



**Author Interview – Jean Johns, National Bestselling Author
of Shifting Plains and the Sons of Destiny series**

Interview by EM

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Where do you hail from?

The Seattle area.

How long have you been writing?

Ever since I was 8 or 9 and thought I could write a better ending to a story I'd read.

What genre do you write in?

Science-Fiction, Fantasy, and Romance, sometimes a blending, sometimes served straight.

How many books have you written? Which is your favorite?

Not including short stories in anthologies, and only counting the stuff being published at the moment...9 books. I have more books waiting to be completed on my harddrive. Lots and lots of plot-bunnies. As for favorite book...um...lol, I can't. I like them all!

What is your latest (and where can they get it)?

The latest is SHIFTING PLAINS, from Berkley Sensations, it was released November 3rd (some retailers stock their shelves a little earlier) in just about any bookstore that sells new Romance books. Like the Sons of Destiny series, it is set in the same world and is a fantasy-romance.

Is there a character you identify more closely with yourself than the others?

Lol, not really. I learned a while back to disassociate myself from my characters. The closest might be Serina, the mathemagician, but only because we're both absentminded-professor types. Otherwise we have very little in common, lol.

What are 3 things that we don't know about you?

I can arch only one eyebrow, muahaha, I have a fantastically evil laugh (I practice a lot; it's fun and relaxing), and I have a Ph.D. in Religions.

What would you say is your quirkiest writing habit?

Heck if I know... I consider what I do to be perfectly normal for me, lol.

Where do your story ideas (those pesky plot bunnies!) come from?

The terminus of my alimentary canal, of course. ...Okay, okay. Fragments of dreams, answers to What If questions, and so forth.

What do you think makes a good story?

Something which resonates with the reader. Whether it's a piece of humor that makes them laugh out loud, or empathising with a character struggling with problems the reader also suffers

in real life, if the story clicks with the reader and shows them something about the world, themselves, their life—particularly in a new light—that’s a good story.

What is the most surprising thing you’ve learned while writing a story?

My characters occasionally assert control. I’ve come to realize I’m an interdimensional voyeur/paparazzi, peeking into other universes and scribbling down what I see.

When did you first consider yourself a writer? How about an author?

When I was 15 and wised up and put writing first instead of relegating it as a constant side-project, that’s when I considered myself a writer. As for Author...when my first book hit the bookstore shelves. Not even at the contract stage, since anything could’ve happened to derail publication. But the moment THE SWORD hit the bookstores, I was a published Author.

Any advice for other writers?

Tonnes. But first and foremost is: WRITE. Never say in my presence, “Oh, I plan to write a book -someday-...” because I will go drill-sergeant on you. If you plan to write the book, sit down and WRITE it. Don’t delay. All you have is right now, and if it’s your dream, go for it. Second piece of advice: Writing is WORK, do not pretend otherwise, you WILL get tired of writing. Keep at it anyway. Invest in a cattle-prod sized for plot-bunnies. Bribe them with chocolate if they’ll help you write another 1,000 words. Stop Watching Television for an hour a night, and devote THAT time to writing. And thirdly: If you post a practice story online (not one intended for publication), ignore the comment/reviews that are all squees and all flames, but cherish the ones which have both, and which go into details of why. Those will teach you more about your writing than you may have dreamed possible.