

Affaire de Coeur

Bringing You Honest Reviews Since 1980

November-December 2023

Peace on Earth (and Beyond)
From Two of AdC's Favorite Multi-talented
Authors



Teri Riggs



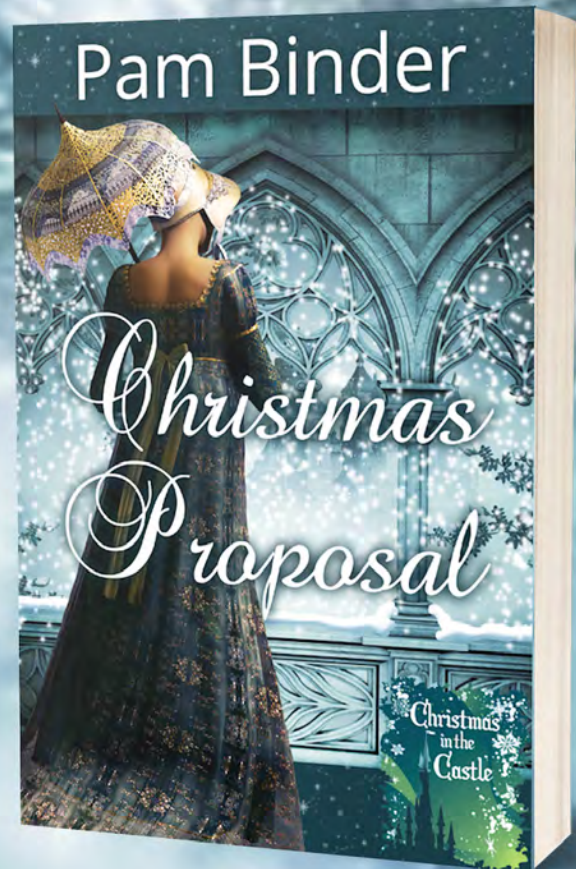
Urban Fantasy, Paranormal
author T.K. Lawyer





Pam Binder
New York Times
USA Today
Bestselling Author

**Time is an Illusion,
and Love...
the Only Reality**



PamBinder.com
@PamBinder183

November/December 2023

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“Swag!!”**

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Season's Greetings
from



Staff of *Affaire de Coeur*



by Pamela Ackerson

Dear QWERTY SWAG!



Dear Qwerty,

“What in the world is swag and why do I need it?”

Books, Swag, and Goodies! Oh my!

Readers love free stuff. They love special deals and discounts. They love meeting authors. But when an author gives them swag and goodies, they’re in heaven!

Swag are goodies but with a slight difference. Many times they go into ‘Swag Bags’. Honestly most of the time they’re interchangeable. Swag can be anything small: pins, magnets, pens, business cards, and/or bookmarks. The list could go on!

Goodies are more targeted with a focus on the author’s logo, quotes, and/or graphics: Books, coffee cups, glasses, plastic cups, pamphlets, notebooks, calendars, etc. Goodies are often given away during contests, at the author’s table at book events, and/or on a Goodies Table.

They’re all used for promotional purposes. It’s the perfect advertisement for the author because readers love them!

If you’re just starting out, I’d recommend going with bookmarks and pens. Start with one or the other. Both would be even better, but if you can’t, that’s okay.

Many hosts/hostesses will contact authors and request swag for their book event VIP swag bags. VIPs are readers who’ve paid extra for the book event. Even if you aren’t attending the book event, find out how many swag items they’d need and send them on to the event coordinator. It will be worthwhile for you. It may or may not get you a book sale or two, however, it will get your name out there.

Name recognition: that’s a good thing.

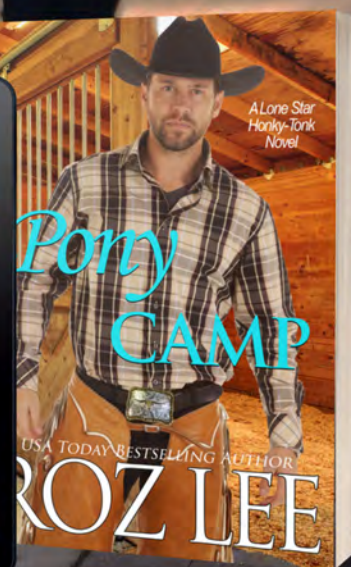
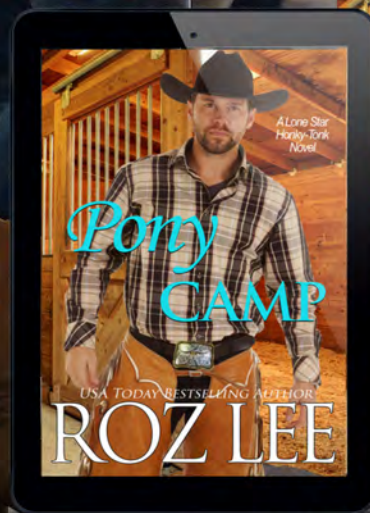
Let’s talk about how to make your swag and goodies more advantageous.

Bookmarks and Business Cards: They don’t always need to have your cover on them. But, if you’ve only got one

New from
USA Today Bestselling Author
ROZ LEE!



It's girls' night out at the Lone Star Honky-Tonk and Shelby's looking for a cowboy to take her mind off her troubles for a little while. How could she have known one dance would change her life?



Available at all major book retailers.



book out, put it on there. Make sure the dpi is 400 dpi or higher if it's a jpg. The reason why I say more than 300 dpi is because text tends to blur and that extra boost will make your bookmark have a crisper more professional appeal. Also, when you or your graphics artists saves it as a pdf, it'll compress to 300 dpi with no issues. Text shouldn't be any smaller than a 12pt font. Fonts should be easily legible. It's wonderful to have fancy, smancy lettering but it may make it difficult for the reader.

You can go with 300 dpi if it's a png. Pngs tend to adjust easier with press/print ready jobs.

The recommended dpi for the bookmarks works with almost all print/press ready goodies and swag.

*Some business cards can go down to 10pt font, but I wouldn't recommend it.

For the bookmark, use a short blurb very similar to the bullets publishers put on the front of book covers. If you can, include a QR code and your website address.

For someone who only has one book, your card, or bookmark will have your cover, the blurb, your web address. If there's room a QR code, and perhaps whichever @yourname for social media.

As you move on to more than one book, I'd recommend using a universal background. Find something that's royalty free and not too distracting. Make sure the colors in the background are easy on the eyes, and easy to work with.

If you so choose, create a logo.

Once you've decided on a background that suits you, keep it consistent with the rest of your swag. So, any buttons, notebooks, magnets, etc, will have the same background, your quote, and website.

Coffee Cups, plastic cups, notebooks: For larger items the fonts and dpi need to also be at print/press ready. For example, if you decided to have coffee cups made up as goodies to give away to a contest recipient or at a book event, the images you choose, and text

you use must be print/press ready. Depending on the size of the goodies will depend on how much text can be added along with the logo, or book covers.

