

July/August 2023

Affaire de Coeur

Bringing You Honest Reviews Since 1980

It's AdC's Anniversary!

And here to help us celebrate:

Ms. July--this time it's a duo

And Ms. August

Leanne Tyler



Claire Marta



Nia Farrell



Reviews!

Reviews!

Reviews!

*AdC Loves Conferences and
Florida is the place!*



Affaire de Coeur

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July/August, 2023

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Dear QWERTY

By Pamela Ackerson

“I want to start helping authors by writing reviews.”

How to Write a Review



media sites, it can make you a strong influencer. Learning and following the guidelines of writing reviews will make your voice heard and generate interaction.

The goal of a good editorial is to persuade the reader to consider the perspective of the reviewer which may result in them changing their opinion. Editorials often focus on controversial issues with widely different viewpoints.

There are different sections to written reviews: (1) Interpretive, (2) critical, (3) persuasive, and (4) praising. Regardless of the type, **a review is the opinion, the perspective of the person who read it.** As such, the reviewer must always keep the content of the review focused on the novel. Comments

acceptable. Finally, the review must be directed toward the book, not the author. The reader of a review should never discern how the reviewer feels about the author, only his/her work.

A review is also a critique of elements other than content. The critical portion of a review can point out, for example, plot holes, the flow of the story, misinformation, or an overused storyline. If you believe misinformation is given, make sure you research it before you say it's wrong. And, where you say it's wrong is important i.e. social media versus contacting them directly. . Authors, publishers, and even some readers are slow to forgive reviewers who blast an error rather than contacting them directly.

“Should reviews contain feedback with praise as well as criticism? Or just point out the errors?”

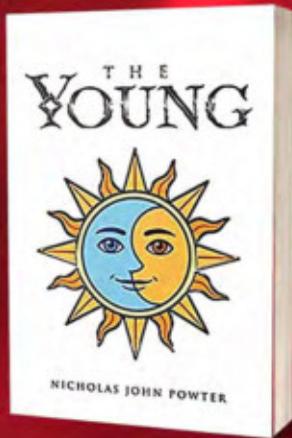
Writing a review is a great way to help readers and authors. As an author writing a review, I have seen how it also helps to promote the author as well as yourself, especially if quotes are used from the review.

A review shares your opinion and, if done properly, can affect other people's opinion of the book. On social

A review is also a critique of elements The critical portion of a review can point out plot holes, the flow of the story, misinformation, or an overused storyline.

must be kept within the boundaries of the story. Personal tangents about things not pertaining to the book are not

Editing is never critiqued. It is not uncommon for a publisher to send out unedited copies for review. Ignore the editing errors; they are working on correcting them. Otherwise, you're reviewing the editor. The editor or editors didn't write the story. It is about the story, not the editing.



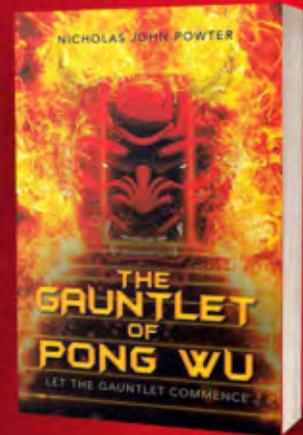
A father and son have been attacked by a mysterious man, an omen, a sinister presence has come about the lands of "The Deluge".

They must go on a journey to stop them and free their lands from both the gods and the cults grasp.

@NicholasJohnPowter

Hell Hath Fury!

Creatures emerge from hell through a sinkhole in a local village, killing all the residents. A demon cast out of hell warns of more holes opening and unleashing all sorts of hideous creatures. To stop them, he needs a human body.



The **Interpretive** component gives the background of the story (without giving away the ending). This is the type *Affaire de Coeur* offers most of the time. Don't spoil the ending! Don't give away plot twists! In fact, don't tell anything after the first half of the book. Give the reader a quick description of the beginning of the storyline. If the book is catching and intrigues the reader enough, he/she will continue to read. Consider the reader's interest in the genre.

The **Critical** element of a review warns the reader there may be issues, even if it still encourages them to read the story and make their own opinion.

The **Persuasive** section engages the reader with a positive opinion to encourage them to read the book. Use facts, or quotes from the book to encourage interaction. Be fair, and keep in mind that everyone has his/her own thoughts on a subject.

The **Praising** portion can be combined with the persuasive section with a call to action. For example: This very talented author takes the reader on a whirlwind of adventure. A must read!

Be positive but honest with the praising and persuasive areas of the review.

Once you've decided to write a review for books, take notes, create an outline if you're so inclined. Jot down special moments that caused an emotional reaction. That's what readers want to hear.

Starting the review is probably the most challenging for anyone, a reader, or an author. That blank page can be scary. Check your notes, re-read the first chapter to get an emotional push and then just write it.

Then, read what you've written, correct it, make it sound better to your ears.

Check your spelling and for any

typos! It doesn't have to be perfect. If you're writing a review for a social media site, no worries, just write. The author will be thrilled.

If you're presenting the book review to a magazine or publisher, it's okay, they have professional editors.

Speaking of writing reviews for a magazine or publisher...we're looking for reviewers. Check our reviewer's guidelines on adcmagazine.com or affairedecoeur.com.

Do you have a subject you'd like Dear Qwerty, to cover? Let us know, DearQwerty@adcmagazine.com

The Spotlight is Shining on two greats

Nia Farrell, AdC's Ms. July and Claire Marta



Spotlight On Nia Farrell and Claire Marta

USA Today best-selling authors Claire Marta and Nia Farrell began co-writing in 2019. Since then, three of their titles have been voted “The 50 Best Indie Books of the Year.”

A native Brit, Claire lives in Italy with her husband and daughter. Claire’s other co-writes include the popular “Churchill Bradley Academy” series.

Nia has nearly a hundred titles in a wide range of genres written under four names. Married to her high school sweetheart fifty years ago, she lives in Southern Illinois with her husband and seven cats rescued as abandoned feral kittens.

AdC: Tell us about the genre(s) you write. Why did you choose to go in that direction?

CM: Individually, we write a broad range of genres, but we began our collaboration writing paranormal romance with a sci-fi twist. “Guarded Hearts” is unlike any other paranormal series out there, following cadres of shifters in genetically engineered bodies designed to advance human evolution. The storyline hits a broad range of categories—paranormal, science fiction, MMA, Mafia, vampire, magic, reincarnation, MC, ménage, MM/LGBTQ, angels, fairies, psychics, ghosts, and more. If you like dark paranormal romance with HEAs for the main characters and a heat level that’s off the charts, give this series a

try. The titles are free in KU. Casey and Ash (Guarded Hearts Books 2 and 7) were voted “The 50 Best Indie Books of the Year.”

AdC: Tell us about the type of characters you love to write about.

CM: Complicated anti-heroes.

NF: I love strong women, dominant men, intricate characters with hidden depths, and survivors coping in the aftermath.

AdC: Do you have a new book or series?

CM: “Churchill Bradley Academy” which is a bully stepbrother romance series I wrote with L. Ann.

NF: My latest release is *Nobody’s Baby: A Devil’s Handmaidens MC Novel: Wolf Creek Chapter Book 1*, part of the “Devil’s Handmaidens” collaborative series. My pen name Ree L. Diehl has a new MC/BDSM novella in the *Just One Night* erotic anthology.

AdC: Favorite quote?

NF: *The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched—they must be felt with the heart.* (Helen Keller)

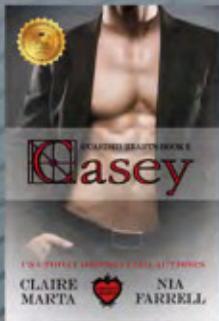
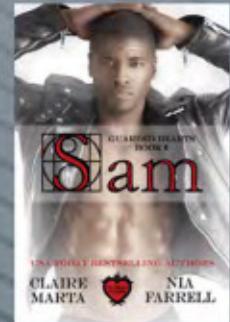
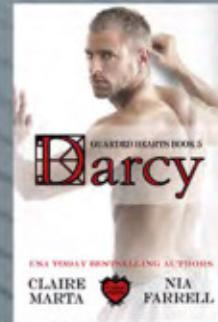
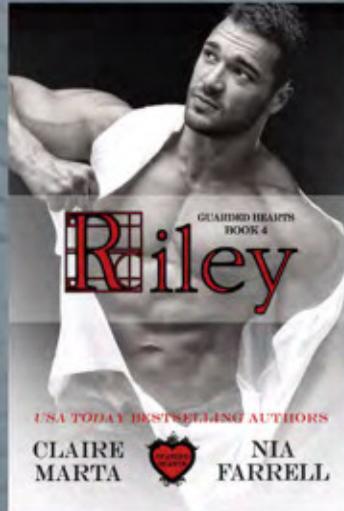
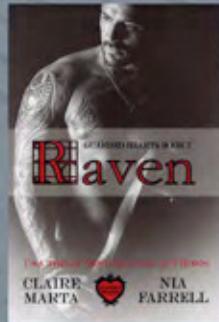
AdC: If you were transported to the setting of the book you’re currently reading or writing, where would you be?

NF: 19th century Syria.

GUARDED HEARTS

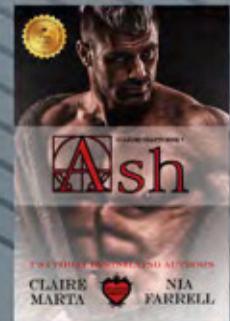
USA Today Best-Selling Authors

CLAIRE MARTA AND NIA FARRELL



Casey (Book 2)
was voted one of
The 50 Best Indie
Books of 2020.

Ash (Book 7)
was voted one of
The 50 Best Indie
Books of 2021.



Reviewer: "I have thoroughly enjoyed this series from start to finish. It's a different type of PNR / Sci Fi / Erotic read that has drawn me in from the start."

Amazon <http://mybook.to/GHSeries> FREE with KU

GARGOYLE SHIFTERS WITH A SCI-FI TWIST!

COMPLETE SEVEN-BOOK SERIES

AdC: Do you hide any "Easter eggs" secrets/truths in your books that only a few people will find?

CM: Yes!

NF: Absolutely!

AdC: If you saw a doorway/portal in the middle of the forest, would you enter it?

CM: Yes, as I love adventure.

NF: If I had only myself to consider, yes. But in reality, my presence is required here.

AdC: What scenes do you find hard to write and why?

CM: I don't really have trouble with scenes, but I have to be in the right mood to write them.

NF: Fight scenes that require intricate choreography.

AdC: Will you be attending any book signings or conventions?

CM: I will be attending British Book

Bash and Author Behind Bars, both in the UK next year. I also might be attending a signing in the US as well.

NF: Not in the near future. Having a husband with Parkinson's and indoor pets makes it a challenge to travel.

AdC: What's something about you -- personality traits, habits, background, etc., that has been useful in your writing?

NF: I used to spend school lunch hours reading encyclopedias and world mythology. In writing, I use my base of knowledge, eclectic interests, love of history, and wide range of life experiences (from flying planes to period re-enacting) to craft interesting characters and compelling stories.

