

Mertz Peters Michaels

Notes from MPM - February 2012



Poor Smoke - not evil, just terrified!

Did the holidays leave you limp? No more excuses. It's February for goodness sake! This, not April, is the saddest month, in a way; it's sooooo long till the first daffodil, and there is surely more snow to come.



Joe - what he is saying to the camera is not fit to print.

I've been working on a detailed chronology of the Amelia books. There's some excuse for my forgetting important points; I wrote the first Amelia, **Crocodile on the Sandbank**, thirty years ago! I've had to keep track of where I am in the saga, if I may use that grandiose word, and it gets a little confusing now and then. **A River in the Sky**, the latest Amelia, takes place in 1910, so as I was writing I had to keep track of what was about to happen as well as what had already happened in the series. Fortunately, I have help from Kristen, my personal editor, and Jennifer, my publishing editor.



Peanut - momentarily still enough to snap a photo.

And I have started the next book. Tentative title is **The Painted Queen**, though that may change. It takes place during the 1912-13 season (more "keeping track" of the other books in the series). Give you three guesses as to who she is. I can't promise when it will be finished – the mind works a little slower as time

goes on! – but, I hope to turn in a manuscript this spring.



Elegant Bruiser - Sethos.



Vicky - during one of her
LOOOOONNNGGG staring spells
(still shots are not a problem).

No communication from me would be complete without cat news. The population at present consists of five: Joe, a gorgeous, mean spirited Maine Coon (tuxedo type); Smoke, a shy, neurotic, smoky Maine Coon, who lives upstairs; Vicky, an “ordinary” tabby, whose head, I suspect, is empty of brains (she can spend long minutes at the door trying to decide whether to go out or stay in); Sethos, a big, sleek black bruiser who turned up one day and refused to leave; and the latest, whose formal name is Watson but who is generally known as Peanut. He's a small orange tabby who moves faster than any cat I've ever owned – zip, zip, an orange blur goes past the door! When he wants in he stands at the door and yells. So there is no lack of excitement around here. Some cat or other always wants in or out.

We've had abnormally warm weather, long spells of 50s and 60s, which feel very nice but give an uneasy feeling that there's bad weather on the way. (Maybe I'm just a pessimist.)

So take care, and remember:

If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind? - Shelley



Barbara