I, personally, hand out notebooks in a little bag with a bookmark, business card, and pen. There are several covers on the 5.5 x 8.5 notebook cover. At the top I have my blurb, *Stories That Stir Within Us the Unquenchable Hope for a Better Tomorrow*. At the bottom is PamelaAckerson.net. The text are at 14pt Garamond.

You no longer need to add www to any web addresses in text. It is automatic for any reader to know there's a www before your web address, regardless of whether it is a .com, .net, .org, .co, etc.

Have fun, and remember, readers love free swag and good

The Spotlight is Shining on Ms. November

Teri Riggs



As a small girl, she didn't read bedtime stories. She made up her own. Who needed Little Red Riding Hood or The Three Little Pigs when there were so many great tales bouncing around in her head? When she became a mother to three little girls, she continued the tradition of making up bedtime stories. She would give the fairytales a bit of tweaking here and there or add a new ending. Her girls loved it. She still tells herself stories as she falls asleep. The only difference now is when she wakes up the next morning, she turns them into books.

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

T.R.: I write mostly romantic suspense. It's what I read so I like to write it.

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

T.R.: My heroes are Alpha males, and the heroines are always strong.

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

T.R.: Still working on my para-tril-

ogy and my historical western trilogy. I'm way behind after unexpectedly taking the summer off from writing.

AdC: *Favorite quote?*

T.R.: Never give up.

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

T.R. The beach.

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

T.R.: I used to, but it's been a while.

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

T.R.: Nope.

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

T.R.: Sex scenes. Maybe because my son-in-law and brother-in-law are in the ministry.

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



Love At The Twilight
Sadie's mother called it a gift. Sadie calls it a curse. Can a woman with psychic abilities ever find a man who will accept her as she is?

Love At First Touch
Gift or curse? It no longer matters as long as Kelcie can avoid the debilitating visions that plague her.



The MIA Groom
Jillian Gilmore's wedding day has arrived. Unfortunately, her groom has not.

Bringing Her Home
Jessica Lane had been dumped by the love of her life, Tommy, after she was seriously injured during an FBI field op.

Teri-Riggs.com

@TeriLRiggs



Sunsets and New Beginnings
Mandi Waters seeks refuge in the seaside town of Heaven's Beach.

True Love Never Dies
Samantha has mourned the tragic death of her husband...she begins to see images that can't possibly be real.

Forever Paradise
Lindsey James is ready to begin her life. A stalker has other plans for her.

T.R. I'll be at 20BooksVegas in November. I'm going to Readers Take Denver, TropiCon, and Space Coast Book Lovers in 2024.

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

T.R.: I used to be a nurse.

Please give us the following contact information:

Personal web page <https://teri-riggs.com/>

Twitter <https://twitter.com/TeriLRiggs>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Teri-Riggs-329379907142621/>





Teri Riggs is offering you a

Sneak Peek

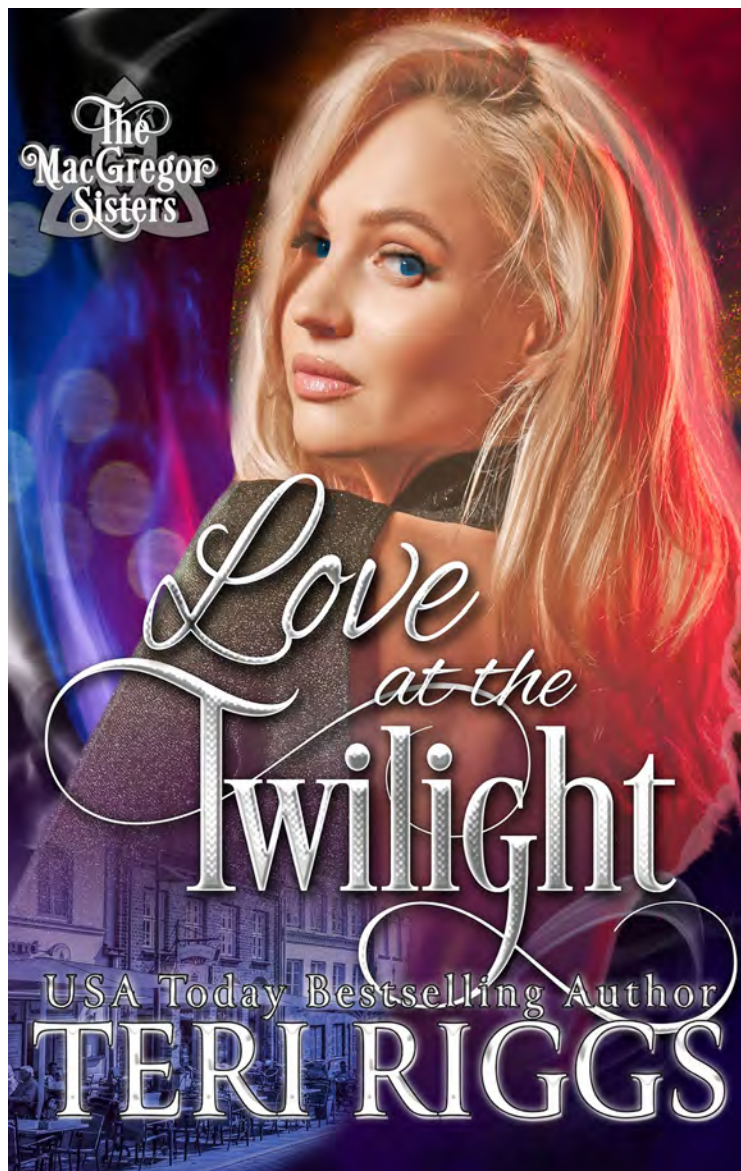
Love At The Twilight

by Teri Riggs

Sadie MacGregor owns her own coffee shop, The Twilight, and business is booming. She loves the small town she lives in. Her two wonderful sisters who live nearby, are her best friends. And now, it seems she is falling in love with her favorite customer. Life is good, well, except for the secret she is keeping. When Sadie decides to confide in Jay, will he accept her as she is? He wouldn't be the first man to dump her over the family curse she carries.

Detective Jay Redman has his heart set on making his favorite barista his. After six months of flirting over his morning cup of Twilight coffee, he's ready to make his move. Unfortunately, the serial killer he's after is murdering women who look like Sadie and has his eyes on her. Can Jay keep Sadie safe?