AdC: Please give us the following contact information:

Claire Marta & Nia Farrell website <http://bit.ly/ClaireNiaBooks>

Claire Marta & Nia Farrell Facebook Page <http://bit.ly/TrueLiesFB>

Claire Marta & Nia Farrell Facebook Group <http://bit.ly/TobiassBratsFB>

Claire Marta website <http://bit.ly/ClaireMartaWix>

Claire Marta Twitter <http://bit.ly/ClaireMartaTwitter>

Claire Marta Facebook page <http://bit.ly/ClaireMartaFB>

Claire Marta Facebook group <http://bit.ly/LiquorAndLust>

Nia Farrell website <http://bit.ly/My3PensWP>

Nia Farrell Twitter <https://twitter.com/AuthrNiaFarrell>

Nia Farrell Facebook page <http://bit.ly/FBNiaFarrell>

Nia Farrell Facebook group <http://bit.ly/TheFoldFB>



Just One Night Anthology

Seven authors share their erotic thoughts and dreams, guaranteed to heat you up—mind, body, and soul.

The collection includes *Duke* by USA Today best-selling author Nia Farrell writing as Ree L. Diehl.

A tattooed biker mistakes an interior designer for a call girl.

Jenna Kennedy

On St. Patrick's Day at a pub owned by the Midnight Rovers MC, a tattooed biker mistook me for a call girl, pinned me against the beer garden wall, and kissed me senseless. When he offered to buy me, I quickly put him in his place, but I can't get him out of my mind.

Duke, aka John Connor

I've never paid for pleasure, but I wanted this woman—only to learn she wasn't for sale. With her cousin and my brother in the same Irish band, it's only a matter of time before I see Jenna again. When I do, I plan to pick up where we left off and make her forget every man who's gone before, including her mobster boyfriend.

Excerpt:

Jesus, he was big. He stood at least six feet, three inches in biker boots, towering above her five-feet, five-inch frame. Across the room, he'd looked imposing. Up close, he was intimidating. Taller, stronger, faster. There was no way she'd outrun him in the four-inch heels she'd worn.

Unlike her sister, she had no intention of joining the band on stage for an impromptu dance or two.

Jenna inhaled a shaky breath. The light evening breeze carried a scent of male musk, leather, and whiskey. Combined with an arrestingly handsome face, sculpted physique, and intricate tattoos, he exuded a potent blend of pure, raw *machismo*.

The biker lowered his chin to look at her from his superior height. Leaning close enough to smell her hair, he dragged in a breath and held it for a long, laden moment.

"Move, please," she stammered, praying that he would.

He did, but not in the way she expected. The biker stepped closer, forcing her to retreat until he'd backed her against the wall. A ghost of a smile played over his lips, but the molten look in his eyes held heat, not humor.

"How much?" he rumbled.

The deep baritone of his voice sent a lightning bolt of sexual energy straight to her core.

Jenna stared at him, trying to discern his meaning. "For

what?"

He caught his lower lip between his teeth and slowly pulled it free. Planting his hands on either side of her head, he pinned her hips against the wall, letting her feel his growing arousal. Dipping his head, he nudged her ear with his nose and whispered, "Everything."

This story includes adult situations, mistaken identity, secret identity, and elements of BDSM. Written for Ages 18+.

Author's Note: Duke and Jenna's story began as a short, fictitious excerpt written by Paige Turner, the lead character in *A Package for Paige (Unbillable Hours #2)* by Ree L. Diehl.

Universal Buy Link <https://books2read.com/u/3Jo6WX>

Books written by Nia Farrell and Claire Marta:

The "Guarded Hearts" series features gargoyle shifters with a sci-fi twist and a vampire villain you'll love to hate. Books 1-6 are ménages (MFM, MMF, MMFM). Book 7, the epic series finale, is an age gap MF BDSM romance. Book 1 can be read as a standalone, but books 2-7 should be read in order.

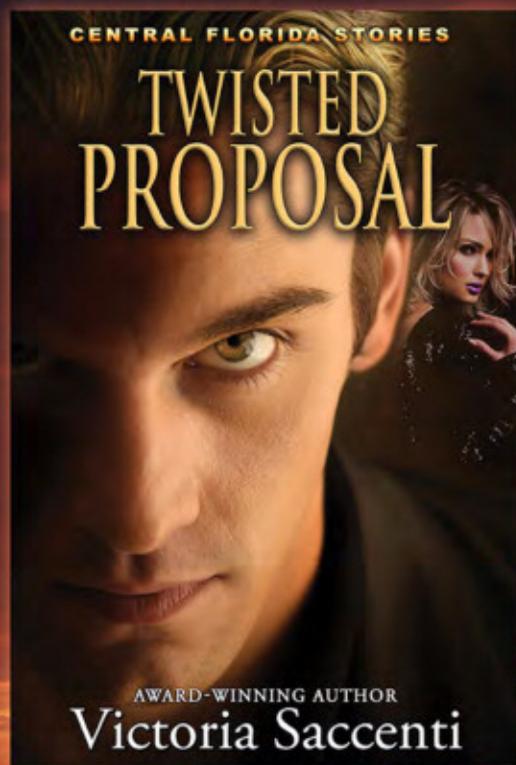
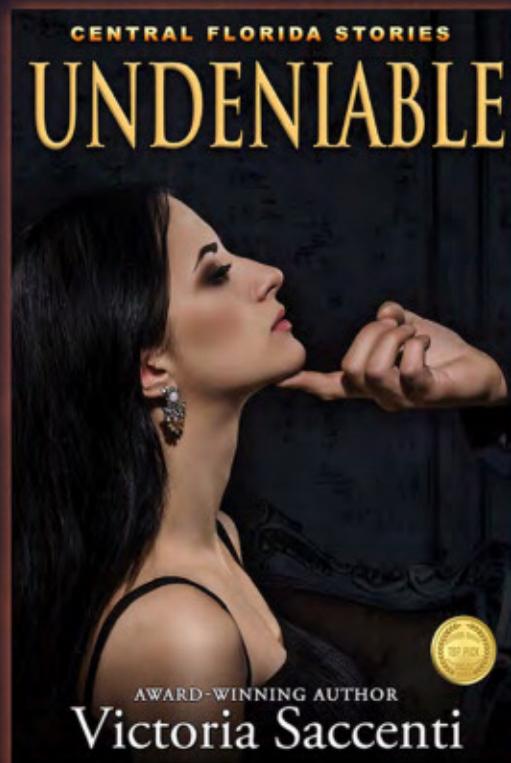
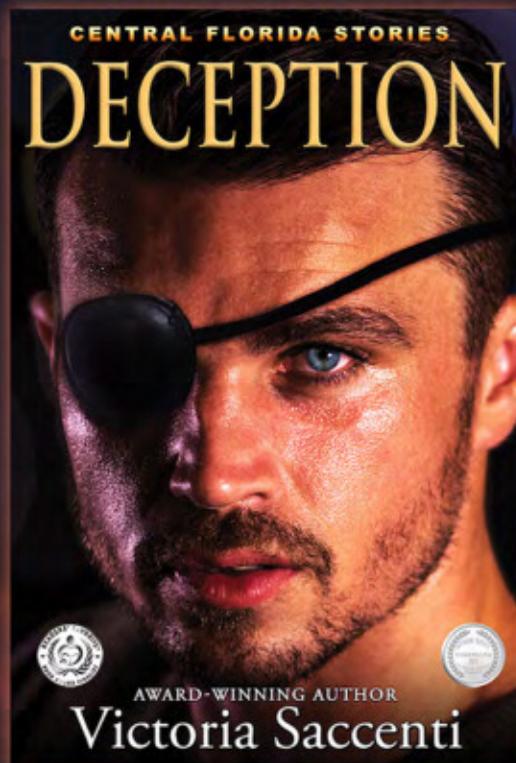
Awards: *Casey* (Guarded Hearts Book 2) was voted in the top 10 of The 50 Best Indie Books of 2020. *Ash* (Guarded Hearts Book 7) was voted one of The 50 Best Indie Books of 2021.

Genres: Paranormal, Sci-Fi/Genetic Engineering, RomCom, Shifter, Angel, Fairy, Vampire, BDSM, Ménage, Interracial, LGBTQIA, DD/lg, age gap.



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A sultry collection, from the pen of Victoria Saccenti.

victoriasaccentiwrites.com

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Saccenti
THE ESSENCE OF ROMANCE

AdC LOVES Conferences

The Space Coast Book Lovers' Conference

The Space Coast Book Lovers in Cape Canaveral, Florida, was held from June 22 to the 25th. Jampacked full of voracious readers and fantastic authors, it's one of the best, if not the best, book conventions in the state.

From the Meet and Greet on Thursday night, to the Bookniqués, launch parties, games, author panels, book signing, and an incredible amount of delicious food, everyone was kept busy having fun.

Keep your eyes peeled and ready. Next year's event is tentatively scheduled for June 19-23, 2024.

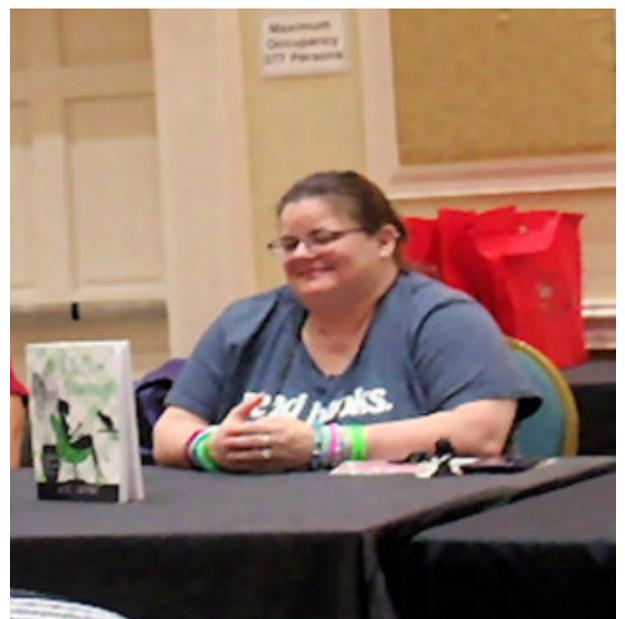
SpaceCoastBookLovers.com



Space Coast Meet and Greet

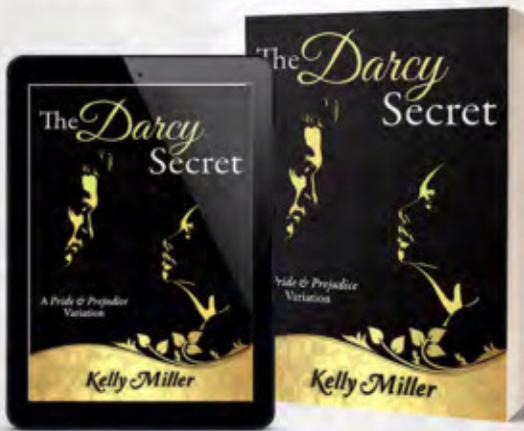


Taira Wilson (l) with hostess Teri Edney (r)



Author J. C. Layne

Will a dire family secret lead to Fitzwilliam Darcy's ruin?



Darcy's heartfelt conversation with Miss Elizabeth Bennet leads to their engagement. But just when his future could not appear brighter, a dreadful revelation casts a cloud of gloom over him, threatening his hopes and plans.

And when an ominous shadow of suspicion falls upon his beloved sister, Georgiana, Darcy is compelled to determine the truth. Does her angelic countenance conceal a deviant, even dangerous, nature?

Amazon #1 Bestseller!

In this *Pride and Prejudice* variation, Darcy and Elizabeth face several grim obstacles, including the sudden death of a family member. Will these challenges drive them apart?

“If you're looking for an escape, or the perfect book to take on holiday, *The Darcy Secret* won't disappoint!”

