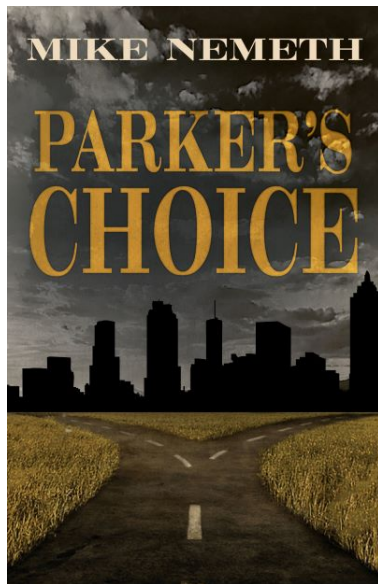


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Framed for murder and on the run, an innocent man is forced to become an outlaw in bestselling author Mike Nemeth’s newest novel, “Parker’s Choice.”

ATLANTA, Georgia – Award-winning novelist Mike Nemeth is back with a new crime thriller that tucks a love story inside a murder mystery.



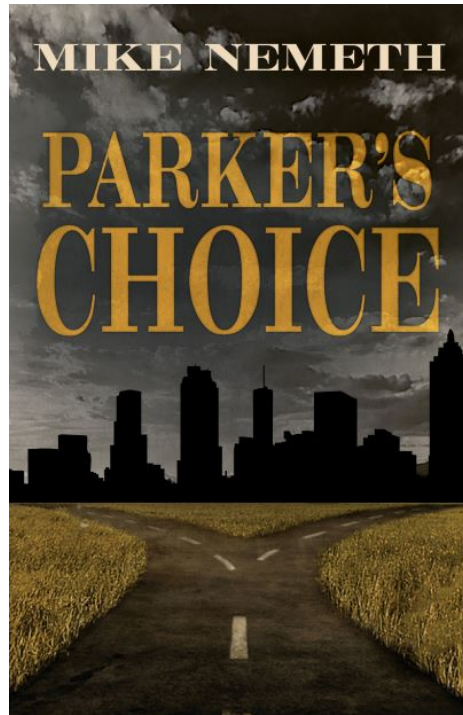
Releasing on March 16, 2021, by Southern Fried Karma’s Brown Chicken Books imprint, “Parker’s Choice” explores the boundaries of family loyalty and exposes the differences between morality and justice under the law. Hiding from his troubled past in Atlanta, Parker, a principled but conflicted man, can’t escape his enemies. His former business partner blackmails him and his boss coerces him to commit fraud, but these aren’t his toughest tests. After his old nemesis is killed, Parker becomes the chief suspect. When he and his clever colleague, Sabrina, uncover evidence that his elusive birth father is involved in the scheme, Parker’s innate moral code faces an impossible challenge. Evading cops and crooks, Parker and Sabrina search for answers from the Carolinas to a Florida rehab and finally a New Orleans cemetery. In this twisting Southern thriller, the choices are

between blood ties and a deep-rooted sense of right and wrong.

“I’ve always been intrigued by the dynamics in marriages and wondered just how far marital bonds could be stretched before they broke under stress,” Nemeth says. “The other theme in this story is the importance of identity. Parker comes to realize that the missing branches in his family tree unexpectedly influenced his beliefs and behavior. When he identifies those branches, he’s forced to modify his world view.”

MIKE NEMETH is a novelist, former AAU basketball coach and retired information technology executive. His debut novel, “Defiled,” a crime fiction thriller, became a bestselling book on Amazon, and his second novel, “The Undiscovered Country,” is the winner of the Beverly Hills Book Award for Southern Fiction and the Frank Yerby Prize for Fiction (presented at the Augusta Literary Festival. Mike lives in the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, with his wife, Angie, and their rescue dog, Scout.

About the Book



“Parker’s Choice”

Mike Nemeth | March 16, 2021 | Southern Fried Karma

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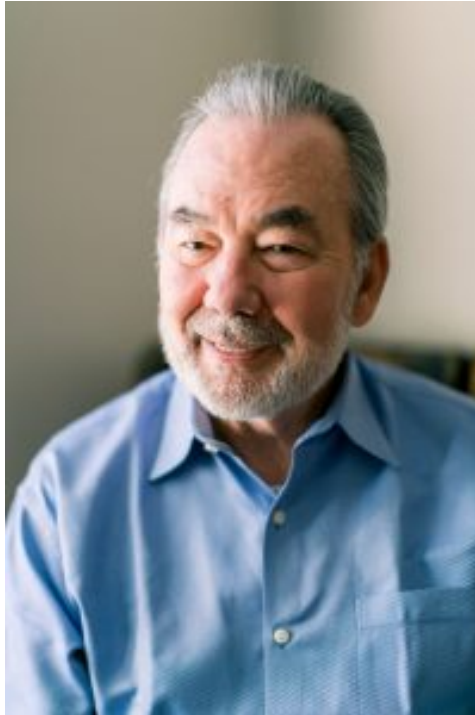
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Suspense, Crime Fiction, Thriller

An Interview with
MIKE NEMETH



“Parker’s Choice” is a murder mystery, but there’s much more going on here. What is the book *really* about?