Between the big secret Sadie is keeping, and the

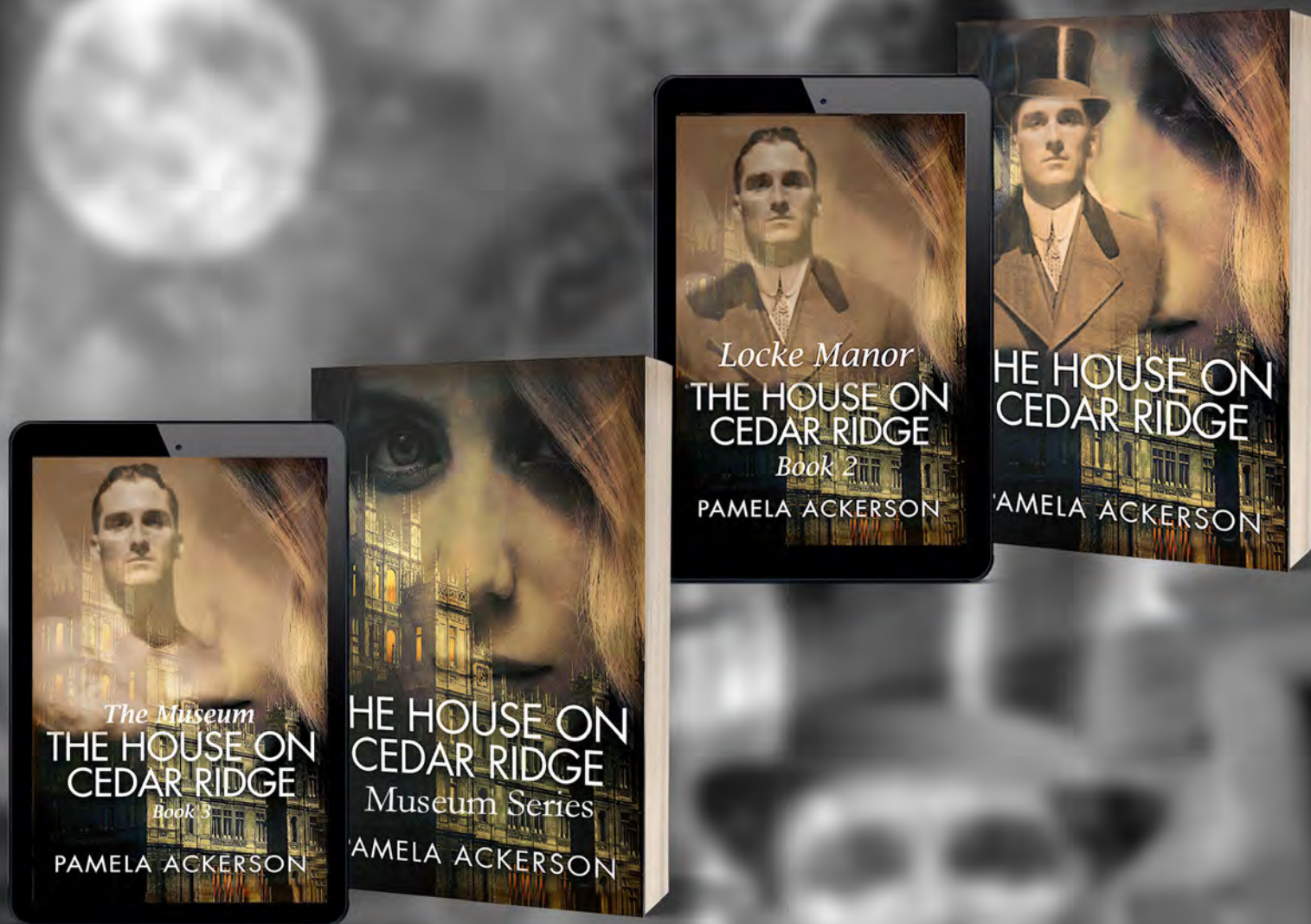


serial killer Jay is chasing, their newfound love may not survive... that is, assuming they can manage to stay alive.

H
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Available in E-Book Large Print
Paperback and Hard Cover

Transported back in time, a reclusive
and timid curator of a haunted museum
engages in death-defying battles against
a powerful, vengeful witch.

The House on Cedar Ridge
Pamela Ackerson



AdC Loves Conferences

Sweet as a Peach Book Signing Event

Hosted by Heather Gunther, Sweet as a Peach Book Signing Event was held October 14, 2023 from 9 am to 5 pm at the Buckhead Marriott in Atlanta, Georgia. With over 70 authors from all genres from all over the US and one author came from Alaska! Many got together the night before to enjoy dinner before the long day. The event ended with dessert and drinks at the after party.



Hostess, Heather Gunther



Author M.K. Moore



Author Sandy Sullivan

FREE FOR ALL

ZOE DAWSON

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE HAPPILY EVER AFTERS...

WWW.ZOEDAWSON.COM



Author, Thetta James



Authors Pamela Ackerson and Kat Mizera

The Spotlight is Shining on Ms. December

T.K. Lawyer



Passionate Playful* Paranormal*

Award winning, international bestselling author, TK Lawyer writes sexy and heartwarming paranormal and contemporary romance with HOT alpha males and curvy women. Her books often toe the line, straying from traditional ideas and opening readers' minds and hearts to unlimited possibilities. She loves exploring new ideas and new ways of thinking.

When she isn't reading or writing, she is likely spending time with her husband/best friend or catering to their lovable American Foxhound misfit who steals all the attention in their house.

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

TKL: I started writing paranormal romance because of my personal interest in paranormal phenomenon. I truly believe anything is possible and I write this in my books. Since I like the romance genre in general, and can't see myself really writing anything else, I decided to also dip my toe into contemporary romance, even venturing into writing a military romance novel for a charity to help pair Veterans with skilled K-9 companion.

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

TKL: The characters in my contemporary romance stories are people with real issues. My curvy women often have been dumped, burned by past partners, and not so sure about the new men trying to vie for their attention. Curvy women who are strong, fiery and don't easily say yes make up most of my books, regardless if it's contemporary romance or paranormal.

For my paranormal books, I write primarily about two different

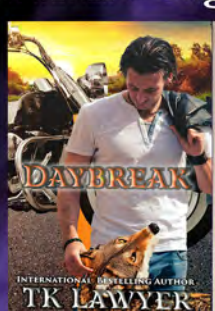
beings: angels and shape shifters of all kinds, including hybrids, which are my favorite. My angels are beautiful, strong, and protective. They are also kind and captivated by the females that capture their attention.

My shape shifters range anywhere from dragons, wolves, bears to butterflies, porcupines, skunks and hybrid shifters which are a mix of two different types of shape shifters. I enjoy writing about hybrids because you can pull powers from the two different species and it is thrilling to write about

Urban Fantasy, Paranormal, and Contemporary Romance



The Guardian League Series



Passionate *Playful* Paranormal



Shape Shifters of all kinds: Wolves, Hybrids, Gargoyles, Sharks, Hellhounds, and a Black Bear that Jingles**

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their capabilities, mixed into one being.

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

TKL: My latest book is *The Unwanted*. Everyone always writes about strong, beautiful alpha shape shifters. Well, I wanted to write about the ones no one talks about. The ones no one thinks about. The “other” shifters that you never hear about because they aren’t considered powerful, impressive beings. They had a tale too, and it needed to be told. Plus, they needed their own, individual HEA’s. That’s what *The Unwanted* is about.

AdC: *Favorite quote?*

TKL: “I shall pass through this world but once.

Any good therefore that I can do
or ANY kindness that I can show

to ANY human being,
let me do it NOW.

Let me not defer or neglect it,
for I shall not pass this way
again.” – Henry Drummond

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

TKL: In Heaven. LOL. Just kidding. We are past that part. Actually, I would be at the food court in the mall watching the couple chatting and getting to know each other some before they move on to the next scene. The couple being an angel who is taking a vacation from his duties and the female who has caught his eye and his interest.