Instagram: @kelly.miller.author Twitter: @Kellyrei007

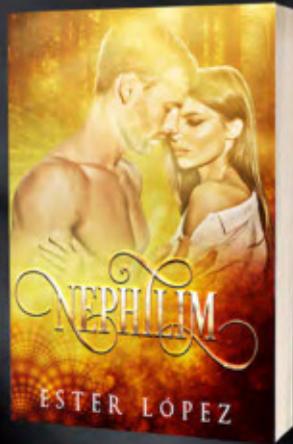
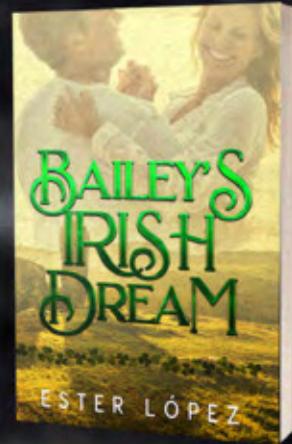
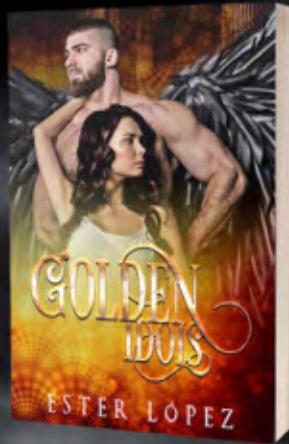
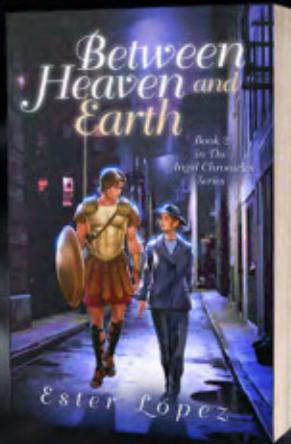
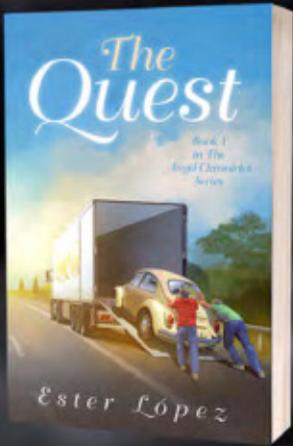


Author feuds with game show host Robbie Cox

Invite Us! You may be surprised to find us there covering your all-important event.

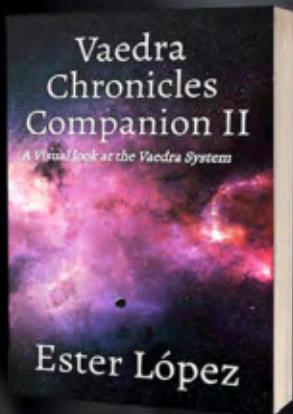


The signing authors

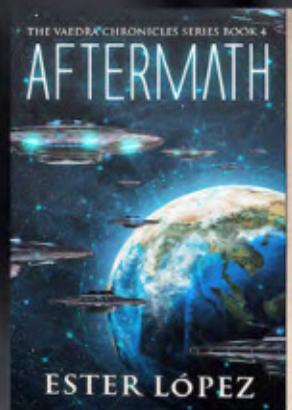
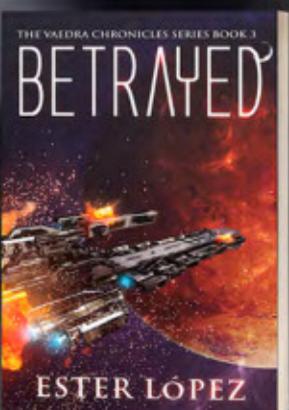
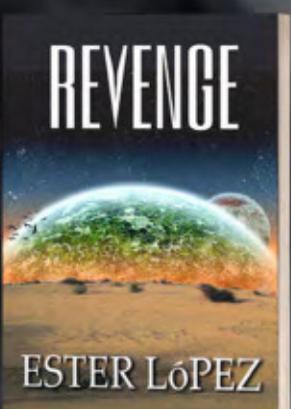
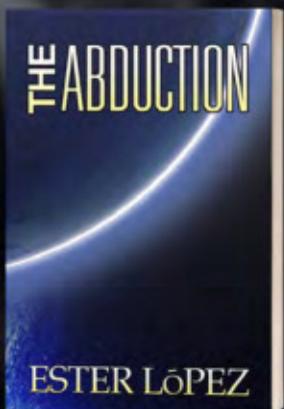


Writing on the Edge of Reality

The Angel Chronicles
The Vaedra Chronicles



Ester Lopez.com
@EsterLopez1



FLIRTY IN TAMPA

Flirty in Tampa, sponsored by Anytime Author Promotions, was held at the Hyatt House Tampa Airport Westshore. In the morning before the event started a group of us met for breakfast. Goodies were handed out to readers and then we all gathered together for the book signing event.

Seventy plus authors from all genres got together for this fantastic book signing event. Raffle basket donations went to help foster kids receive the life they deserve.

A Kids Place of Tampa Bay
<https://akidsplacetb.org/>

The next Flirty in Tampa is scheduled for October 5, 2024
For more information: anytimeauthorpromotions.com
facebook.com/
groups/134150043841497



*Hostess, Virginia Lee Johnson (l)
and Author Pamela Ackerson (r)*



Author, Gina Ferguson



Hostess, Eden Rose



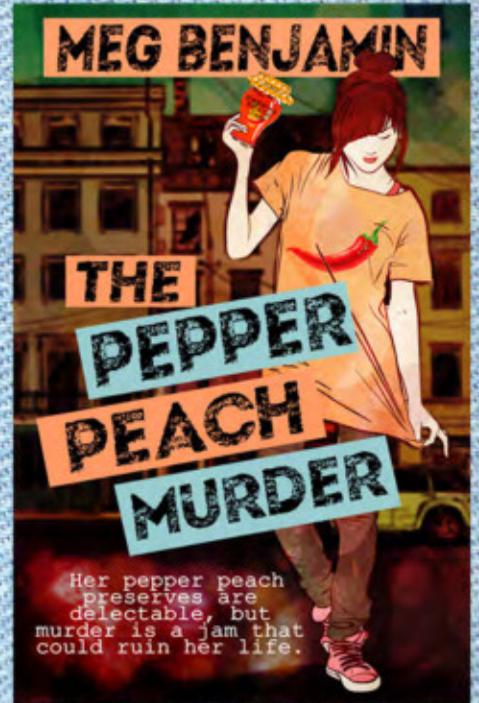
*Photographer
Dante Dellamore*



She's the Jam Queen of Shavano County

But now she's got a murder to solve and a tasty chef who may make her want to reconsider her dating freeze.

The Pepper Peach Murder
Meg Benjamin
From the Wild Rose Press



Author Jennifer Wedmore

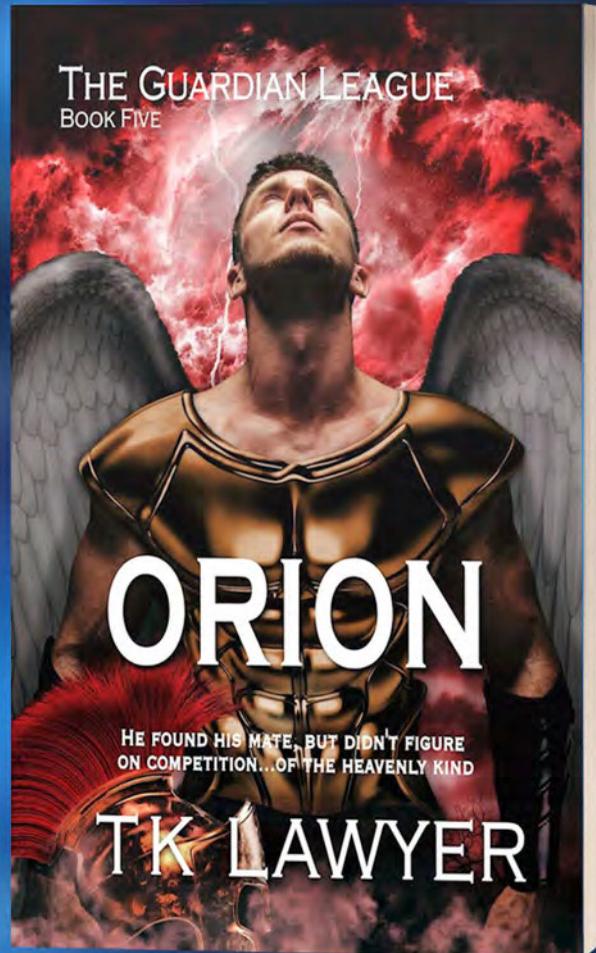
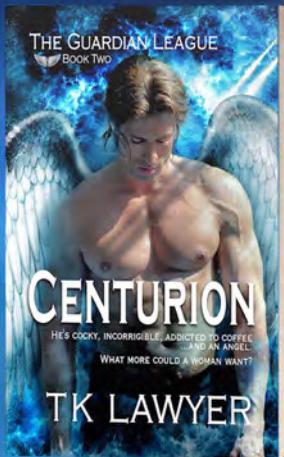
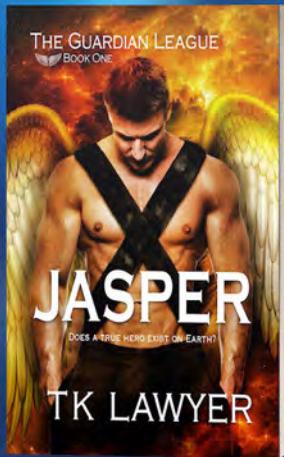


Author Kathleen Lopez



Author TK Lawyer

Passionate* Playful* Paranormal



Jasper

Single female seeks rare, coveted treasure. That was the announcement Tatiana wanted to splatter across every online dating site. She'd had her share of too many toads.

Centurion

A human mate? No thanks. Centurion watched his colleagues, one by one, drop out of the dating pool, choosing committed relationships with humans vs. bachelorhood.

Apollo

Lauren was an assignment. He didn't expect to fall in love. Since her birth, Apollo watched Lauren mature, witnessing all her milestones with a strong sense of pride.

Aeron

Kim is stuck in a desperate situation. One she never thought she'd wind up in: Her husband has given up.

Orion

Torn between two angels, Zoe must choose only one. Orion found his fated mate the second he saw her in the reflecting pool.

