

## The First Two Paragraphs of *Shadows on a Morning in Maine*

by Lea Waite

The first sentence ... certainly the first paragraph ... of a book sets the tone and should entice the reader. What is happening? Why? And ... what will happen next?

*Shadows on a Morning in Maine*, published last month, is the eighth in my Shadows Antique Print mystery series. Books in the series take place about three months apart; the eighth book is set almost exactly two years after the first. During those two years (in addition to solving more than eight mysteries, of course) my protagonist, Maggie Summer, has dealt with being a new widow, run her antique print business and taught at a community college, fallen in love, and decided to adopt an older child. But Will Brewer, the new man in her life, doesn't want to be a father, and tension on this issue follows through the series.

In *Shadows on a Morning in Maine* I wanted to tie up a lot of ends. These are the first three sentences.

*"I don't need another mother. I get by fine on my own." Brooklin Deschaine clutched a worn stuffed animal tightly to her chest.*

*The words rang in Maggie Summer's ears and heart.*

I've cut to the major theme of the book: Maggie has finally gotten a referral for the daughter she's longed for. But will the placement work? Is the reality of adoption what she has dreamed of?

Those who've been reading the series will realize that right away. For readers who've picked this book up and don't know the background, the first two pages also set the scene.

We find out that Maggie's moved from New Jersey to Maine, that she's been dreaming of adoption, and that Will Brewer, the man she loved, had finally been convinced "this decision could be right for both of them." Could be. But will it?

That first paragraph also includes a clue to the mystery in the book. The stuffed animal Brook is holding is a seal, a toy given to her by her biological mother. It is the only possession she holds dear. Maggie is thrilled when Brook relaxes with her for the first time after she finds out Maggie lives near a river where seals live.

But then someone begins shooting the seals. Can Maggie hide that from Brook? Better yet ... can she stop it? And we're off and running.



Maine author Lea Wait is the author of eighteen traditionally published books, including the Agatha-finalist Shadows Antique Print mystery series and the *USA Today* best-selling Mainely Needlepoint series, the most recent of which, *Dangling by a Thread*, was released yesterday. She also writes historical novels for young people set in nineteenth-century Maine. Her book *Living and Writing on the Coast of Maine* is about her new life as the wife of an artist and a published author. She invites readers to friend her on Facebook and Goodreads, read the blog she writes with other Maine mystery authors

([www.mainecrimewriters.com](http://www.mainecrimewriters.com)) and check her website, [www.leawait.com](http://www.leawait.com), which includes links to prequels of her most recent books.