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

TKL: Always. Every one of my books has parts about me in it and life events I have experienced. I like to add

realism to my books, and it is easier for me to write about something I have first-hand knowledge about. Yet most people may not know what is real and what isn’t when they read my books, unless they really know me. It makes for an entertaining experience!

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

TKL: Probably not. Hahaha. But I would stare at it and maybe take pictures and watch if someone else goes through it to see what happens. I might even write about the experience later, in one of my books.

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

TKL: Sex scenes. Yes, I know. I have

Continued on the next page



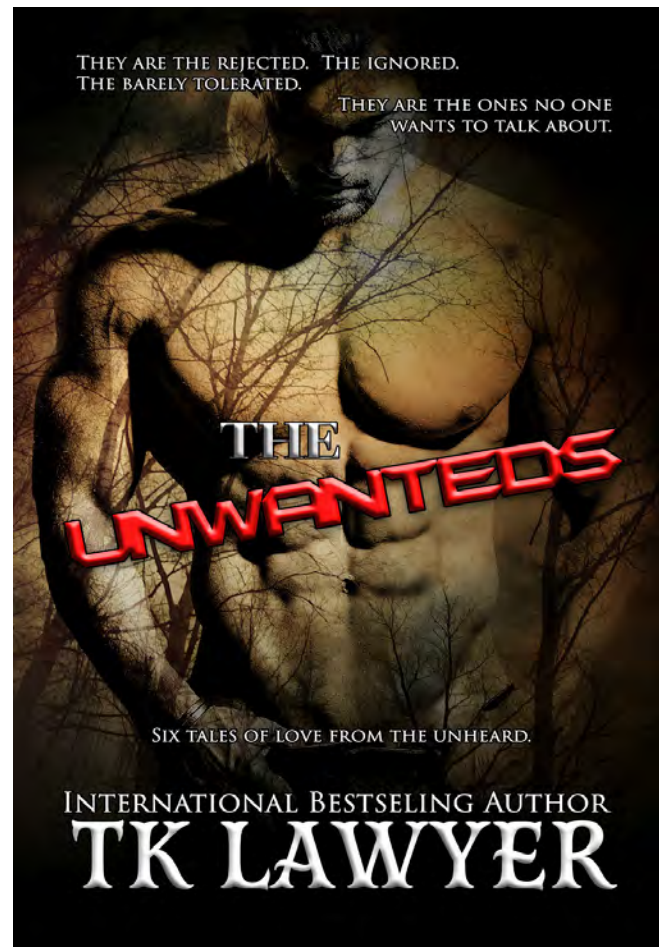
Sneak Peek

TK Lawyer Presents:

The Unwants

An Excerpt

They are the rejected.
The ignored.
The barely tolerated.
They are the ones no one wants to talk about.
Six short stories of love all about *The Unwants*.



Rose enjoyed her co-worker's company. Yet, one night when she witnesses something startling, she wonders if she ever really knew him, at all.

Daphne's trip to the local bar turns into an amazing, unforgettable night with a stranger. Can she give him more than one night?

Pietro was hired to be the janitor. Yet, when he takes off with the Alpha's betrothed to save her from a fated, loveless marriage, will he survive the pack's vengeance?

Hopper was only searching for his next meal. He never expected a reunion with a girl from his past. A girl who has matured in ways that leave him wanting.

Cameron's next-door neighbor proves to be exactly what he is searching for. Yet, there is one major problem. A respected, powerful shape shifter, living next door, who also has his eyes on her.

After losing her job of fifteen years, Jaela wants nothing more than one night of sheer, unadulterated bliss. Yet, her escort is no ordinary man and Jaela plans to win him. The only problem is, she doesn't know his name.

Spotlight continued

such a hard time describing the details. I can do just about anything else, but if you ask me to describe what my characters are doing in intimate settings, I literally want to run away. Hahaha.

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

TKL: Yes, always. My last one for 2023 is Pages and

Palms in West Palm Beach, Florida.

For 2024, I have the following lined up:

TropiCon in St. Augustine, Florida

Tampa Bay Comic Convention (pending acceptance for my 2nd year) in Tampa, Florida

Orlando Reads Books in Orlando, Florida

Rebels and Readers Author Event in West Virginia

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

TKL: I am very open-minded, and you have to be this way, especially when reading my angel books, because they are not your typical angel paranormal romance. My angels fall in love with real people. They come to Earth and do typical things that a human would do to woo and court their chosen mate. These are angels with high responsibilities and prestigious jobs. When they love, they fall hard.

I also believe anything is possible and will use this in writing my shape shifters, creating imaginary worlds that seem believable with real world issues that must be tackled by the couple.

AdC: *Please give us the following contact information:*

Personal web page: <https://www.tklawyerauthor.com>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tklawyerauthor>

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



Cooking During the Holidays

Across

3. Name brand shortening.
5. Honey baked ____.
8. Often used spice during the holiday. Grows on a tree.
9. Select this 350 degrees option when cooking a cake.
10. To shapen cookies, you need one of these.
11. You don't sleep between these, rather bake cookies on them.
14. ____ pecan ice cream.
15. Parker House ____.
17. Use this appliance for instant heating or cooking.
19. Not jelly, but ____ (which "don't shake like that!")
20. These legumes bring good luck on New Years.
22. This sugar is often confused with powdered sugar.
25. Deep-____ chicken can't be beat!
27. This pin is used to flatten dough.
30. Baking ____ makes a cake rise through a chemical reaction with an acid (i.e. buttermilk).
32. A number of people shun this cake during the season.
33. Chocolate chip, sugar, roly poly, sugar pecan are all these.
34. When you cook, protect your clothing with this.
35. This fruit is very popular in sauces and jellies on the Thanksgiving table.