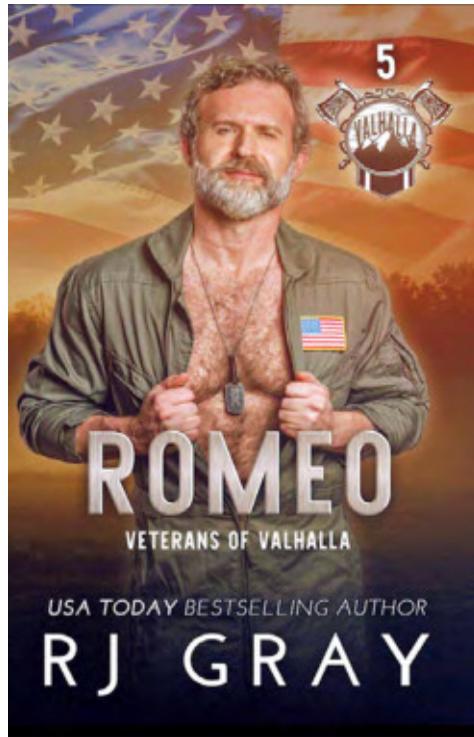
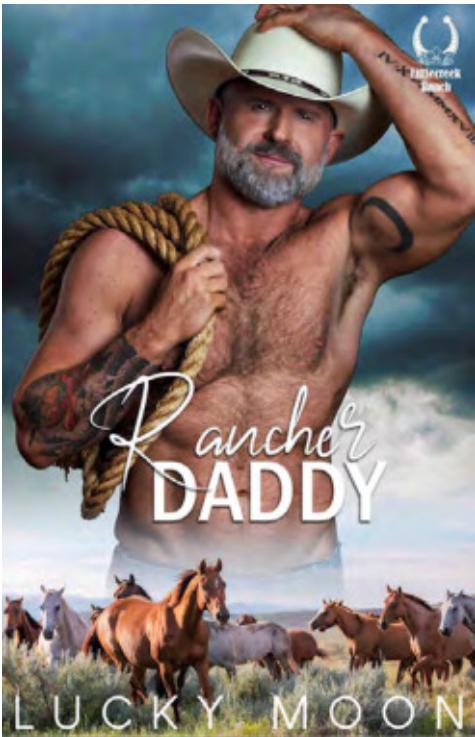
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@TKLawyer



An Interview with Cover Model Kevin Davis

Brought to You by Debra Parmley



Debra: Welcome to Cover Model Corner, Kevin. Let's jump right in. What was the first cover you appeared on and how did this come about?

Kevin: My first cover was *A Dream Too Far* by author SJ McCoy. It was one of the first cover photos I sold from my very first cover shoot with Golden Czermak, of Furiousfotog. He hit me up on social media, almost a year into my recovery from meth addiction, and asked me to do a photo shoot. That was a major turning point in my life.

Debra: You are a wonderful example of how a man or woman can turn their life around, at any age, and being public with your story may inspire many others. What a gift to the world.

Speaking of the world, if you

could do a photo shoot anywhere in the world for a cover, where would you most want to go? What sort of shoot would it be?

Kevin: Well, I've always wanted to visit Australia/NZ so it would have to be there. I would be happy to do any kind of shoot there. There are so many places with amazing scenery.

Debra: That would be a beautiful location to shoot covers in. Beyond romance novel cover shots, what other projects or jobs keep you busy?

Kevin: My social media has grown so much in the past few years. Keeping up with it, getting myself ready for my photo shoots, and acting classes definitely keep me busy. I also love the au-

thor events/signings that I get to attend where I get to meet so many authors and readers.

Debra: What's one question you wish an interviewer would ask you?

Kevin: What is your biggest piece of advice for people? My answer would be to step out of your comfort zone, as much as possible.

Debra: If you wrote a book, what would it be about?

Kevin: It would definitely be about my years in addiction and what I've done in recovery to make it work, and what I've done to build this life that I now have. This past April was my 5-year clean date anniversary.

Dragons were Powerful and Formidable Warriors

They had once struck fear into the hearts of their foes. Wiped from existence, their true nature was all but forgotten. Just a handful of people had seen it and survived long enough to tell the story. Their tremendous speed and power was enough to make the blood freeze in your veins.



When war began among humans and dragons, annihilation was certain. One hundred thousand humans, with the help of the elves, faced two thousand of those monsters. The magic of the elves combined with the sheer will and determination of the warriors led to victory.

Only few dragons are still alive and hidden. Δrakon was ready to do anything to avenge the death of his comrades. Left for dead, revenge was his only goal and burden.

[Amazon.com/Δrakon-Wallace-Knucker](https://www.amazon.com/Δrakon-Wallace-Knucker)



Debra: *Congratulations on 5-years clean! It's so important to take good care of our bodies. My next question is almost always asked in CMC interviews because your fitness level is beyond the average person's. What is your exercise routine and what sort of nutrition plan do you follow to achieve and maintain your level of fitness?*

Kevin: I normally workout 5 to 7 days a week, along with cardio. I try to maintain a high protein, lower carb, lower fat diet. Closer to my photo shoots, I up my cardio and make my diet a bit stricter, if I need to lean down some.

Debra: *If you could share three simple fitness tips the average romance reader could do every day to stay healthy, what would they be?*

Kevin: Try to maintain an active lifestyle, even if it just means getting in your steps every day. Maintain a healthier diet by meal prepping as much as possible, so that you won't make bad choices out of convenience. Try to allow yourself guilty pleasures in moderation. If you are eating well the majority of the time, allow yourself to

enjoy those things, but in moderation.

Debra: *It's your birthday dinner, a day for that enjoyment, and the calories don't count. What's on the menu and what are you drinking?*

Kevin: I have a favorite Italian restaurant in town that has my favorite pasta dish and amazing white chocolate bread pudding. I would drink iced tea and if it was an adult beverage, it would probably be a glass of Pinot Noir or Long Island iced tea.

Debra: *Describe the perfect romantic evening:*

Kevin: I think dinner and a movie at home, cuddling on the couch.

Debra: *Please share one unusual fact about you or your life:*

Kevin: I think the most unusual fact is that because of years of chronic pain, I used meth for 20 years, and it eventually took everything from me. I didn't become a romance book cover model until after I got clean and at the age of 50. I never could have imagined this would be my life.

Debra: *And I am so glad you did! Now five Quickie questions:*

1.) Watching the sunrise or watching

Continued on page 24



Debra Parmley
See her brief bio on page 24

The Spotlight is on AdC's August lady Leanne Tyler



Leanne Tyler

AdC's Ms. August Calendar Girl

Award-winning author Leanne Tyler writes romance and suspense with a twist whether military romantic suspense, contemporary or historical. Her popular "Chicago Protection Task Force" and "A Lone Wolf" series are part of the "Brotherhood Protectors World". Other series includes "The Good Luck" series--a collection of short contemporary romantic comedy romances set in East Tennessee. In addition, she writes American historical novels set prior to and during the Civil War. Leanne lives in East Tennessee with her son and frisky Yorkie. For more information about her books and to sign up for her newsletter, please visit leannetyler.com.

AdC: *Tell us about the genre(s) you write. Why did you choose to go in that direction?*

L.T.: I write military romantic suspense. I didn't pick it. My friend and fellow author Sharon Griffith convinced me I'd be good at writing in this genre because of writing as my alter ego Lexi Witcher writing YA Paranormal. My friend said if I could write that then I could write romantic suspense. It took me reading one of Elle James' books in her "Brotherhood Protectors World" to believe I could do it, but once I did, I realized that I could write them as well. Ten books later and I'm writing special projects for Elle James and loving it. My friend couldn't have been more right about my ability. Sometimes it takes others to see our hidden talents.

AdC: *Tell us about the type of characters you love to write about.*

L.T.: I like to write about unforgettable characters that make the readers want to see them again in other books.

AdC: *Do you have a new book or series?*

L.T.: I have two. One is coming out this month: *Simon's Promise* is book two in the "Team Raptor Special Project". Simon is an explosives expert, and he is called to Colorado Springs to investigate a fake bomb at a hotel by a former trainee who attended one of his explosive's seminars. Jocelyn is a former FBI agent who is working as head of security at the hotel. Together they try to figure out who planted the bomb and left the note that Jocelyn's days are numbered at the hotel.

I have a new book that will be coming out this fall. It is book two in "A Lone Wolf" series, *Lonely No More*. It is about a reporter who is getting

death threats for reporting on a cold murder case and the PI who is working for the family suggests she needs a protector and reaches out to the Wolf Agency. Of course, my heroine doesn't believe she needs a protector, and my hero agrees to back off if she doesn't get any more threats, but we know that isn't going to happen. I've got a great cover for this one.

AdC: *Favorite quote?*

L.T.: I'm not sure that I have one.

AdC: *If you were transported to the setting of the book you're currently reading or writing, where would you be?*

L.T.: I'd be transported to Altoona, Pennsylvania. That is where *Lonely No More* is set. It is a town that is similar to East Tennessee in many ways. I believe I would fit right in there.

Romance and Suspense with a Twist

Team Falco

Five brothers fighting for justice, fighting to save five lives. After years of military service and the death of their father, will they achieve their ultimate goal? To become a family once more?



Former Marine and firefighter Marcus Falco has to keep Charli Jackson safe, but can he? Two attempts have already been made on her life.

Her grandmother perished and her cousin ended up in the hospital. But who is after Charli? And why? Suspicions run wild as Marcus struggles to uncover the culprit as the dry summer of Fools' Gold threatens a wildfire.

February 2023



LeanneTyler.com @LeanneTyler

AdC: Do you hide any “Easter eggs” secrets/truths in your books that only a few people will find?

L.T.: Typically, I do not. Although people will come back and tell me they find this or that in my stories and I’m amazed that they do. Of course, as an author I will take credit for it because how do I know that subconsciously I did not put that there intentionally? I could have without knowing it.

AdC: If you saw a doorway/portal in the middle of the forest, would you enter it?

L.T.: Depends on if I was feeling adventurous or not at the time. It might be like when I was writing *Victory’s Gate* for the “Through the Garden Gate” contest which got me first published in 2007, and walking through that portal could take me back to the Civil War when Victoria found herself on the Battery in Charleston, SC, early one foggy morning as the soldiers were marching down the street preparing for battle

instead of the garden where she’d come from.

AdC: What scenes do you find hard to write and why?

L.T.: I find love scenes especially hard to write. I want to make them believable, and I worry that they won’t come across that way or will read too graphic or even forced. I like my characters to lead if there is one in the story. And sometimes I spend more time on the suspense than I do the romance and have to revise to add it in. But in the end, I feel I have a good story that the readers will enjoy

AdC: Will you be attending any book signings or conventions?

August 2023—Rockin’ Romance Readers, August 5 at the Airport Hilton in Knoxville, TN.

October 2023—Wears Valley Fall Festival, October 20-22, Wears Valley, Townsend, TN.

November 2023—Indie Romance Convention November 1-4 Lebanon, TN, co-Keynote with Sharon Griffith.

AdC: What’s something about you -- personality traits, habits, background, etc., that has been useful in your writing?

L.T.: I have a background in journalism. Even when I was in college working for the newspaper, my beat editor said I had a sense of organization in my writing. I believe that has helped me as a writer. I try to keep my story telling tight and the pacing fast. I don’t bog it down with too much detail or description to slow the pacing.

AdC: Please give us the following contact information:

Personal web page leannetyler.com

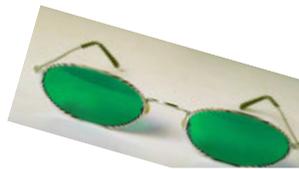
Twitter@leannetyler

Facebook @leannetylerauthor

Fighting for Charli

Team Falco Book Two

by Leanne Tyler



Team Falco

Five brothers fighting for justice, fighting to save lives. After years of military service and the death of their father, will they achieve their ultimate goal? To become a family once more?

Former Marine and firefighter Marcus Falco has to keep architect Charli Jackson safe, but can he? Two attempts have already been made on her life. Her grandmother perished and her cousin ended up in the hospital. But who is after Charli? And why? Suspicions run wild as Marcus struggles to uncover the culprit.

Excerpt:

“Marcus, you got company,” one of his older brothers, Troy called, walking toward him.

“I’m in no mood to see anyone,” he replied. “If it’s another insurance claims adjuster, tell him to come back later. I’ve talked to enough people about the crash to fill a book.”

“Yeah, well, it’s not. And, I think you’re going to have to talk to her about the crash whether you like it or not,” Troy said. “It’s time, baby brother.”

