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SILICON VALLEY ENTREPRENUR SURPRISES WITH “SPELLBINDING,” “FAST-PACED,” “VIVID,” MYSTERY NOVEL

Midnight Ink Books Publishes DOT DEAD, a Debut Mystery by Keith Raffel, Founder of Internet Software Pioneer UpShot Corporation

“Raffel, founder of a software company, knows his way around the high tech industry. He has written a well-plotted mystery with enough action and plot twists to keep most readers going. Add a Jewish mother and a great rabbi to the mix and you can't go wrong.”

---*Library Journal*, July 2006

“*Dot Dead* is a fast-paced, truly witty mystery set in the maze and madness of Silicon Valley. Ian Michaels is a determined and often befuddled hero who must navigate around a delightfully opinionated Jewish mother and solve a murder while finding love. This is a fun read.”

—Stuart M. Kaminsky, 2006 Mystery Writers of America Grand Master

“Keith Raffel’s expertise in the computer field plus his ability to compose a terrific story combine to make *Dot Dead* a spellbinding novel, with a protagonist you won’t want to leave....”

—Alan Paul Curtis, Who-Dunnit.com

“Keith Raffel has written an exciting and believable amateur sleuth murder mystery that doesn’t strain the bounds of credibility like the flaw of so many books in the sub-genre.... The protagonist is a very likeable and believable character who inspires positive emotions in everyone around him including readers because he comes across as an ‘everyman.’”

—Harriet Klausner, #1 Reviewer, Amazon.com

“The vivid description of Ian’s life and work in the more elevated levels of a Silicon Valley business is a great strength of the book... Not many people know enough about upper management to visualize such a workplace, and to see it portrayed so vividly adds greatly to the interest of the story.”

—Book Bytes, www.bookbytes.com

Woodbury, MN, July 5, 2006. “Keith Raffel, an entrepreneur who sold his CRM firm, UpShot, to Siebel Systems for \$70 million in 2003, publishes a surprisingly entertaining whodunit,” writes *Inc. Magazine* (July 2006).

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Before he started his company, Raffel already had literary ambitions and signed up for a mystery writing class at UC Berkeley Extension. “We did a classroom exercise and – poof! – I had the beginning of a novel.”

“You write what you know and what I knew was the entrepreneurial culture of Silicon Valley,” says Raffel. “In writing *DOT DEAD*, I tried to capture the Valley’s *zeitgeist*, the monomania focused on bringing the next great product to the market and making millions along the way.” Raffel lives with his wife and four children just eight houses away from where he grew up in the Silicon Valley city of Palo Alto. Sara Weinman of the popular mystery blog, *Confessions of an Idiosyncratic Mind*, chose *DOT DEAD* as a pick of the week, writing, “Raffel’s debut mystery is an entertaining look at the underbelly of Silicon Valley, one with enough twists and turns and likeable characters to hope for more.”

Raffel will be kicking off a book tour at Dark Carnival in Berkeley on July 9. Besides the San Francisco Bay Area, he will visit bookstores in the Los Angeles, Denver, Portland, and Seattle metropolitan areas. He will also be on two panels at the ConMisterio Mystery Conference in Austin on July 15 and 16. Last week he began a blog, *Dot Dead Diaries*, online at www.keithraffel.com, to report on the tour and reflect on his experiences as a first-time mystery author.

In *DOT DEAD*, when Ian Michaels, a Silicon Valley hotshot, discovers a young, beautiful woman stabbed to death in his apartment, it takes him a moment to realize that the still-warm corpse is his maid. Although she made him cookies and left him notes, they had never met. Gwendolyn Goldberg was a stranger to Ian, but her family, old boyfriend, and the Palo Alto police seem to think they were a couple.

Despite his best efforts to prove otherwise, the evidence against Ian grows. A letter to Gwen is found etched in the memory of his computer, and it looks like someone is framing Ian for murder, but who?

An executive at a tech firm, Ian is anxious to prove his innocence to his boss and mentor, Paul Berk, a Silicon Valley legend. Ian is so close to Paul and his wife, Kathy, that he frequently stops by their house for dinner, but recently Ian has been facing problems at the office. He is about to give a presentation that will determine whether he gets the nod a Paul’s heir apparent.

As the investigation heats up, so does Ian’s interest in Gwendolyn’s sister, Rowena. As Ian learns about Gwen’s past, he realizes that he and Rowena have interests and values in common beyond the Silicon Valley business scene, including their Jewish religion and traditions.

However, Ian tries not to fall for Rowena. Because in this dangerous game, someone’s getting away with murder – and whoever it is knows him very, very well.

DOT DEAD: A Silicon Valley Mystery

By Keith Raffel

www.keithraffel.com

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