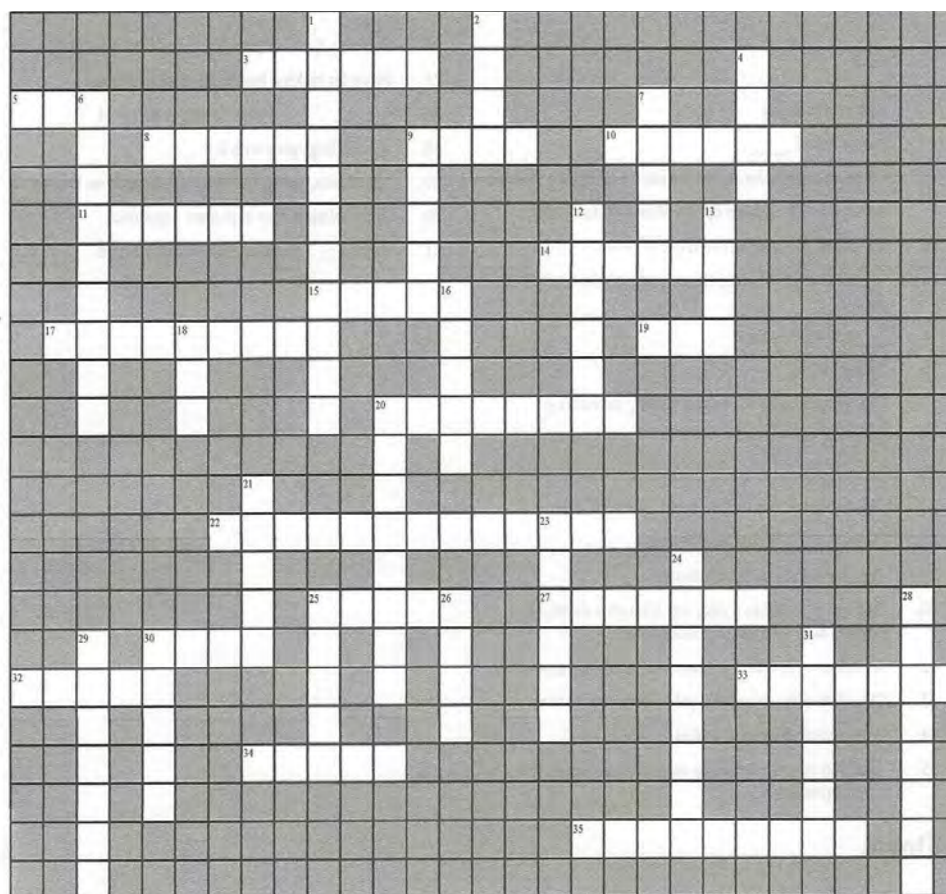
Down

1. This pastry is used to make houses during the holiday.
2. Cool the cookies or cake on this.
4. Bake this in the ____.
6. These cups come in 1/4, 1/3, 1/2 and 1.
7. This cake pan has a tube up the middle.

9. Steaks and sweet peppers are cooked on this oven setting.
12. The fowl that's prominent during the season.
13. Some items have this unit of measurement rather than the ounce.
16. The original sweetener.
18. Either shortening, butter or this is necessary to bake a cake.
20. Round flaky bread great with butter or gravy.
21. Hot drink popular during the cold season. Often served with marshmallows, whipped cream or sprinkles.
23. This method uses less oil when cooking and is healthier.

24. Probably the most popular spice of the season.
25. Basic for making bread and other pastries.
- 26 ____ ____ goose describes this fowl.
28. Aka stuffing--goes with #12 Down
29. Vegetables, meats, and fruit are chopped on this board.
30. The healthiest way to prepare vegetables.
31. Baking ____ makes a cake or biscuits rise.

Answers on page 22





A FUN, SEXY
ROMANCE
ABOUT A GUY
WHO CAN'T COMMIT
AND A GIRL WHO
PROMISES HERSELF
SHE WON'T FALL
IN LOVE WITH HIM.
(SPOILER ALERT!
THEY'RE BOTH DELUSIONAL.)

DEBORAH'S BOOKS ARE ALL AVAILABLE ON AMAZON

All of Ms. Camp's books are awesome! She is a prolific author. One is always drawn in from the first sentence. And you can't help falling in love with the hero!!!!

★★★★★ Amazon Review

WWW.DEBORAH-CAMP.COM

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

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



Contemporary Romance

Impressing Brett

Becca Jameson

Self-published

E-book

B0C1WDTZ5V

★★★★★



Lacy

My childhood was not ideal. My mom died when I was twelve. My father didn't want me. He forced me to grow up before I was ready. And then he tried to coerce me to marry against my will. I had two options; I chose to walk away and never look back.

It's been ten years; my father's sudden death means little to me. I don't even care that he cut me out of his will. Except maybe he didn't.

Brett

I've known Lacy for a long time. I've always been attracted to her, but she's not Little. She's in trouble though. Someone tried to burn down her apartment building. She needs

a place to stay. And...I was wrong about her. She might not know what it means yet, but she is Little. She needs protection, too. Someone is following her. They'll never get their hands on her because she's mine.

First off, monkey stuffie!!! Life has not been kind to Lacy, and I was thrilled when Brett came into her life and gave her a shoulder to cry on and a heart to lean on. This was a sweet tale of self-discovery and love plus a monkey stuffie!!!

D Antonio

The Secret She Keeps (Tennessee Cold Case #4)

Lena Diaz

HARLEQUIN - Romance

978-1335591234

★★★1/2

Raine will do anything to stop her brother's rapidly approaching execution, including kidnapping PI Callum

Contemporary Romance

Reindeer Tracks (Little Cakes #16)

Pepper North and Paige Michaels

Self-published

E-book

B0BMDNHL34

★★★★★



"Welcome to Little Cakes, the bakery that plays Daddy matchmaker!"

Love has always tiptoed around her. Could Santa have arranged for her to find the Daddy of her dreams?

Gemma James loves helping women feel beautiful, and as the owner of Design Magic, she's living her dream every day. Helping women embrace fashion that flatters and fits is all the reward she needs, but her business limits her opportunities to meet a special man of her own.

While waiting to buy his sister a gift card, Anton Gates spots the well-loved stuffie by the cash register. But the moment he meets Gemma, he can tell she's the right person to help him find the perfect gift instead. Enchanted by Gemma's style and charm, it isn't long before Anton is envisioning the perfect little holiday gift for himself, too.

"Little Cakes" is a sweet and satisfying series, but dare to taste only if you like delicious Daddies, luscious Littles, and guaranteed happily-ever-afters. *Reindeer Tracks* is sweet as can be. Not so much a holiday story as a story taking place around the holidays. This is a wonderful addition to the series. Gemma gets to discover her Little side and Anton enjoys enlightening her. Each book in this series can be read standalone and I encourage you to take a bite.

D. Antonio

Wright. Callum is the only person Raine thinks can help convince the Governor to stay her brother's execution. Raine offers Callum and his team a lead on a killer they are pursuing. However, she chooses to keep a fundamental secret from Callum. In a race against time, Callum and Raine work together to discover the truth before her brother dies and another man kills again.

From the moment her brother went to jail for murder, Raine devoted every moment of her life to proving his innocence. She even studied law and became a lawyer. Raine has no friends and no social life—only her job and the quest to get her brother off of death row and out of prison. Beautiful, loyal, intelligent, stubborn, and a proficient investigator, Raine gathers

and analyzes information that enables her to detect a serial killer that the police were unable to find.

A handsome former police detective who worked on the case upon which the murder conviction was based, Callum lacks technology skills and know-how and doesn't like lawyers. He works for a company that solves cold cases and helps law enforcement agencies without resources solve cases.

Diaz deftly develops her complex, relatable characters with emotional and snarky interactions that soften them. Her vivid descriptions draw readers in from the opening scenes and keep them turning the pages until the thrilling conclusion. She explores the criminal justice system and how prisoners on death row are treated with nuance, offering a different perspective on

the content from what readers may have read before.

Although the novel's primary focus is its well-developed suspense elements, Lena Diaz transitions Callum and Raine's relationship from an unlikely antagonistic partnership to a believable romance by the novel's end. *The Secrets She Keeps* is an intriguing, funny, intense, angsty, suspenseful, and emotional read.