Marcus groaned and walked out of the shed to see Charli leaning against her motorcycle, glaring at him. Her sprained wrist wrapped in an ACE bandage. He’d been so engrossed in working on his chopper that he hadn’t even heard her riding down the drive to the Paradise. This was the last thing he wanted. He’d been trying to avoid her since the accident, because deep down he knew he was responsible for her grandmother’s death. If he hadn’t been flying them and his bird hadn’t gone down, she might still be alive, Charli’s wrist wouldn’t be in that wrap, and Melanie wouldn’t still be suffering from awful headaches.

“I never took you for a coward, Falco,” Charli said.

Man, oh man, but she didn’t mince words. “Now wait a minute...”

“No, you listen to me, and you listen good, Marine. You stop hiding out and staying on this ranch with the weight of my grandmother’s death on your shoulders where it doesn’t belong. It wasn’t your fault that she had a heart attack while we were flying to Greeley. Neither was it your fault that we had mechanical difficulties in the air. Is that clear? It could have happened anytime. As for my grandmother, she was gone before we hit the ground, Marcus. Melanie told me once she recovered enough from the concussion and remembered the events before the crash. The medical examiner’s report also confirmed it if you need professional proof of her time of death. I would have told you all of this if you had *even bothered* coming to her funeral service like your brothers to pay your respects.”

Damn, but she had him dead to rights, and he felt even worse for not going to the funeral now. But it had just been too soon for him after burying his own dad. He still had flashbacks from his mother’s funeral from when he was a child.

“I figured I was the last person you’d want to see there, especially since I caused both you and Melanie to get injured when we went down, and I walked away without a scratch.”

“You assumed wrong.” Charli stepped away from her motorcycle and came toward him with one hand shoved in the front jean pocket. The gravel crunched under each step of her scuffed-up boots. She looked good in her snug fitting jeans, leather jacket, now hooked on two fingers over her shoulder and her long, dark hair pulled away from her face with a red bandana.

She smelled like cocoa butter as if she’d been sunbathing before she came out to see him. The closer she got to him the stronger the scent of her assaulted his



nostrils. Damn, if she didn’t have him all tied up in knots whenever he saw her. It was all he could do to keep his mind on the present and not thinking about taking her off to his bed. He’d taken a few women to hotel beds, their beds, but he’d never felt the need to take a woman to his bed. He trampled down the thought because the last thing he wanted was to be like his father. He wasn’t a womanizer. And he definitely didn’t see Charli as a conquest the way he knew that Shawn Falco would have in his younger days. Instead, he’d prefer moving slower, getting to know her, but it wasn’t happening because he was having trouble making his move.

Troy snickered from the side of the shed where he pretended to be working on something, but Marcus knew his brother had only stuck around to see if he finally asked the woman out or not. But it was hard to do so when you felt responsible for the death of her grandmother.

And now she was calling him a coward and telling him how he wasn’t to blame.

In his book, this wasn’t exactly the best time to make that move.

“Well, aren’t you going to say anything?” Charli demanded.



Across

1. Navigate in the water.
6. This area draws visitors to see the history of America.
8. _____ concerts are performed under the sky.
11. Big park bordered by Montana and Wyoming.
13. Going back to the rustics--tents, open fires, etc.
15. In the backyard, this protects the lawn table from the sun.
16. The big fun ship that goes from port to port.
18. The sandy place where the ocean comes to shore.
19. Counties and states have one featuring 4H, hogs races and hot dogs.
22. The demand for this Ben & Jerrie's product peak during the summer.
24. This canyon spawls over several southwesern states.
25. C'mon, let's hop in the car and take a road_____.
26. This destination was Bob Marley's home.
29. Large national park in California (where Sam comes from).
30. Event where members of the family get together.
32. The demand to see her vineyard peaks during summer.
33. Document needed to travel between countries.
34. New _____--Broadway, Central Park, The Guggenheim.
35. Growing one's own vegetables.
36. This is the second largest island in number #17 Down.
37. Document needed to stay in a foreign country.
41. Keeps that bright light out of your eyes.
42. Making perserves, jams, jellies, etc.

Down

2. Vacation time begins with _____ Day.
3. Take a dive in one of these when it's

Vacation

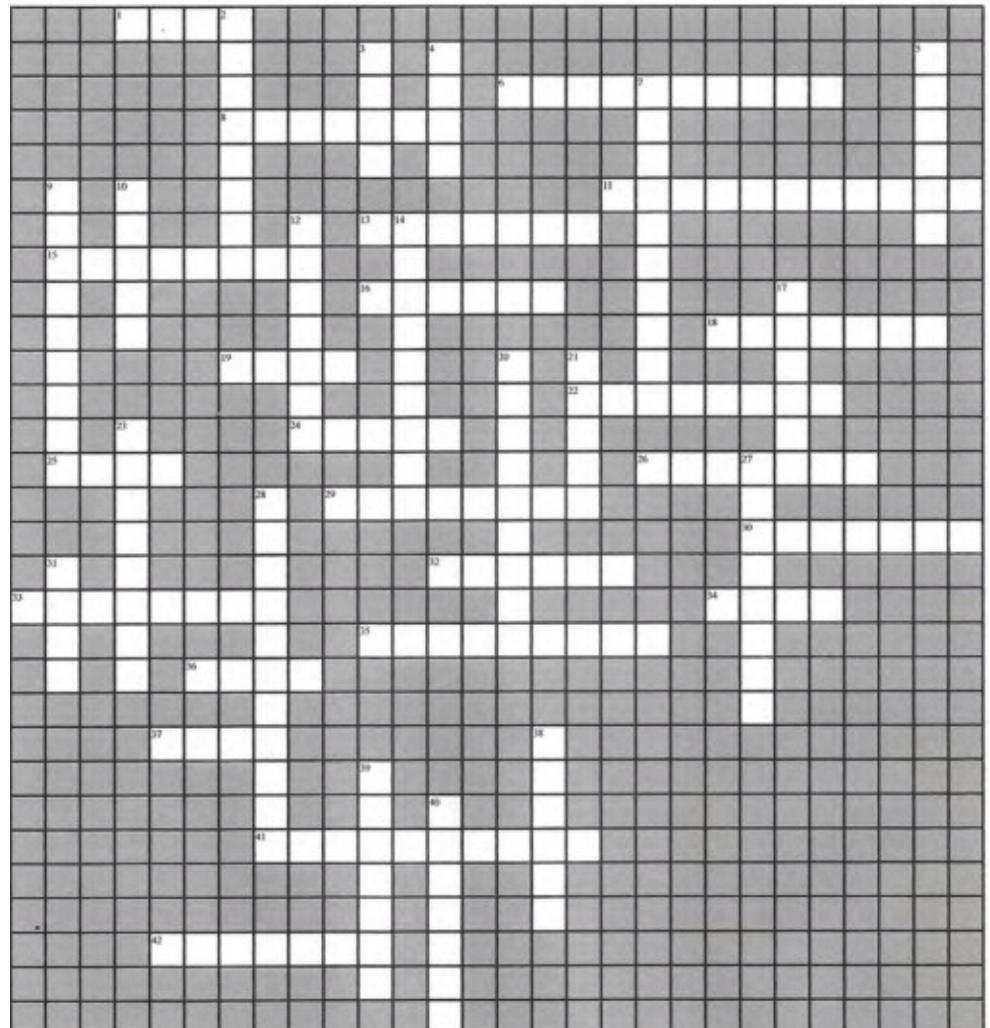
Brought to You by Gwen Brantley

- hot.
4. Dude, take out this board when the waves are high.
5. Itsy, bitsy teeny, weeny, swimming garment.
7. _____ Highway connecting cities through roads across the country.
9. These parks have rides and attractions.
10. Vacation time ends with this holiday _____ Day.
12. Sitting in the sun and getting the skin darker.

14. Not a boat or car, this one takes off from the ground.
17. The 50th state.
20. The person in the hotel who tells you the best places to go.
21. This is a religious vacation school.
23. The big red buses that takes visitors all around to see the things the area is famous for.
27. Hethrow, JFK, LaGuardia, etc.
28. Lucky people eat at Michelin _____.
31. Shakespeare in the _____.
38. Sheraton, Hilton, and Marriott, etc.
39. Transport ones's clothes in these.
40. Best shoes of the summer.

Vacation!

Gwendolyn C. Brantley



Answers on page 35

REVIEWS

- ★★★★★ Amazing/Excellent
- ★★★★ Good
- ★★★ Average
- ★★ Something's missing
- ★ More than one element missing

Sometimes a book does not quite fit into the description above. That is when the reviewer will use 1/2 to indicate it is better than its description but not quite at the next level.

Books are evaluated on (1) Characterization (2) Plot (3) Pacing, (4) Writing and (5) Originality.



Contemporary Romance

Be Our Guest



Do you think you can write a fair and honest review of a book you've recently read? Here's your chance. We accept guest reviews. If you would like to submit one, pick a book that has just come out, whether you liked it or disliked it, and write a review of it. It's not as easy as you think. Send it to our website at www.adcmagazine.com.

Authors,

We'd love to review your books! Are you brave enough for an honest review? If so, send it in at least three months before the pub date to adcreviews@att.net

Chained Reaction

Shiloh Love

Dark Castle Lords Publications

E-book

B0C77FC4DG

★★★★ 1/2

Camille was coerced and blackmailed into kidnapping a local business owner with two of her coworkers. The target was Trenton Shade, one stunning hunk of a man. She had really gotten herself in deep with this one. One of the multiple problems with this whole scenario, she's extremely attracted to the man.

They realize both of them are in trouble, put their heads together with a plan, and escaped through the swamps and woods of Louisiana.

From the very first paragraph to the very last sentence, this story kept me glued to the pages.

Kitty Lane

Picture Imperfect

T K Lawyer

Self-published

E-book

B0BY7BK79S

★★★★ 1/2

Natalie was in the deadline hot seat. Her cover designer was in the hospital; her book cover wasn't ready, and her book was about to be released. Frantically searching for a designer, she finally came across someone she'd worked with before and had someone in mind for her.

Nate was perfect.

When Nate found out he'd been picked for a cover, he was thrilled. He'd been hoping and waiting for the right time and opportunity to shine. A little hint from his mother informed him there was hot sex scenes in the book. His mind wouldn't stop picturing the author, and the sex she imagined they had, were having in her imagination. Yelling out Natalie's name, a woman he hadn't even met yet, and at a most

Contemporary Romance

Play to Win

Jodie Slaughter

St. Martin's Griffin

Trade Paperback

978-1250821843

★★★★★



Miriam Butler's life becomes unexpectedly complicated when she wins the Mega Millions Lottery Jackpot in Jodie Slaughter's second chance romance *Play to Win*. Living with her mom in her childhood home and working the same low-wage job since her teens, Miriam feels trapped. When she goes to the corner store to get her mom's lottery ticket, Miriam impulsively buys one for herself and hits the winning numbers. It's too bad her estranged husband can show up to claim his share of her millions after all this time.

Leo Vaughn hasn't spoken to his wife in years. But when Miriam calls suddenly, asking him to return to Greenbelt, he returns immediately. He's astonished to discover Miriam's won the lottery and her offering him millions to sign divorce papers, walk away, and never contact her again. The last thing Leo wants is half her millions, and he can't imagine forever without Miriam in his life. Leo's yearned for one thing since walking out on her eight years ago—Miriam back in his life. He makes Miriam a counteroffer to give himself time to make up for the biggest mistake of his life.

