

Character Spotlight for The Pulp & Mystery Shelf

By Christin Brecher

Murder's No Motive Confidence

Hello, Shannon! Thanks for hosting me today. Some of you out there might know about my store on Nantucket Island, the Wick & Flame, where I make and sell candles. I was also in the local paper recently, regarding a murder I helped solve. Simon Sterling, the estranged uncle of Jessica Sterling, whose wedding I was hired to bedeck, was killed by my one-of-a-kind unity candle. I disagreed with the arrest of Bill Duffy, a family friend, and decided to look into matters myself. Peter Baily, the town's newest reporter for the Inquirer & Mirror, did a great job at covering the story, but there are a couple of rumors I'd like to put to rest.

First, my general stock of candles is not suitable as a murder weapon, so you all can cut out the jokes in town. As for the unity candle which killed Simon Sterling... I designed the candle to be the centerpiece of the wedding ceremony. At two-feet tall and six-inches in diameter, it was delicately designed to match Jessica's dress, but it had the mighty strength of a baseball bat and fell into the wrong hands. I'm happy to say that in spite of the Sterling wedding misfortunes, my unity candles have become quite popular for island weddings.

Second, Tinker, a cat, did help me in my investigation of the case. Tinker arrived with the victim, Uncle Simon, and therefore knew the estranged guest better than anyone at the wedding. Although I had little experience with cats, and our introduction to each other was frankly unpleasant for both of us, I soon realized that Tinker was as interested in the case as I was. I know he'd hiss at me if he heard me say it, but at the end of the day, I think he's a romantic. I couldn't help but fall for the little guy.

Thanks for letting me settle these points for the record.

In other news, I'm starting a new class on candle molds this month. If you would like to join, please stop by the store and I'll give you details. I am also happy to design unique candle scents for special occasions; including birthdays, anniversaries, and wedding ceremonies. I will be closing early on Monday afternoon, however, to go for a harbor tour on Peter Bailey's *Yacht*.