Lacy Hill



**SATURDAY
FEBRUARY 24TH, 2024
12PM - 4PM**

**Douglasville Conference Center
6700 Church St
Douglasville, GA 30134**

**Multi-Genre
Book Signing Event**

70+ Authors

**The event will raise
money for the
Georgia Police
K-9 Foundation.**

rawrevent.com



Historical Romance Reviews

Never Wager with a Wallflower

Virginia Heath
St. Martin's
Griffin

Trade Paperback
978-1250787804

★★★★★



Venus Meriwell absolutely hated her name and the abundant curves that God had bestowed upon her. Ever since she had developed those curves, the opposite sex had been intrigued by her name and loved to compare her hourglass figure and abundant bosom with the famous statue that she was named for. And even though she wore prim, schoolmarm glasses and dressed demurely, she was totally unaware of the allure she projected. And the one

person who was very aware of her allure was a distant family member, Galahad Sinclair, whose cousin Giles was married to her sister.

Galahad, or Gal as he liked to be called, had come up hard in America and, after working like a dog day and night, had finally saved up enough money to see his long-held dream come true. He had come to England four years ago and had opened a gaming den on the London docks. He avoided his family as much as he possibly could but, every year, Venus' sister held a special family pre-holiday dinner especially for him that he felt he had to attend. And every year he locked horns with the oh-so-prim-and-proper Miss Venus. Something about her got under his skin and he found he couldn't help but goad her (about everything) just to see her

eyes sparkle in outrage and her face turn a charming red.

Venus knew that the handsome, charming devil named Galahad (of all things!) with the lazy American drawl, was a scoundrel of the basest sort. After all, he owned a gaming hell on the docks, hung out with unsavory characters and did everything in his power to upset her every time they met. So, she consistently looked down her nose at him and made sure she put him in his place while trying to figure out why, every time she met him or they touched, she had tingles running up and down her body!

Never Wager with a Wallflower is a character driven Regency romance of preconceived notions and prejudices. The back-and-forth dialogue between Gal and Venus is prudishly sarcastic on

Historical

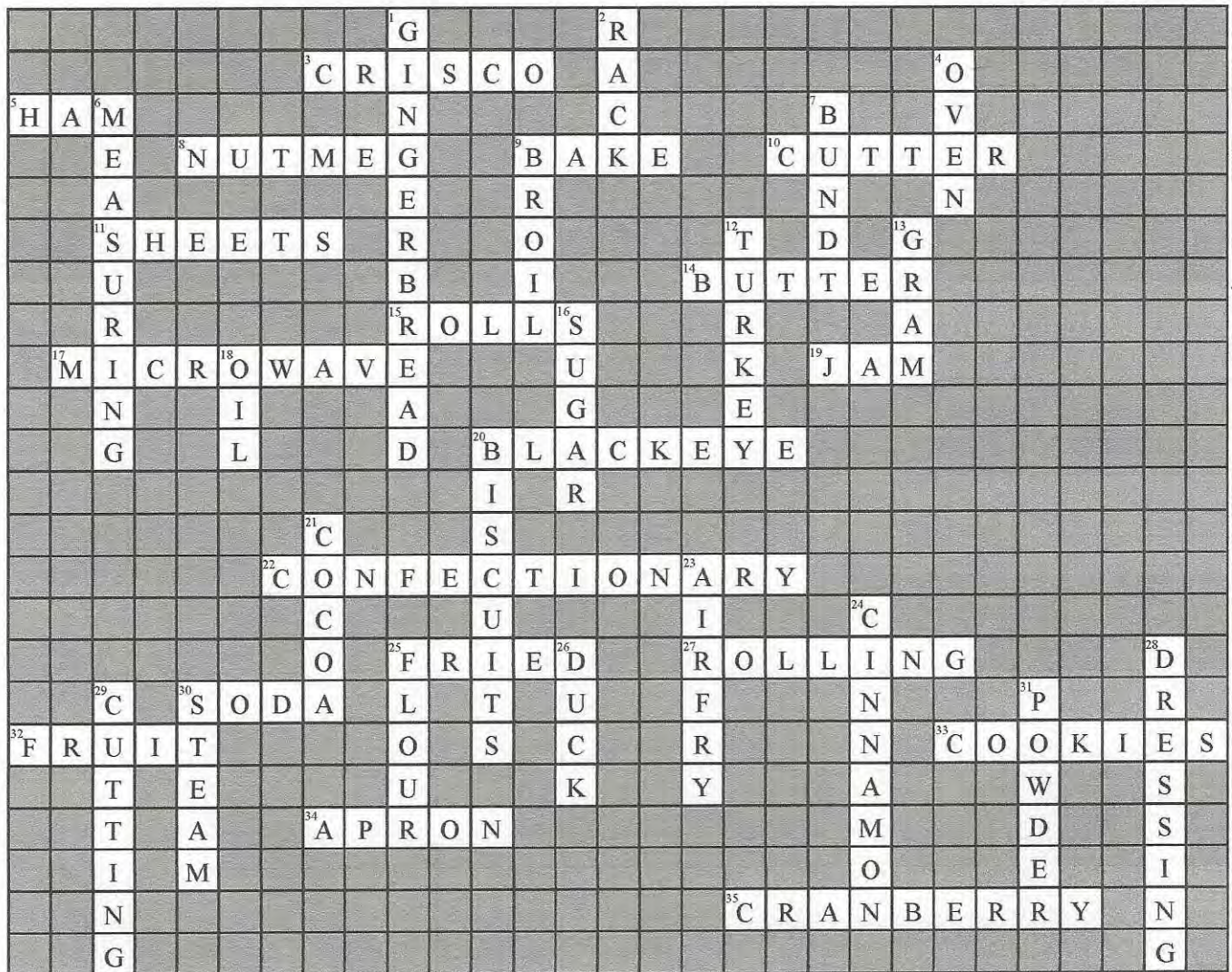
Venus' behalf and devilishly sardonic on Gal's part. And it works. Ms. Heath has captured the misconceived outrage and the good-natured, but cautious, teasing between the two with definite flair. Throw in the antics of the three young orphans that adore "their" Miss Venus and are against anything she's against, and you have a laugh-out-loud read that you will find hard to put down.

Lani Roberts



Cooking During the Holidays

Louise B. Snead



Paranormal Romance Reviews

Fantasy

Vampires

Shape Shifters

Time Travel

Werewolves...

Minnie (Silver Springs Pets #1)

Mia Harlan
Self-published

E-book
B0C7D116TJ
★★★★★



I'm the witch with the most capital "B" in Silver Springs, a freak that even a quirky, paranormal town won't accept. But no one actually knows the real me... I'm taking care of a toddler, working two jobs, and barely holding on by a thread. The carefree socialite everyone sees is just an act, and things keep turning from bad to worse.

If I don't come up with a bunch of money, fast, I'll end up unalive. My mom cursed me to flirt with my boss's mate, whom I don't even like. And I have three fated mates who might end up screwing me (and not in a fun way):

-The single dad whose son I'm caring for.

-The man who broke my heart when we were kids but now wants to marry me.

-A mad scientist who's selling innocent animals as vampire food.

On top of that, I'm hiding an anxiety disorder, squatting in an abandoned building, and taking so many

potions that I may have a problem.

I'm Minnie Alexander. I used to be Minerva Montgomery, owner of the bakery in town. Now I have a baker's dozen of problems.