Miriam is stubborn, loyal, forthright, and generous, and she loves with all her heart and soul. Living in poverty without hope for a way out, Miriam's outlook was bleak. She gave Leo her heart as a young woman, and he broke it. Surprisingly, Leo is a sensitive, sweet, and honorable man who takes his responsibilities seriously, maybe too seriously. Leo has a martyr's complex, which leads him to make horrible choices.

Slaughter's language use and narrative style, vivid and detailed description, colorful and natural-sounding dialogue, and deft world-building draws the reader in from the first scene and keeps them glued until the last page. Her characters are relatable, likable, and authentic, and she skillfully develops them through emotional, funny, emotional, and sexy banter and interactions. You can't help but root for Miriam to find her way and treat herself with the love and care she so bigheartedly offers to the people she loves so she can live a life filled with hope happily ever after. With Leo, Slaughter takes a character you expect not to like so much and not only changes your mind about him, but she also makes you hope the silly man can resolve his issues and win Miriam back.

Play to Win is a beautifully written, fast-paced steamy, sexy, funny, angsty, sweet, and romantic novel about second chances, first love, family, facing fears, self-esteem, forgiveness, self-discovery, hope, trust, and fresh starts.

Lacy Hill

inappropriate time didn't help matters.

She'd gotten into his head, without even trying.

Picture Imperfect snags you from page one. Love it, love it, love it!

Fantastic!

Kitty Lane

The Summer Girl (Avalon Bay #3)

Elle Kennedy

St. Martin's Griffin

Trade Paperback

978-1250863874

★★★★★

College student Cassie Soul returns to Avalon Bay to visit her grandmother for her first summer since her parents' divorce in Elle Kennedy's new adult, friends-to-lovers romance, *The Summer Girl* (Avalon Bay #3). After five decades of ownership, her grandmother is selling their family's boardwalk hotel. Cassie is turning twenty-one and hoping to find someone to have a summer fling with. When she meets Tate Bartlett on her first night in town, she thinks she's found the perfect candidate.

A sailing instructor, Tate is a surprisingly sweet player that isn't a stranger to flings. However, while he's known as Avalon Bay's fun-loving golden boy, he's not a heartbreaker. Because he knows right away that Cassie isn't a girl you can have a casual fling with and walk away from without someone getting hurt, he puts her in the friend zone. The more time he spends with and gets to know her, the harder it is to deny and fight his attraction to her. Friends-zoning Cassie was a monumental mistake. Soon, all Tate can think about is how much he wants more than anything to have a fling with Cassie this summer.

Despite agreeing to be friends, they become intimate, stretching the boundaries of friendship because of their intense attraction. After surrendering to their feelings for each other, they agree to keep their fling a secret, not realizing that there are far more dangerous secrets than theirs at stake. Avalon Bay is like many small

Contemporary Romance

they're revealed, Tate and Cassie's relationship may not survive in their wake.

Kennedy develops Cassie's and Tate's relationship through humorous, sexy, and sweet banter that also contribute to the characters' development and the story's progression. Being friends before lovers helps Cassie and Tate grow. They encourage each other to face their fears, follow their dreams, and be honest with their parents about what they want from their lives and how their parents treat them.

The Summer Girl is a sweet, funny, sexy, romantic romance exploring themes of first love, falling in love, taking risks, family secrets, self-esteem, toxic parents, self-confidence, and following your dreams.

Lacy Hill

You Can Die (Laurel Snow #3)

Rebecca Zanetti

Zebra

Mass Market
978-1420154368

☆☆☆☆

In Rebecca Zanetti's *You Can Die*, Laurel Snow #3, FBI profiler Laurel Snow's life and serial murder case takes a surprising turn when her biological father returns to town. Laurel has taken over the Violent Crimes Unit and based it out of her hometown, Genesis Valley, WA. The bodies of family men with community ties are found near counseling centers, charities, and churches with Valentine candy hearts shoved down their throats. But these men's lives aren't what they seem on the surface once Laurel and her team investigate their murders. The investigation becomes personal when Laura's father—a former pastor she's never met—is discovered, fitting the serial killer's M.O.

Amping up the suspense, Zanetti increases Laurel's personal involvement. Laurel's relationship with Washington Fish and Wildlife Captain Huck Rivers continues to evolve. They've officially started dating, and she's experiencing insecurity for the first time. Her psychotic half-sister, Abigail's insistence on meddling in her personal life and relationship with Huck doesn't make it any easier. Abigail once again is connected to the serial murders Laurel's investigating. With her biological father's return, Laurel has to deal with two malignant narcissists. Her troubled half-sister's machinations complicate Laurel's determination to uncover the truth about her father's past. Laurel is searching for proof of Abigail's connection to her current case and the others she's solved since coming home.

Zanetti deftly develops her compelling characters with absorbing and combative interactions. Her descriptive, vibrant, and active writing style and a disturbing and intriguing mystery plot draw the reader in and keeps them turning the pages trying to guess who the killer might be. Her action scenes are thrilling, suspenseful, and well-constructed.

Without distracting from the suspense/mystery plot, Zanetti wonderfully continues exploring Laurel and Huck's relationship. Complete opposites—they balance each other. Laurel's coolly analytical, while Huck's impulsive and fiery.

You Can Die is a dark, thrilling, suspenseful, steamy, and romantic fast-paced read recommended for fans of dark, psychological, romantic suspense.
Lacy Hill

Kevin's answers

Cont. from page 17

Sunset and stars.

2.) *The beach or the mountains?*

I love both but I'm starting to enjoy the mountains the most.

3.) *Primitive camping or luxury hotel?*

Luxury hotel.

4.) *Snow skiing or water skiing?*

Never been snow skiing so I will pick water skiing.

5.) *Favorite movie?*

I could never narrow down to one.

Debra: Kevin, thank you for visiting with me today. It's been fun getting to know you. Before we say goodbye, where can fans keep up with you online?

Website: www.silvermodelkevin.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/rkevindavis>

Instagram: <https://instagram.com/kevinrdavis.official>

Debra's mini bio

Debra Parmley has interviewed cover models for Cover Model Corner since 2011 and enjoys sharing these interviews with readers of *Affaire de Coeur* magazine.

An Air Force veteran's wife, she writes military romantic suspense, and historical romance. In 2020, she and her husband sold their house to move full-time into a 43-foot motorhome, to travel the U.S. Debra has traveled all over the world and is always looking for the next adventure. She climbs lighthouses because she is afraid of heights.
www.debraparmley.com



Historical Romance

Reviews

What's a Duke Got to Do With It (Synneful Spinsters #2)

Christina Britton
Forever

Mass Market
978-1538710425
☆☆☆☆

Miss Katrina Denby lost everything because of a scandal four years ago. Now, she has built a new life with amazing friends and a position as Lady Tesh's companion. Then, the man responsible for ruining her

reputation and life dies in a fall from her bedroom window. She is blamed for his death, vilified, and ostracized again. When her reputation causes her friends to suffer by association, Katrina will do whatever's necessary to protect them by gaining respectability—even marry whoever will have her despite her lack of fortune and stained name. But the only man Katrina's ever loved arrives, nearly engaged.

Sebastian Thorne, Duke of Ramsleigh, fell for Katrina as a care-free rogue. Unfortunately, because of his father's conduct, he gave up on

his dreams of a future with Katrina. Working to save the dukedom left him with one option—to marry well—to protect the people counting on him. Sebastian is so close to securing marriage and fortune. Unexpectedly, he encounters Katrina while on an errand for his future father-in-law. He discovers his feelings for her have not faded, and her hold on his heart is even deeper. Will their connection and shared passion lead to Sebastian and Katrina's ruin or happiness?

Katrina has experienced

Historical

much loss and pain but remains sweet, kind, loyal, and protective of the people she loves. Strong and resilient, she stays positive, mostly. Her interactions with prospective suitors and scornful society are frustrating and upsetting because they treat her abominably for things that aren't her fault.

Burdened by his father's sins and overwhelmed by the devastation left behind, Sebastian is trapped and desperate. He is willing to sacrifice

his dreams and life to protect his family and those under his protection. Because he cares for Katrina and wants her to be safe and have a good life, even if it's not with him, he can't help protecting her. Unfortunately, his attempts to protect her inadvertently interfere with her attempts to marry and restore her reputation.

Brittain's vivid and detailed descriptions and relatable and likable

characters draw readers into her compelling, poignant, fast-paced novel. Katrina and Sebastian's deep attraction, profound connection, and pining and longing for each other shine in all their scenes.

Angsty, funny, and romantic, *What's a Duke Got to Do With It?* is a second-chance romance that explores themes of acceptance and healing, friendship, overcoming difficult circumstances and the judgmental nature of society.

Lacy Hill



We Want to See You There 2023 Book Events

Literary Love Savannah Convention

Savannah Marriott Riverfront
100 General McIntosh Boulevard
Savannah, GA 31401
July 20 to 23, 2023
[Facebook.com/Literary Love Savannah](https://www.facebook.com/LiteraryLoveSavannah)

Books at the Beach Convention

September 21st, 7:00 PM – Sept 24, 10:00 PM
The Sirata on St. Pete Beach
5300 Gulf Blvd. St. Pete Beach, FL 33706
www.booksatthebeach.com

Paranormal Romance Reviews

Fantasy
Vampires
Shape Shifters
Time Travel
Werewolves...

Across Both Sides of the Mirror

Bianca Pensy Aba

Self-published

E-book
979-8218155735

☆☆☆☆

Nova didn't know why she had gotten into a rut, and was unsure of which direction she was going. She had a bit of guilty envy toward her two close friends. They'd done so much better, all-around, than she had.

She'd broken a mirror and decided she'd splurge and purchase a new one. At the antique shop, Nova found the perfect mirror. Without hesitation, she took it home. Excited about a date, she did something silly and kissed the mirror. And that's when things started to drastically change.

This is a good steady-paced story.

Lauren Calder



At the Coffee Shop of Curiosities

Heather Webber

Forge
Hardcover
978-1250867261 Hardcover
E-book 9781250867285

☆☆☆☆

A month after the death of her ex-fiancé, 27-year-old Ava Harrison receives a mysterious letter containing a help wanted flyer from a small town in Alabama. In a bold move and contrary to her normally cautious nature, Ana packs up and leaves her Cincinnati, Ohio, home to travel to Driftwood, Alabama.

Ava really takes a chance moving to a place where she knows no one and where no one will know her unique abilities or understand her health problems. But she fits right in to the town where quirky is normal. She takes a part time job in Magpie's Café, owned by the woman whose father is supposedly in need of a caretaker. She interacts with a unique cast of characters including a spooky elderly woman prone to amazingly accurate predictions and a hunky dog owner. Surprisingly, she quickly finds herself woven into the fabric of this small town.

Over the course of her adventure, Ava not only learns a great

deal about herself, but the townspeople we'll come to love experience their own positive changes.

This charming book is indeed filled with curiosities and is quite a satisfying journey.

Hannah Rowan

Nightcap at Daybreak

Mariska Sliker

Self-published
E-book
B0C5775XZP
☆☆☆☆

Maia is alone in the world. Her parents were killed by a junkie. Remy, who was a volunteer working with troubled youth, had taken her under his wing and gotten emotionally attached to her. When a rogue vampire had taken her, Remy broke the rules and claimed her as his own.

When his master, Raenef, found out, he was not a happy vampire and Remy's rebellious attitude didn't help any either.

Against all common sense, Raenef took control of the situation and made Maia his fledgling. When Remy tried explaining to Maia that she'd been changed, at first, she didn't believe him.

Nightcap at Daybreak is a good fast-paced story that any lover of vampire stories will enjoy from beginning to end.

