

Chapter 1 : Bush Poodles Are Murder : Lou Allin :

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With a cottage on a frozen lake as her inspiration, she started her Belle Palmer series, featuring a realtor and her German shepherd, beginning with Northern Winters Are Murder. Watch for Contingency Plan in the same series. How many dogs have their own mystery novel? This excerpt comes from Bush Poodles are Murder, written in Friday her real name is now ten and blind. I first saw Chile Pepper as she was called by her breeder when she was eight weeks old. He became her guardian for the five years he had left, a gentle giant. On our honeymoon night we camped in a crowded provincial park near a shale beach. It was humid and hotter than hell, even for Ontario. As we took her leashless around the large campground, she stayed by our feet like a furry magnet. But just in case, we put a collar and rope on her and tied her to a picnic table while we made dinner. Like a wild colt, she thrashed and screamed like she was being tortured. What she was telling us was that she was bonded. Friday was smart enough to know that she was home wherever we were. As we sweltered in the small tent, flaps open, with our two dogs and bulky air mattresses, Nikon stepped out for a breath of air. Fumbling in the dark, I went after him. When he got back in the tent, he stepped on the keys and hit the remote horn. The truck started blasting all over the campground, waking two hundred people before we found the control tangled in the sleeping bags. It was an auspicious start. How could I resist putting her in my next series book? To hype the necessary conflict, I made her a spoiled little girl, but a gutsy heroine in the final scenes where she and the main character find themselves without shelter during a Northern Ontario blizzard. A picture of her jumping with snow in the background put her on the cover of Dogs in Canada. Not bad for a six-month pup. Since we lived in the woods, aka the bush, she was out every day, winter and summer, hiking or snowshoeing. A mighty mouse, she was fearless but prudent. Speed was her salvation. Once an agile young Doberman met us around a corner and started chasing her. Off they went down the woodsy paths and out of sight. I envisioned the worst, but in a few minutes, back she came, having led the hapless Dobe on a wild chase and looping back through the woods. Even at C, she never missed a trek, wearing her monogrammed purple fleece and nylon parka with slots for handwarmers. Once we tried a pair of Mutlucks, but they flew off as she sped along. I tied them in a fir tree on our favourite path. She carried on normally for a few more years as we moved into border collies and started agility training. Friday would chase hell for leather after the bouncing tennis balls from the Chuck-it. Woe to the border collie who got in her way. She was Alpha Bitch at fifteen pounds. She soon adapted to the winter rains and traded her parka for a yellow rain slicker. Two years ago, cataracts put her lights out. There was no use operating on them with the underlying retinal problem. But the blindness had come so slowly that she adapted perfectly. Now she uses her sense of smell and hearing to follow our feet into the rainforest and up and down clear-cut roads. Only near a precipice do I use a leash just for precaution. When we reach a lake or creek, she remembers that she used to dive for stones, pull them onto shore, and then paw at them in an homage to her terrier roots. Next treat for her will be a salmonberry or blackberry as they ripen on our magical island. As for mud, she slogs with us through the worst bogs in spring, navigating roots and rocks and up to her knees in muck. Does she bump into things? Life is no fun behind the door. In the tri-level house, she goes up and down the stairs like a pro, then jumps onto the ottoman where she holds court in safety while the border collie chases a toy. The ritual is familiar. While she used to jump on the bed with aplomb, that was one trick she had to abandon, or so I thought. Having been in a kennel for a few days while we flew to Arizona, she was very excited on my return. She leaped up on pure faith when I patted the bed. The other day she did the same thing in the rear of our Ford Focus wagon where she rides in a crate. So eager was she to leave for the walk that she leaped up into the back by herself. Our border collie Zia, already crated, might have been telling her that the way was clear. Friday depends on us to watch out for her without setting too many limits. She is as much a lover of life and challenges as she ever was, teaching us lessons about bravery and adaptation AND the sheer joy of action.

Chapter 2 : - Bush Poodles Are Murder A Belle Palmer Mystery (Rendezvous Crime) by Lou Allin

In the third Belle Palmer mystery, Belle takes her friend and employee on a snowshoe trek. Miriam MacDonald brings her spoiled mini-poodle, a gift from investment broker boyfriend, who promises huge returns on her life savings. Later that week, Miriam discovers Elphinstone bludgeoned to death in his condo.

