



Tim Weaver

THE BEST-SELLING THRILLER WRITER RECKONS THAT BATH HAS GROWN ON HIM . . .

Q. How do you balance your job as a journalist with that of a novelist?

A. I just don't have a social life! I work Monday to Friday evenings on the books, generally from about 7.30pm to midnight, and then on Saturdays and Sundays I try to have a couple of nights off. Sometimes I break my own rules, though: when I'm deep into a book, it's hard to leave it alone for two days.

Q. . . . and as a family man?

A. I'm always worried my wife and daughter will forget what I look like, so that's another reason I generally don't work weekends. I think we've got it off to a fine art now, although that doesn't mean I wouldn't love more time with them. One thing every writer needs: an understanding partner.

Q. Why do you live in Bath?

A. I was born here, grew up here, and then landed a job I really loved, straight out of school at 18. It's part-laziness, part-circumstance.

Q. What do you think the pros and cons are?

A. It's probably a town you appreciate more as you get older, to be honest, and especially when you have kids. It's nice and manageable, genteel and safe, and you don't have to go far to get to the countryside. Growing

up, it was never much of a party town, and I remember spending a lot of my younger years in the pubs and clubs of Bristol. But now it's a good fit.

Q. What's your most regrettable habit?

A. My wife would probably say my inability to write in anything but monastic silence (I force her to wear headphones at night if she wants to watch TV while I work), and my daughter would almost certainly say the length of time it takes me to wake up in the mornings. I'm definitely a night owl.

Q. What has been your finest hour (so far)?

A. Probably getting *Chasing the Dead* published. It was a 10-year struggle to get anyone interested in it, then – inside six months in 2009 – I had an agent and a deal with Penguin. Sometimes it's hard to believe I'm now writing book four.

Q. Why the crime genre?

A. I grew up on Wilbur Smith and Alistair Maclean – more traditional adventure-thrillers – and loved them, but when I made the switch to crime writing, I just immediately felt at home. I loved the world, the characters, the way writers like Chandler and Ross MacDonald would knit everything together. Even though my books are

set in the UK, I've always been very inspired by American detective fiction. I find it to be less hard-edged than a lot of British thriller writing. Probably my favourite contemporary crime writer is Michael Connelly – books like *The Poet* were why I wanted to write thrillers in the first place.

Q. You're a massive film fan. What's the last film you saw at the cinema?

A. We need a babysitter these days, so it's harder to get to the cinema than it used to be. Before my daughter was born, my wife and I used to live at the cinema. Not literally, but almost. Sundays used to be double-bill day, and we'd almost always watch something else midweek. These days, it's 10 per cent cinema, and 90 per cent DVDs/Sky Movies, and that immediately puts you behind the curve. The last film I watched: *Due Date*. It was absolutely terrible.

Q. Complete this sentence: "the greatest TV series ever made was..."

A. *The Shield*. The worst thing that could have happened to it was being on TV at the same time as *The Wire*, because it just became that 'other' cop show. But it's utterly, utterly brilliant, and has the best – and most genuinely heartbreaking – last season of any TV show I've ever seen.

Q. Any chance of us seeing your books translated to TV?

A. No one's biting at the moment - but that would be fun!

Q. What book(s) is/are currently on your bedside table?

A. *WITSEC* by Peter Earley, about the history of the witness protection programme in the States. It's a seriously impressive piece of non-fiction, written like a page-turning thriller.

Q. Books – randomly scattered around the home, or alphabetically/thematically arranged on shelves?

A. Always, always alphabetically arranged.

Q. What's up next?

A. Next is book three – provisionally titled *Vanished*. It's out July 2012.

Q. Surprise us....

A. I used to appear fortnightly on *The Big Breakfast*. **BL**



Top: Tim's latest book *The Dead Tracks*
Middle: Wilbur Smith has been a major influence
Bottom: Criminally overlooked: *The Shield*

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