Kitty Lane

Paranormal Romance

The Solitary Rose

Anne Rollins

Wild Rose Press

E-book

B0C7CX4W7K

★★★★ 1/2

Henry Dawson, an apothecary assistant with a bit of magical abilities, was offered a position organizing a private library—and woo, marry Emma Ainsworth, an empath. Her uncle, Elwood, knew it would be a challenge. Emma had her own opinions and mind. She wasn't about to accept an arranged marriage and be "matched" to anyone. She didn't want a suitor. Especially one who wanted her money and dowry.

Time made her realize Henry may not be the type of man she thought he was. One day while riding, Henry's horse was spooked and he was injured in the fall. Confined to the estate, he would be staying longer than originally planned.

This story takes the reader on a wonderful adventure. The author builds the attraction and tension with precision—a must read!

Kitty Lane

The Witches of Bone Hill

Ava Morgyn

St. Martin's Griffin

Trade Paperback

978-1250835437

★★★★ 1/2

Cordelia Bone and her sister, Eustace, haven't spoken in years. Eustace warned her about marrying John. Cordelia should have listened. John cleaned out their bank accounts and borrowed money from a loan shark. Cordelia has thirty-one days to repay fifty thousand dollars. Or else...

Cordelia gets a call that seems to solve all her problems. She and Eustace have inherited a mansion from

an aunt they've never met. Cordelia plans to put the house on the market as-is. A quick sale will get the loan shark off her back. Unfortunately, the house is part of a trust. It cannot be sold. In fact, the sisters must live in the house or they will forfeit the inheritance.

The house appears to be sentient and is not happy that the women want to leave. It does not hesitate to make its feelings known. Cordelia begins seeing ghosts again, and her headaches return. They are more frequent and more painful than previously. They are just like the ones her mother had right before she died. Could something (or someone) in the family home be killing Cordelia?

The Witches of Bone Hill is spooky and unputdownable. Reader be warned. There are instances of graphic animal abuse. The occurrences are used to further the plot, but they may be too upsetting for some people.

Sheila Griffin

What Became of Magic

Paige Crutcher

St. Martin's Griffin

Trade Paperback

978-1250905529

★★★ 1/2

Aline Weir was in middle school when she met a ghost named Dragon. With her help, Aline begins to cross between planes. Dragon introduces her to another ghost. Dragon says that the ballerina charm that Aline recently found is the key that the ghost needs to move on. Aline begins finding keys and helping ghosts to cross over.

In high school, Aline stumbles across a bookstore owned by three sisters. The women begin teaching Aline about magic. Aline finds a book about a lonely witch who founded the town of Matchstick. It was a safe haven for witches, ghosts and otherworldly beings. Aline begins to dream of Matchstick and a handsome man who

Affaire de Coeur

lives there.

Ten years pass. The sisters leave town and don't return. Dragon disappears. Aline becomes worried. Crossing planes to search for her friends, she finds the town of Matchstick. It turns out that Matchstick is real and Magic is a sentient being. In fact, Magic is the man she's been dreaming of for years.

There are lots of things in Matchstick that are sentient, Day, Night, the Sun and Moon to name a few. They all desperately need Aline's help.

This is an interesting book until the heroine travels to the city that she thought was fictional. Like many of the author's books, it's great for the first half and then it gets confusing.

Sheila Griffin



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Historical and Contemporary Whodunnits?

Misfortune Cookie

Vivien Chien

St. Martin's Press

Mass Market

978-1250782632

☆☆☆ ½

Trouble seems to follow restaurant manager Lana Lee even when she travels from the family restaurant Ho-Lee Noodle in Cleveland to attend a culinary conference in sunny California. As guests of their Aunt Grace, Lana and her sister Anna May attend a swanky party which is interrupted when Auntie's best friend plunges to her death from the roof of a nearby building. Suicide? Or murder?

Having witnessed a disturbing encounter between the victim and a vendor at the conference earlier in the day, Lana is suspicious, and Aunt Grace insists her friend would never have jumped. Though Lana's family and lover disapprove of her tendency to play amateur sleuth, she finds herself in the middle of a shady cast of characters while her curiosity puts her in danger once again.

This ninth book in the "Noodle Shop Mystery" series is slow to get off the ground. However, it is suspenseful and lightly humorous

once it gets moving. It is an enjoyable read that stands alone if the reader hasn't followed the entire series. It will certainly satisfy cozy mystery fans.

Hannah Rowan

Mrs. Plansky's Revenge

Spencer Quinn

Tor Publishing/Forge

Trade Paperback

978-1250843333

☆☆☆☆

Seventy-one-year-old widow Loretta Plansky serves as an unofficial bank for so many relatives that it's no surprise when she gets a call from her "grandson" needing emergency funds. She is conned out of her life savings, but once she realizes what happened, she's not about to take it lying down.

This feisty senior sets out on a solo adventure across the ocean to track the perpetrators, even as her family questions her mental competence.

Along the way, she gains unlikely allies and dangerous enemies, but she is determined to get juice for herself and any future potential victims.

Mrs. Plansky's revenge leads to a hair-raising caper that could rival James Bond. It would be lovely to see this clever and inspiring grandma go on

to solve other crimes.

Hannah Rowan

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A Cowboy Kind of Thing: An Opposites Attract Western Romance (Texas Cattleman's Club: The Wedding #1)

Reese Ryan

Narrated by Jasmin Walker

Recorded Books

Audiobook

B0BWX15NK5

☆☆☆ 1/2

Maid of honor Dionna Reed comes to Royal, Texas, to help her actor BFF plan her wedding. Because Ari and Xavier, the groom, are stuck in Hollywood, they ask Di to work with Xavier's cousin, Tripp Noble. The best man, Tripp, plans to convince her that Royal's the perfect setting for Ari and Xavier's wedding event of the year—not Hollywood. Will he be able to keep his hands to himself while she's in town?

An introverted Hollywood casting director, Di is a sensible, dry-witted movie geek from a movie biz family. While Di is a city girl now, she loves the summers spent on her grandparents' farm. She's been BFFs with Ari since middle school. Di and Ari are filming a movie about a

Black cowboy. The heir apparent of his family's ranch, he carries on their legacy and traditions and works to keep from losing it. But he doesn't love ranching. However, he's passionate about increasing the availability of information about Black Cowboys and their history. Tripp is an obstinate and sexy playboy rancher who's a rebel cowboy that loves breaking the rules.

Walker's lively narration brings Ryan's steamy romance and fascinating characters to life. Her voice perfectly fits Di, Tripp, and the secondary characters. Skilled in narrating and providing distinct voices that differentiate between numerous characters, she changes her voice to reflect the characters' moods, revealing their personalities with ease.

Ryan's vibrant description makes her characters and story come alive. She develops Dionna and Tripp's romantic relationship with chemistry-filled and intensely emotional banter, and love scenes. They're complete opposites, but their attraction is fiery and intense. The novel's quick pacing and mostly lighthearted, humorous tone combined with her description, make it a page-turner.

A Cowboy Kind of Thing is a funny, sweet, steamy, emotional,

and sexy audiobook recommended for opposites attract, small-town, and wedding planning-themed romance fans.

Lacy Hill

Sweeter Than Honey (Honey Hill #2)

Joy Avery

Narrated by Tamika Katon-Donegal and Leon Nixon

Brilliance Audio

Audiobook

978-1713657798

☆☆☆ 1/2

Tamika Katon-Donegal and Leon Nixon narrate Joy Avery's friends-to-lovers romance *Sweeter Than Honey* (Honey Hill #2). Talented, successful baker Rylee Harris is unlucky in love. Widowed for five years, Rylee hasn't taken another chance on romance. To ease her mother's worries about her nonexistent love life, Rylee invents a fake relationship with her friend, town sheriff, Canten Barnes—the only man who's caught her eye.

Canten agrees to uphold the ruse to help Rylee and keep overzealous suitors away. The whole town believes they're dating after the town's gossip grapevine spreads their secret. Rylee and Canten's hidden feelings surface and deepen. Will they surrender to their emotions and take a real chance at love?

Katon-Donegal and Nixon's lively, emotional narration wonderfully brings Avery's charming, small-town romance to life. Their voices/narration perfectly fit Rylee and Canten, respectively, and the secondary characters. Katon-Donegal's narration, however, fits Canten better than Nixon's narration suits Rylee. Both narrators offer distinct voices that differentiate between the characters using accents, dialects, pacing, tone, and inflection to reflect their moods, revealing their personalities, feelings, quirks, and states of mind. During the novel's intimate scenes, they use their vocal ranges to express/portray Rylee and Canten's intimacy and their chemistry, sensations, desire, and passion.

Audiobooks

The narrators complement each other and Avery's humorous, emotional, sexy, and entertaining story and complex, relatable, and fallible characters. Avery's vivid writing with detailed descriptions, natural and authentic-sounding dialogue/language, and well-drawn complex, relatable, and likable characters draw readers into the novel. She develops Rylee and Canten's relationship through sweet, steamy, humorous, angsty, sexy banter, interactions, and love scenes, which help advance and evolve their characters, connection, and Avery's entertaining love story. Avery captures small-town life and the closeness and interconnectedness of the townsfolk's lives. Riley and Canten's interactions with friends, family, and townsfolk are hilarious.

Rylee and Canten ignore/deny

their sweet, supportive, close friendship with a deep connection and a simmering attraction until fake dating throws them into intimate situations. Rylee's kind-hearted, selfless, sexy, beautiful, and impulsive. She harbors secret feelings for Canten, but she's not ready to risk love again after how things turned out with her marriage. Canten's caring, stubborn, and generous. He's carrying a ton of baggage from his marriage and his wife's murder. He has a crush on Rylee, but he's kept his feelings under wraps because he cherishes their friendship and fears changing or ruining it.

Sweeter Than Honey is sweet, steamy, emotional, funny, sexy, romantic, and a bit angsty. Perfect for friends-to-lovers, fake dating, and small-town romances, it explores themes of grief, guilt, letting go of the

past, secrets, following your dreams, wedding planning, small-town life, friendship, and family.

Lacy Hill





Booty

Reviews from other genre

Lazy Happy Successful

David Leon

LLP Limited

E-Book

B9C6XCNTQW

☆☆☆☆

David Leon, the author of *Lazy Happy Successful* makes a point to the reader that setting unreachable, unrealistic expectations and goals sets them up for failure. Having such high expectations has created a feeling of depression and failure for many people.

Douche Bragg is the epitome of everything that goes wrong, and he is the anti-hero of the story, a good guy who makes really bad decisions.

This reader will admit that I didn't start this book with an open mind. That said, I cannot agree with some of the suggestions Mr. Leon is promoting for a happier life. However, there are some major key points that screams, "Yes!" A must read for anyone who feels the more they tread water, the faster they're sinking.

Lauren Calder

Missing Presumed Dead

Gabriel Cox

Self-published

E-book

B0BGMBML86

☆☆☆☆

Catalina PBY pilot, Robert Davis' last battle had been a bad one. Attacking the Japanese base at Rabaul, the Cats had done what they needed to do. Unfortunately, casualties happened. Flying into Buissa, they barely made their way to the closest harbor, a very hard landing, a huge explosion, and the PBY was gone and so had the garrison they were expecting to be there.

Davis was the lone survivor and no one knew where he was.

Locals who'd witnessed the Cat crash found Davis and brought him back to their village. Knowing he'd be in danger if the Japanese found him, they hid the man during his recovery. After weeks of convalescence Davis began to recover, only to find he'd lost his memory.