Minnie is a quirky, angsty, slow burn, romantic comedy set in the Silver Springs universe. There is a cliffhanger ending. Please see the "Author's Note" for trigger warnings. Minnie is a quirky rom-com with a paranormal bent. It reads like a spin-off, as the characters have a shared history that we aren't clued in to. Minnie is a thoroughly unlikeable character that you will come to love. Her words don't match her actions, and her actions are incredibly sweet. I thoroughly enjoyed this story and am anxiously awaiting the next installment.

D Antonio

Second Hand Rose

D.E. Fox
Blossom Spring
Publishing

E-book
B0C3RG2H35
★★★★★



Second Hand Rose begins with Abigail getting reacquainted with the people in her old town. Things that were out of place start to become apparent as the story progresses and the mystery of the un-openable wardrobe eventually reveals tragic consequences.

Abigail Hirst and her little ter-

rier Jake, moved back to Friendship, to Grandma's beautiful house and antique shop the Second Hand Rose. Grandma was gone, but she left Abigail with a legacy she hadn't dreamed of as she became reacquainted with the townsfolk. She runs into Sam Giles, the love of her life and the reason she had left Friendship 12 years before. They begin a new relationship. In the meantime, there is an old wooden wardrobe in the house that seems to defy being opened, her grandma said it was special.

One day they found it was open, a cold draft had appeared, and the terrier was growling at an unseen foe. The old wardrobe would cause so much misery from an evil spirit named Michael hiding inside it. People die, children and adults alike as this spirit only wants to feed and enjoys the killing. Abigail doesn't know about Michael or his earthy assistants to whom he gives youth in return for help with his evil doings. Abigail, Jake and Sam must eventually confront this horrible situation. Little does she know that she has special protections, from the most unlikely places.

Readers might have to remember to keep track of some of the characters in the story, but it will all come together. This reader was under the impression it was a short story, but it's a 145 page novelette. Great page-turner!

Lauren Calder



Two Sides of a Coin

Dario Mondanelli

Self-published

E-book

B0CHHG51R7

☆☆☆☆

John Stevens is a successful man of importance with business as well as at home. With business, he was the best of the best. He was a role model, mentor, and inspiration to those around him.

Charming and quick-witted, William Anderson is the opposite of Stevens, troubled, and struggling with life. He did have a way of fooling people with a practiced voice of stories filled with adventure. He was successful with his job. Unfortunately, Anderson had a gambling problem.

The two met at a charity event. It became a turning point in their lives.

Two Sides of a Coin is a wonderful story of redemption and hope.

Kitty Lane

What was Left of Her

Victoria Hattersley

Rowanvale Books, Ltd.

E-book

B0CF9LBKHJ

☆☆☆☆

Even though it'd been twenty-five years since they'd seen their Aunt Lucie, Cassie and Alex inherited her house. Lucie's neighbor, Mrs Gibbett, helped them get acclimated. Being there had brought back memories, dealing with hurt feelings, their cousin Bella, and some happy moments of Lucie.

As she questioned what happened to her aunt, how she'd died from a fall, strange things began to happen. They began seeing things and hearing things.

A very enticing, chilling, and touching tale that will leave the reader turning the pages as quickly as possible.

Kitty Lane

Three Daddies for Christmas: A heartwarming paranormal Christmas ménage romance... (Pleasure Times Four Christmas series Book 5)

Candace Blevins

Kaleidowords Publishing

E-book

B0CLKZ95CD

☆☆☆☆



Archie, Leo, and Isaac are triplets. All three have a daddy fetish, but they come at it from different directions. However, finding a Little who can handle three daddies — a caretaker daddy, a disciplinarian daddy, and a nymphomaniac daddy who needs sex-on-demand more times a day than a werewolf needs food — has proven difficult.

Emma makes a good living decorating wedding cakes in Las Vegas. She's a coyote shifter, and she avoids the werewolves as much as possible. Imagine her surprise when a huge wolf walks into her bakery and comes to her rescue when her ex-boyfriend is making a scene.

After leaving her ex, Emma is living in a by-the-week apartment until she can find a house to buy, and she's surprised at the offer to move right in with the triplets. A trusted mutual friend assures her these guys are safe, so she agrees to the house rules and makes the move. She's always wanted a daddy, and now she's living with three. Will it be too much? Or just enough?

Three Daddies for Christmas is not your typical DD/lg story, but for fans of Candace Blevins, it is a terrific love story. Just like love, kink is defined by the people in the relationship. For Emma and her guys they communicate and make it work. This story emphasizes the difference between work and play. Enjoyable escape.

D Antonio





Cleat Cute
Meryl Wilsner
 Narrated by
 Dana Varden
 and Zim Avaltrades
Macmillan
Audio
 Audiobook
 978-1250292896
 ★★★★★



In Meryl Wilsner's rom-com *Cleat Cute*, narrated by Dana Varden and Zim Avaltrades, Grace Henderson and Phoebe Matthews, U.S. Women's National Team soccer players, stumble into a friends-with-benefits relationship, never expecting to fall in love—while preparing for the World Cup.

Grace is a 10th-year U.S. Women's National Soccer Team star player. She's unprepared for an upstart rival—who excites and makes her feel alive—coming along to take her spot. When a hip injury sidelines Grace, Phoebe does just that. Phoebe can't believe she gets to train—possibly play—with her idol whose skill she's admired as long as she's loved soccer. Starstruck, Phoebe

sees Grace as more than her teammate, especially after they kiss. Unexpectedly, Grace and Phoebe become friends-with-benefits.

Grace's injury heals, and she and Phoebe discover how to play together as teammates instead of competing for her spot with the World Cup approaching. Their friends-with-benefits relationship is amazing. However, Phoebe thinks they're dating while Grace realizes she's catching feelings and doesn't know how to feel, believing Phoebe isn't serious about her. Will they discover their feelings/relationship is more important than the World Cup?

Wilsner deftly develops the relationships between diverse characters. Grace and Phoebe share an immediate connection. Wilsner captures fire and passion in their first kiss, then smoothly transitions their relationship from rivals to friends-with-benefits to two women falling in love who don't understand how they got there.

Narrators Avaltrades and Varden bring Wilsner's steamy and romantic novel to life. Avaltrades primarily narrates Grace's POV, and Varden Phoebe's, alternating for each other and secondary characters distinct voices, revealing their personalities, feelings,

quirks, and moods. Avaltrades' accents are excellent. Her lovely voice and expressive narration perfectly fit Grace's and other characters. Varden's narration for Phoebe makes her sound older than expected. But her pacing and inflection are spot-on for Phoebe's sunny, fast-talking personality. It's difficult imagining different narrators.

Complete opposites, they balance and help each other grow. Phoebe is extroverted, loud, and loves winning people over with laughter. However, she struggles with time management, quitting when things get hard, and lacking focus—except in soccer. Grace is an introvert who loves privacy and quiet. She's driven, wary, prefers control, plays with grit and perseverance, and isn't comfortable with feelings, relationships, or showing weakness. Grace is what Phoebe's been wanting/waiting for—judgment-free acceptance. Phoebe plays with excitement and joy that Grace doesn't remember losing.

