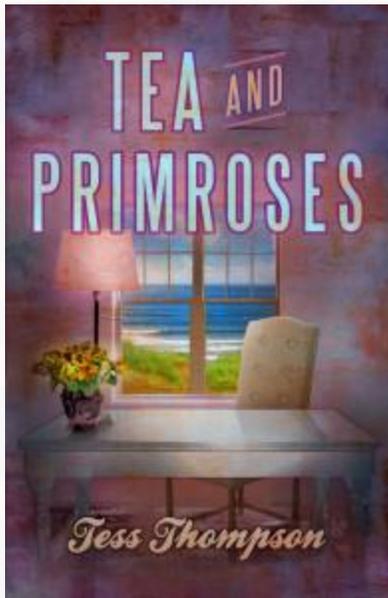


# TESS THOMPSON

INSPIRATION FOR ORDINARY LIFE

## Don't Ever Leave Me

Posted on January 14, 2014 by admin



*Tea and Primroses*, the second in the *Legley Bay Collection*, is set in the fictional coastal town of Legley Bay, Oregon. The novels in this collection are always titled something edible with a flower. If you read *Caramel and Magnolias* you know that the main character, Peter Ball, a Seattle police detective who grew up in Legley Bay, thinks women always smell of two things. Thus, the titles.

When I proposed to my editor, Jennifer D. Munro, that the title for the follow up to *Tea and Primroses* might be *Tobacco and Dead Roses*, it was met with silence. What do you think? A tad too dark? Listen, if you'd been out here in the wilderness dating for a year like I have, you'd be bitter too. But I digress...

Of course I was kidding with the suggestion of the title. I live to make Jennifer laugh, mostly because she makes me laugh and I'm competitive that way. I'm kidding about that too.

Jennifer D. Munro, or JDM, as I refer to her, is one of those effortlessly clever people. She is smarter than I am and a better writer and probably a better person. Actually, I'm pretty sure she's a better person. And because of all that, she makes me a better writer. She makes me smarter. Or, is it more smart? I'll make a note to ask her about that one. JDM, if you're reading this, I'm kidding.

*Tea and Primroses* is about loss and love and redemption, like most of my books. But this one is also uniquely personal in that one of the main characters, *Constance Mansfield*, is a fiction writer. Much of the book is about the relationship she forges with her first editor who helps shape her work in a way that sustains and informs for thirty years. I believe most writers would tell you the most important relationship they have is the one with their editor. If you're lucky enough to find the perfect match, it transforms your work. They ask the hard questions. They point out the holes. They tell you when it sings. They tell you when it's finished.

*Tea and Primroses* is partly an homage to writers and editors, partly about the terrifying and complicated journey of mother/daughter relationships. I guess you write what you know.

What I know for sure, to steal a phrase from Oprah, is that JDM transforms my work and therefore my life. There will never be enough "thank you's" in the acknowledgment section of the book to properly express my gratitude.

When she wrote in the margins of the first draft of *Tea and Primroses*, after my description of Constance's first editor, Patrick Waters: "I hope you're not trading me in for a tall, dark and handsome editor." But she needn't have worried. I had already answered her before I even read this pithy comment. In my email response to her first set of notes was: "You can't ever leave me."

I hope she never does. For one thing, I don't think there's a Match.com equivalent for finding the perfect editor. God, I hope I never have to find out.

So to all you long-suffering editors out there and beleaguered writers, cheers, and keep on swimming, bird by bird. *Tea and Primroses* is for you. JDM would probably tell me I shouldn't steal metaphors from both *Finding Nemo* and an essay about shitty first drafts by Anne Lamont, and then make it worse by combining them in a sentence, but she's not editing this piece so I'm going for it. Do you see why she can't ever leave me?

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### One thought on "Don't Ever Leave Me"

1.  Christina Esdon says:

[January 14, 2014 at 6:38 pm](#)

I'm so glad you have found "The One", Tess. Match.com, be damned. 😊