I love WW2 stories. When I was asked to read this, I was thrilled. It's a good steady-paced story. The lack of dialogue and different POVs did tend to slow the book down a bit. However, that being said, this is a book that any WW2 enthusiast will absolutely and thoroughly enjoy.

Pamela Ackerson



Booty

Uniformly Undeserved

P. Scott Corbett

Dapshow Publications

E-book

B0B3B4JMCZ

☆☆☆☆☆



This is a story that covers generations of family and community whose home are on the island of Okinawa. From the early 1900s, the Okinawan Takara family dwelled through the Japanese occupation enduring the oppressive attitudes and other challenges.

An incident makes travelling to Hawaii for agricultural work very appealing for Morio Takara and his best friend Rin Kineshiro. The situation there eventually soured and they migrate with their families to California.

Twelve-year-old American born Eiji, Morio Takera's son, is given land as a co-owner with another boy Izzy Otani in California as they are eligible, natural born US citizens. This would enable the Otani and Takara families to work the land and earn a solid living.

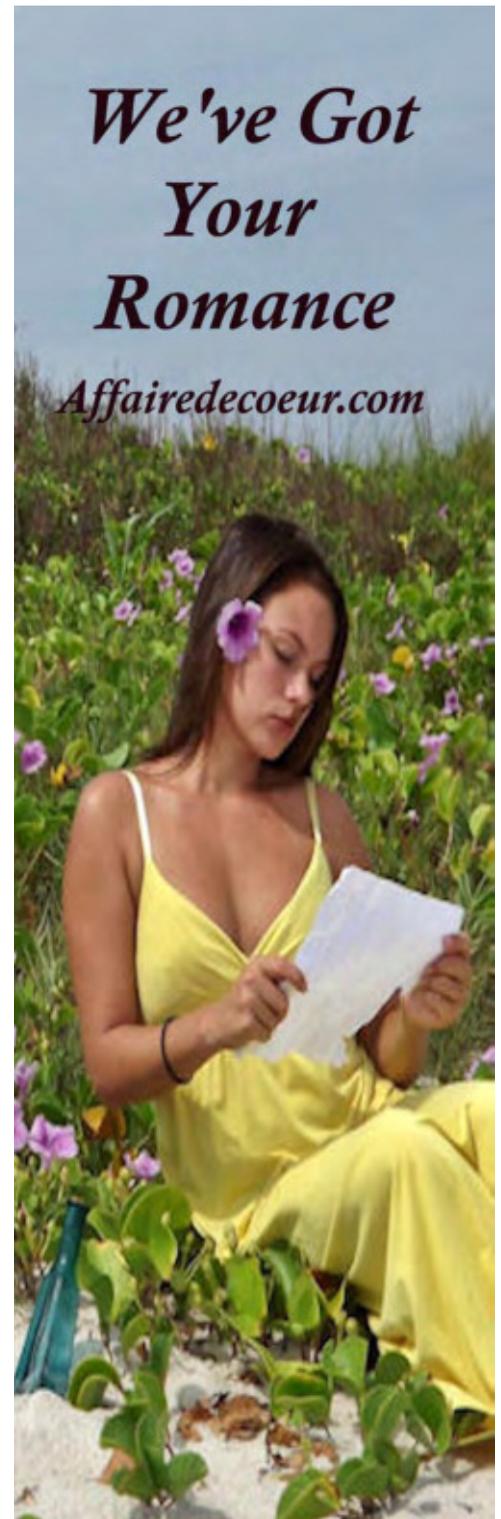
Eiji must soon return to Okinawa to continue his education and strengthen family ties. His education takes him to Japan for study, making him well-rounded in language and understanding of the American, Okinawan, and Japanese ways.

World War II breaks out and the families in the U.S. are put into the relocation camps. Eiji gets recruited and sent to the Midwest for training as an analyst where he is a tremendous asset. His best friend, Saburo, joins the army to get out of the camp and survives the war.

The story covers many years and a community of Okinawans from a little town they call Some Place Else. Some families move away out of necessity but never forget their roots. The adversity of prejudice rears its ugly head throughout the story; whether it be the mainland Japanese with feelings of superiority or the Americans wary of jobs being taken away. The families move on and do their best to live and not just survive. The title tells of the struggles being inappropriately labeled by qualities that are only skin deep.

P. Scott Corbett does the Okinawans justice in his descriptions of the feelings between many cultures. Though prejudice and strife are frequent in the story, there is no soapbox rhetoric. They are simply the facts of the days. There are a small variety of characters, well thought out and placed, that enter and leave the picture. This reader believes the author's sense of the period and people is well-developed.

Laura Calder



Late!

Didn't quite make in the last issue



Includes all genre and all time periods

Fire With Fire

Candace Fox

Forge

E-Book

978-125087596

Mystery

★★★★

Whatever happened to young Tilly Delaney? Did she drown in the Pacific or was she abducted? Her parents are so dissatisfied with the LAPD's handling of her disappearance that they hold the police forensics lab hostage until they get some answers. Innocent lives are in jeopardy in the hands of the desperate parents.

Faced with losing valuable DNA evidence to the domestic terrorists, Detective Charlie Hoskins and disgraced rookie cop Lynette Lamb form an unlikely alliance in hopes of finding the answer. Their unauthorized affiliation could possibly lead to a resolution of the mystery the case presents.

Hopefully Charlie and Lynn will continue their partnership and go on to solve other cases in future books.

Hannah Rowan

Playing with Danger

Deborah Fletcher Mello

Harlequin - Romance

Mass Market

978-1335738431

★★★★

Detective King Randolph clashes with private investigator Lenore Martin over his murder investigation when a young woman's body is found in a Louisiana swamp. Lenora's pushy and aggravating personality makes him reluctant to work the case with her. These two are complete opposites with strong personalities that clash and are cautious about trusting each other. Nevertheless, to find a missing Black teen and the perpetrator of heinous murders of Black citizens, they join forces. More murder victims' bodies are discovered, and mutual dislike

soon transitions to a shared, intense, fiery attraction that neither can deny. Unknown forces threaten grave danger throughout New Orleans against King, Lenore, and other innocent citizens. While working together to solve the case and fight their attraction, the desire, connection, and emotions they feel for each other deepen unexpectedly.

Mello's vivid description and captivating storytelling draw readers into the novel from the opening scenes. Her characters are fascinating and deftly developed and evolved. Mello develops her characters through emotionally intense and steamy interactions.

Lenore is a PI with her family's private detective agency, trying to help a family friend find her missing daughter. She's prideful, controlling, stubborn, and beautiful and makes up her own rules. Lenore doesn't trust men or expect to meet a man she not only likes and respects but could also love. King surprises her, slipping past her barriers with ease. He's an intelligent, kind, honest, man with a dry sense of humor. He's driven to know more about Lenore because she fascinates him as much as she drives him crazy. She's an enigma he can't resist trying to solve. King and Lenore's snarky interactions are enjoyable. They both fear getting hurt and are cautious about getting involved, especially with each other when their feelings and attraction are so intense.

Playing with Danger's tone is dark and intense, and Mello explores disturbing content. But she balances these moments with humor and romance. Lenore's relationships with her family and friends contribute to her character development and evolution. Likewise, King's interactions with his father and co-workers contribute to his development and progression. Mello explores the impact of socio-economics on criminal investigations, law enforcement, and criminal activity within the Black community with subtlety and nuance through the novel's narrative and the characters.

Suspenseful and romantic, *Playing with Danger* is a dark, intense, fast-paced, character-driven read with

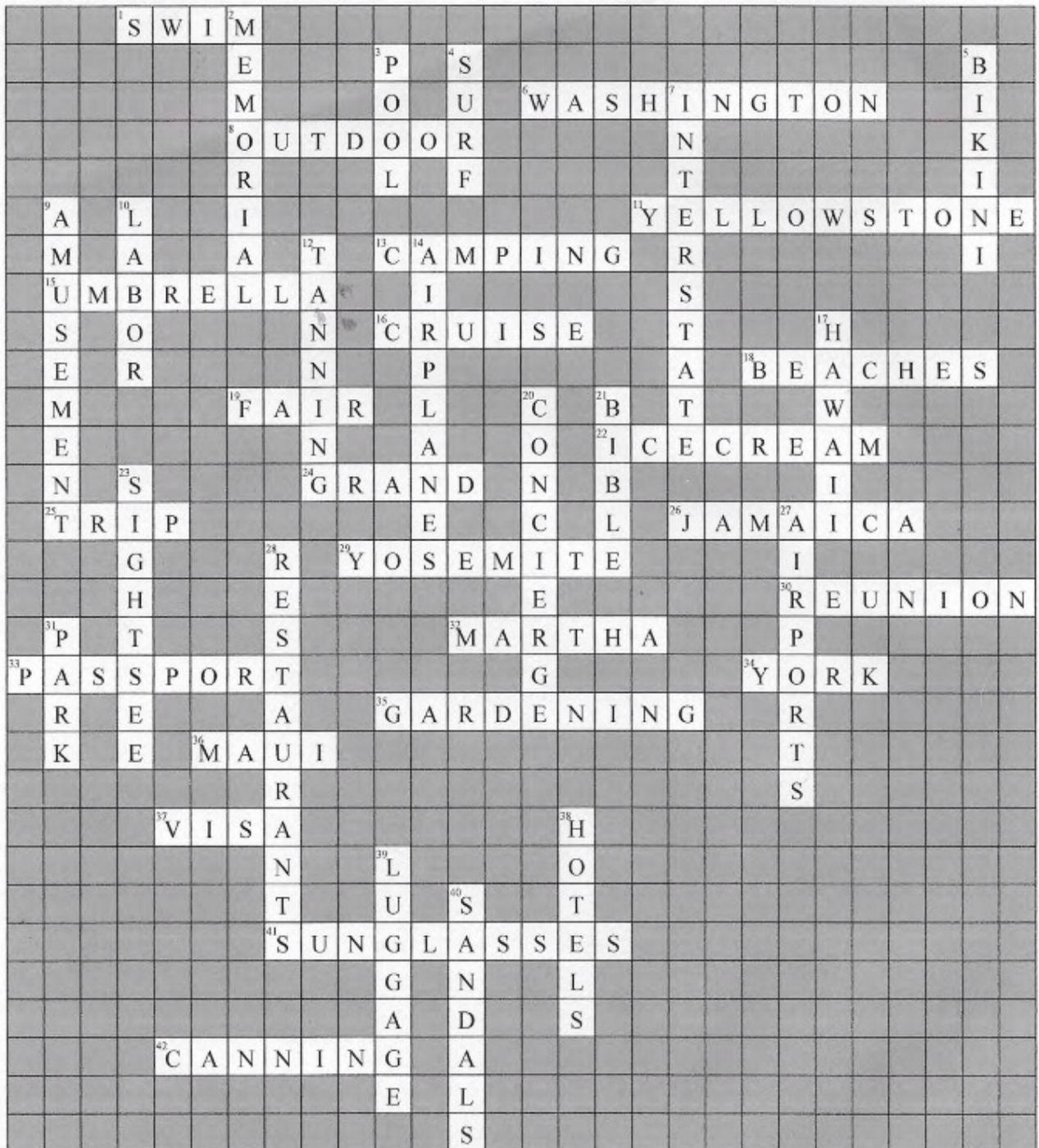
Late!

surprising twists and turns. It explores themes of family, justice, self-discovery, family secrets, anti-heroes, trauma/PTSD, emotional healing and recovery, falling in love, and learning to trust.

Lacy Hill

Vacation!

Gwendolyn C. Brantley



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