

Michael Sedge returns to fiction

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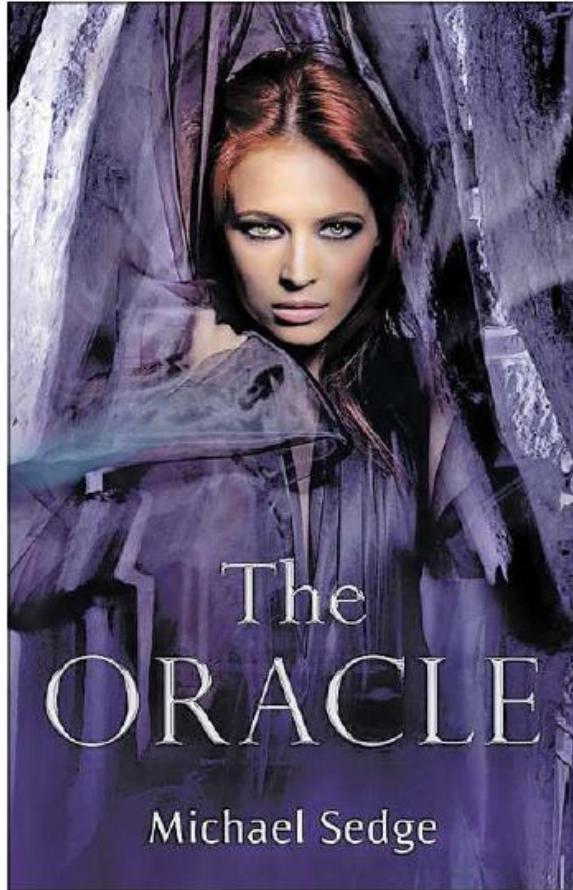
Michael Sedge joined the Navy as a young man with only two goals in mind: Getting out of Flint, Mich., and staying as far as possible from Vietnam.

"It was 1973, three of my high school friends went off to Vietnam, and my number was coming up," remembers Sedge. "I went to the recruiter and asked, 'What do I need to do to get geographical location?' and he said, 'Four years of your life.' I flew to Naples and a week later the war was over."

Sedge spent the next two years unloading aircraft, "and that taught me I did not want to kick boxes the rest of my life," and then finished his military career in a public affairs office. A few major events happened while he was stationed there, "so I got to know people, from world leaders in media and the bureau chief for the Associated Press in Rome," leading to his first post-military job. "I spent one year as a war correspondent on military aircraft, and put in more time in war zones than I ever did in four years of active duty," Sedge said.

His Navy background helped him as a war correspondent, Sedge said, because few people working at other overseas offices had that advantage.

"They'd go out to cover a story, but if you don't know how the military functions and the hierarchy, it's very difficult to get good information," Sedge said.



Before long, he was running his own media agency, and later transitioned to marketing products for companies hoping to get a foothold in the Army and Navy Exchange stores, and later promoting international calling cards, bringing athletes and musicians to perform for the troops and setting up telephone operations for service members in a war zone through the Armed Forces Exchange Service. That contract led

to another government contract in Italy, where he met his future business partner.

For the past decade, Sedge has provided architectural design, engineering service and construction management in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, "doing things most American companies will not do," Sedge said.

It all adds up to a busy and fulfilling life, one that would seem to be "enough" for most people. But

through it all, Sedge has been writing, as well, from articles and audio tape scripts to children's plays, television documentaries and more than 30 nonfiction books, including the award-winning "The Lost Ships of Pisa."

This year, Sedge has two fiction titles coming out: First is "The Oracle," a modern mystery inspired by an ancient Greek sibyl thought to have lived at the city of Cumae, just a short drive from Sedge's home in modern southern Italy. Sedge had researched the area for articles he was writing for "Discovering Archaeology" magazine about the 3,000-year-old ruins at Cumae. A second fiction title, "Death Watch," is about an international terrorist who is a U.S. citizen and who plants a virus aboard an American aircraft carrier.

Though Sedge based his writing career on nonfiction, these two latest books are not his first efforts at writing fiction. He had a book and movie deal about international terrorism and NCIS, "but when 9/11 happened, Columbia and Bantam cancelled the deal, saying they can't touch it at this time," Sedge said.

For now, he's back at his writing desk, working on two more nonfiction titles and another novel, traveling the world and continuing to carve out his own path. It's a long way from Flint, Mich., and exactly where he wants to be.