Strange days in Australia. The government of John Howard has issued full-page advertisements calling on Australians to protect their "friendly, decent society" from terrorists within by spying on each other. More than a thousand people have used a hotline "to report things", causing grief to Muslim Australians. Asked if he thought it better that Muslim women made themselves "less conspicuous at this time" by not wearing their traditional headdress, Howard replied: For those Australians yet to succumb to the amnesia of the times, this is all very familiar, evoking a melancholy history of obsequious service to great power: Some years ago, I interviewed an Australian warrant officer who had served on a CIA-run assassination team in Vietnam, and ruefully recalled to me the words of his American commander. This amazing victory, unknown to the rest of the world, was reported without a hint of irony, let alone the truth of what Australian troops actually did in Afghanistan - kill tribespeople without knowing who they were. Mushroom Club citations have been handed out. An Australian pilot beams from the news pages with his American Bronze Star, awarded for flying Black Hawk helicopter gunships "in combat". Untold numbers of innocent Afghan villagers were killed by these gunship attacks; but that is beside the point. The gormless television news begins with "heart-warming" scenes of Australian sailors being welcomed home from the Gulf, where they are "playing a leading role in the international community enforcing the sanctions against Saddam". Unheard and unheeded by the rest of the world, Howard is our mouse that roars. Almost anything that falls from the lips of George Bush or Donald Rumsfeld is repeated by him. None of this almost comical warmongering is reflected in the public mood, as far as I can detect. Moreover, half the population oppose Australian involvement in an attack on Iraq. In contrast, "paranoia" and "threat" are daily media fare. A Mushroom Club "exclusive" in a Murdoch tabloid, the Herald Sun, claims that "terrorists train in forests in secret camps" near Melbourne. Australia has the most narrowly based and tightly controlled press in the western world. Seventy per cent of capital-city newspapers are owned or dominated by Rupert Murdoch; in Adelaide he controls everything, including the printing presses. The only national daily, the Australian, is owned by Murdoch. The Australian Broadcasting Corporation, directly funded from Canberra, is routinely intimidated. Much of the rest is Murdochism by another name. This is demeaning for Australian democracy, but never more so than now, when the fabrication of a war atmosphere here surpasses any absurdity spun by Jack Straw. The foreign editor of the Australian, Greg Sheridan, is not untypical. On other forms of "terror", closer to home, the hysteria is different. Imprisoned behind razor wire in some of the most hostile terrain on earth, in what, by any definition, are concentration camps, are refugees who have committed no crime. Many are from Iraq and Afghanistan, the countries to which Howard is prepared to send troops "in the cause of freedom". The racism is self-evident. Mandatory detention does not apply to the thousands of Britons and other Europeans who overstay their visas. The conservative former prime minister Malcolm Fraser has described these camps as "hell-holes". Australians caught a glimpse of their horrors when an ABC programme told the story of a six-year-old Iranian boy. Having spent a quarter of his life behind the wire of Woomera camp in the South Australian desert, he witnessed desperate adults set themselves on fire and a suicidal man slashing himself. Silent and depressed, he refused food and drink and sat day after day, drawing pictures of razor wire. The Catholic Commission for Justice, Development and Peace has described conditions in the camps as "institutional child abuse". When the head of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Louis Joinet, was finally allowed to visit Woomera and other camps, he said he had not seen a more gross abuse of human rights in more than 40 inspections of mandatory facilities around the world. The minister responsible for the camps, Philip Ruddock, once boasted to me that Aboriginal infant mortality was "only" three times that of white children. Alexander Downer, the foreign minister, unwittingly explained why. He said he did not like the idea of UN officials from the Committee Against Torture arriving unannounced to inspect its refugee detention camps. Racism is never

far from the surface in Australian politics. After years of political failure, he took power in , the beneficiary of an extraordinary public cynicism towards a succession of Labor governments whose spin and betrayal of those known here as "true believers" are acknowledged by Blairites in Britain as prototypes. Howard is now lauded in the media for his "political skills". Having waged a war of attrition against the Aboriginal people, denying them universal land rights and incurring a shaming judgement of racism from the UN committee on discrimination, Australian government policy is clearly directed at exploiting the "threat" of non-European refugees - when, by any measure, there is no threat. Some 4, asylum-seekers arrive illegally by boat in Australia every year, one of the lowest figures in the world. During the last election campaign, in October , it has since been revealed, Howard and his ministers lied about refugees throwing their children into the sea, an incident that was presented as evidence of their inhumanity. His re-election was credited to this "tough stand". While he was telling his favoured radio talkback bigots why it was kind to be tough, a leaking boat on its way to Australia took people to their deaths - including children. Known only as the Siev-X, it was overloaded with Iraqi refugees and in Australian waters, although the government disputes this. An inquiry by the Australian senate last March disclosed that the Australian navy had extensive prior knowledge that the Siev-X was in a perilous state. In other words, the people on board could have been saved. Jane Halton, a special adviser to the prime minister on asylum-seekers, made the same denial. Smith hurriedly retracted his original denial, and on 15 June, Admiral Chris Ritchie, the incoming chief of the navy, admitted that the boat "never came within our search area and we did not change our search area specifically to look for [it]". Navy personnel have been ordered to act as jailers; and prior to their accredited heroics in Afghanistan, Australian SAS troops were sent into action against a Norwegian ship whose captain had rescued asylum-seekers from drowning in Australian waters. A handful of tenacious journalists have told these stories for as long they can, but a consensual silence inevitably descends on what George Orwell called "smelly little orthodoxies". The price Australians are paying for this silence and compliance is not immediately obvious in these midsummer days. The minimum wage, an eight-hour working day, pensions, child benefits, the secret ballot were all won first in Australia. There is virtually no public discussion about this surrender of sovereignty. In a land plentiful with academics, Burchill is one of a handful who have dared speak out. With no public scrutiny, the Labor government of New South Wales is enacting legislation that gives its police force totalitarian powers in the "war on terror". No longer, says a bill being rushed through parliament, can police behaviour "be challenged, reviewed, quashed or called into question on any grounds whatsoever before any court, tribunal, body or person in any legal proceedings". The great American sage Mark Twain loved Australia. He described it as "a place where the ordinary man is king, or thinks he is". In *The Mysterious Stranger* , Twain also wrote about "statesmen [who] invent cheap lies, putting the blame upon the nation that is attacked, and every man will be glad of these conscience-soothing falsities.

Chapter 3 : Lou Allin Book List - FictionDB

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In the third Belle Palmer mystery, Belle takes her friend and employee on a snowshoe trek. Miriam MacDonald brings her spoiled mini-poodle, a gift from investment broker boyfriend, who promises huge returns on her life savings.

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