William Faulkner said something to the effect that the job of a novelist is to expose the human condition. I interpret that to mean that a novel should be a measure of the status of our civilization. A civilization isn’t measured by its scientific and technological advances. A civilization is measured by how civil people are toward one another. Today racism is rampant, by diverse groups, against diverse groups, in every corner of our world. Today, the morality we were taught by our parents or our clergy has been supplanted by self-interest. In this story, Parker’s colleague, Sabrina, becomes his moral compass.

What inspired you to write “Parker’s Choice?”

Divisive politics and slanted media. I’m only half-kidding. I think the information we get from the media about problems like racism and alcoholism is superficial and often misleading. The news now has a purpose—a desire to have us believe a one ideology or another. It’s the same with politics—each party wants us to believe it is right—and here’s the problem—the other party is wrong. So, I wanted to take a deeper look at some of our current issues through the eyes of characters who aren’t stereotypes.

What impact do you hope to have on your readers, and what do you want them to take away from your new book?

Well, I want readers to be excited about turning each page, anticipating what will happen next. I also want them to have an “aha” moment or two about how the characters deal with their problems, maybe relate to how other people look at things.

What are the most compelling elements of “Parker’s Choice?”

Betrayal has to be top of the list. The characters all have good reasons—rationalizations, really—for what they do, but the self-interests of the various characters are in conflict with one another. So, there’s a lot of chaos and disappointment as they all seek to come out of these crises intact. And, secondly, the search for the truth is constantly hampered by misinformation. In today’s society, the factual truth may be our most elusive commodity.

Given that you grew up in Wisconsin, what makes you write characters with such deep ties to the South?

I did my military service in the South and I fell in love with southern culture, southern food, and mild winters. The South is what I know. More importantly, the conflict between the past, the present and the future is part of the Southern fabric.

What challenges did you have in writing “Parker’s Choice?”

Maintaining balance. I wanted the characters to have believable and logical motivations for their actions, to have understandable and reasonable beliefs. They had to be able to face and discuss touchy subjects without going off the rails. The clues to the murder mystery aren’t really red herrings so much as they are revelations, like those Russian dolls that you open only to find another doll inside.

How would you describe your writing style?

Literary novels, the ones preferred by traditional New York publishers, contain far more narrative than dialogue and action. The storyteller is clever, facile with words and phrases, able to delve deeply into the psyches of the characters. My style is quite different. I cater to today’s short attention spans and the influence that the Internet, Google, and smart phones have had on readers. I focus on the story itself, the plot and the suspense-inducing events and plot twists that keep readers turning pages. My novels are 80% dialogue and action scenes and only 20% narration. I let the characters tell their story and I get out of the way. It’s sort of a “cinematic” style because it is like watching a movie in words.

Given your tendency to be modernistic rather than classical, why don’t you write about superheroes or monstrous villains in your novels?

In my experience, most evil acts are committed by perfectly ordinary people who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances. Common human motivations, such as greed and jealousy, prompt people to do unspeakable things out of self-interest. Parker isn’t the one and only person who can save the world and his enemies aren’t cardboard cutout serial killers.

And, how do you choose those stories or themes?

Hemingway said that if you want to write about life, you first have to live life. It’s another way of saying “write what you know.” So, I write about social problems with which I have some personal experience, but problems we haven’t fixed as a society. In my novels I’ve targeted our fallible justice system, the decline of the middle class, and the decay of altruistic morality.

Your first two books, “Defiled,” and “The Undiscovered Country,” were about the same character—Randle Marks. Do you see a second book about Parker?

Randle's story was too big to tell in a single novel, but I don't want to stretch characters out like taffy till they break. You see this all the time in streaming series where the first season is excellent and then the writers struggle to keep the stories and characters relevant and by season three the series has lost all appeal. If readers like Parker, there could be more to tell. The end of this story could certainly be the beginning of a new story. But it would have to be a good, new story.

You have a diverse professional background – pilot, soldier, coach, novelist, IT executive – do you think all of these skills influence or serve as a foundation for your writing?

Sure. I was privileged to travel around the globe, encounter diverse cultures and diverse ways of thinking about the challenges we all face as humans. My experiences left me with the thought that the status quo is not the best we can be. Change is the most difficult challenge we face, but change is necessary to advance our civilization.

Which other authors do you admire? Are there authors that are similar?

I admire a long list of authors, but Elmore Leonard and William Goldman are probably my all-time favorites and I follow their writing advice. Now I read Joseph Kanon and Gillian Flynn and Chris Pavone but the authors who tell stories like most mine are Paula Hawkins and Harlan Coben.

Tell us more about your rescue dog, Scout! Is she a good writing companion?

She's a Belgian Malinois so she's very smart and has a large vocabulary. She's named after the character "Scout" in "To Kill a Mockingbird," because she's also feisty and endlessly curious. Scout lies at my feet, in my office, until it's time for me to take her for a walk. While we're walking we talk about the next scene. Her aversion to adverbs is good for my writing.

What's next for you?

After a year of pandemic quarantine, Angie and I are ready for a jailbreak. Savannah and Tybee Island are the setting for my next novel, so a leisurely research visit is on the list along with some Florida sunshine. Then it's back to work on the next novel. I want to draw on my Army experience to tell the story of a man who is on his last investigative assignment after a productive life but is still haunted by his actions fifty years ago in Vietnam.