**AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY (short):
Joan Merriam**

***A Just Reckoning*** is Joan Merriam’s first book in the Tess Alexander mystery series. She is a freelance writer, communications consultant, and college instructor, and author of the full-length nonfiction book, *Little Girl Lost: A True Story of Shattered Innocence & Murder*, which sold over 400,000 copies worldwide.

Over the years, she has also authored a number of feature articles, commentaries, profiles, and columns which have appeared in dozens of national and regional magazines and newspapers. Among them are *AARP Magazine*, *Sacramento Magazine*, *Sierra Heritage magazine*, the *Sacramento Bee* newspaper, and *Vidura: The Press Institute of India Mass Media Magazine*.

​​Today, she also writes a column on companion animals which is syndicated in several California and Colorado newspapers.

Joan has been honored for her work by the Society of Professional Journalists, *Writer's Digest* magazine, and most recently, the New Millennium Awards.

She lives in the low mountains of the Sierra Nevada range, in northern California’s historic Gold Country.

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