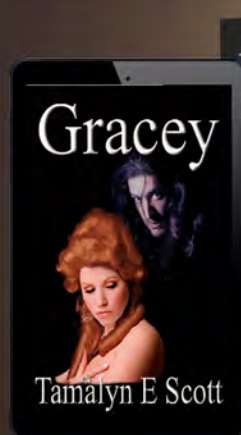
Cleat Cute's excellently paced with a wonderful balance of steam, humor, angst, sexiness, pining, and sports. Wilsner's lively and colorful dialogue, vivid description, and engaging interactions between complex, fallible, and likable characters make it a captivating, fast-paced, multi-layered romance.
Lacy Hill

A Valentine for Christmas (Valentine Vineyards #1)

Reese Ryan
 Narrated by *Tamika Katon-Donegal*

Recorded Books
 Audiobook and cd's
 B0BYT8JFM
 ★★★

Tamika Katon-Donegal narrates Reese Ryan's *A Valentine for Christmas*, in which Chandra Valentine agrees to be Dr. Julian Brandon's pretend girlfriend after he saves her twice. When their pretend relationship and Julian's seduction under mistletoe lead to a steamy affair, she questions her beliefs about love, family, and life.



Sarah

Little did she know that her life wouldn't truly start until the day she found something extraordinary, a hidden letter! Then and there, Sarah knew that one day, she and Beckham would have it's own story to tell.

Bethany

Colonel McInnis, a widower with two small children, had a temper so hot, he regularly decorated Bethany's day dresses with oatmeal. Even so, something about him called to her. Perhaps, it was the sadness in his eyes...

Rebecca

They seemed like knights in shining armor, and she laughed out loud. After all, they were only a legend, a fairy tale. Weren't they?

Gracey

To have all that you thought and all you believed, change... things aren't always what they seemed to be and legends just might be real...

TamalynsBooks.com



Audiobooks

Chandra is sensible and cautious, while JB is more inclined to take risks or be adventurous. Though they're complete opposites, their attraction is fiery and intense. However, they share the experience of losing a parent while young. His presence calms her when she's anxious and uneasy like he did on the flight. JB gives in and falls for Chandra quickly. Chandra tries to fight their attraction because she's not ready to get involved—and Julian's younger. But she's unable to resist him, falling for him despite herself.

Ryan's vibrant description brings her characters and story to life. She develops and evolves Julian (JB)

and Chandra's connection and evolving relationship with chemistry-filled, sweet, sexy, steamy, humorous, and intensely emotional interactions, banter, and love scenes. Ryan uses the senses to describe their feelings and attraction to each other and their physical and emotional effects. While there's much going on in the book, Ryan's efficient and orderly narrative style/writing doesn't overwhelm you with the various characters and storylines.

Complementing Ryan's snarky, humorous, and colorful dialogue is Tamika Katon-Donegal's narration which brings Ryan's poignant story and complex characters to life. Katon-Donegal's chosen voices and narration for Chandra and Julian perfectly match their characters because she is skilled and provides distinct voices that differentiate between characters.

The novel's quick pacing and angst, balanced with humor, make it a page-turner. A sweet, funny, steamy, and sexy Christmas romance, *A Valentine for Christmas* is an audio listen recommended for fans of small-town romance, heroes who fall fast and hard for the heroine, and older woman/younger man romance tropes. It explores finding love when/where least expected, family, family estrangement, family secrets, toxic parents, parental abandonment, finding and reuniting with family, forgiveness, and starting over.

Lacy



2024: Your Year of More

Noah William Smith

Self-published

E-book

B0CF63FZB4

★★★★ 1/2

2024: Your Year of More focuses on motivation and planning for success and happiness. There are guidelines to help you decide and see what you really want and then how to get them.

It helps the reader to adapt to unexpected changes and work with them. It helps with thought-provoking questions, helps work through the answers, and keeps the reader motivated.

This is a gem waiting for anyone who just needs that extra little push.

Lauren Calder

Eternally Mortal

Tom Cobey

Self-published

E-book

B0CHKNC4ZL

★★★ 1/2

William Fennerman wasn't immortal, but he'd been around for centuries. He had searched for others like himself only to conclude he's one of a kind. William has the ability to transfer living energy back and forth through other humans, to add life to another or take it for himself. He lost his wife in World War II during a bombing and lost a lot of his will to live, but he had to go on. He still gave to those in need.

Joanne Arnet married a psychopath with schizophrenia. He abuses her and talks to imaginary people. Joanne feels trapped. With the help of a friend, Darcy Gordon, she was about to leave Michael. Michael kills Darcy, shoots her in the head, and leaves her for dead.

Joanne is in a coma for a long time, and the police have no leads

to Michael's whereabouts even as he causes mayhem. She eventually learns to get along as does Tabatha who was Darcy's wife. The struggle is hard. Joanne's, William's, Tabatha's and Michael's fates are ultimately intertwined.

Eternally Mortal begins with the not quite immortal William and carries on for a long beginning in the book, then breaks off to follow the other characters in the story. William's relevance only comes back far later as the main characters Joanne, Michael, and Tabatha weave in and out and carry most of the story. Sometimes it isn't easy to understand where the author is leading, but Cobey does bring it all home in the end.

Lauren Calder

Financially Free in 23

Elizabeth Hubbard

Self-published

E-book

978-1735833873

★★★★ 1/2

Financially Free in '23 works with the reader to define the needs for financial freedom with the assistance of faith. A workbook is also available to guide the reader for better success. It is possible to be financially free. It's not an overnight miracle. It takes time, effort, consistency, and faith.

Elizabeth Hubbard, the author, uses real-life situations to help the reader see he/she is not alone; they can control what's going on in their lives financially and can deal with the debts they have so they no longer need to struggle and live paycheck to paycheck.

Financially Free in 23 is highly recommended for anyone who doesn't understand the concept of money, how to use it for their best interest and comfort, and how to avoid living paycheck to paycheck.

Kitty Lane

Payback in Death

J.D. Robb

St. Martin's

Press

Hardcover

978-1250284090

★★★★★

Eve Dallas should have known that the glow from her long-awaited vacation couldn't last once she got home. She hadn't even made it back to the precinct before she got a call about a special case—the death of a cop.

Retired IAB officer Martin Greenleaf was found dead in his study, an apparent suicide. But is it? Eve's instincts cause her to question that assumption, especially since Greenleaf

Out There Screaming: An Anthology of New Black Horror

Edited by Jordan Peele and John Joseph Adams

Random House

E-book

978-0593243817

★★★★★



Out There Screaming is an anthology of horror short stories written by black authors. Edited by renowned film director Jordan Peel, nineteen stories explore the wide and deep spectrum of horror. The appeal of this anthology is just how varied each story is in subject matter. While "horrors" of the black experience, ranging from "superficially" subtle to structural and up to overt and violent racial terror is a common theme, there is so much nuance to the subject matter. Hatred of others is like a monster in itself, making its targets feel helpless at being able to protect themselves or fight back, but some of the stories remind the reader that there are dark and unknown creatures in the world that are indifferent to the concerns of humanity.

The intersection of the historical and contemporary experiences of people of the Black Diaspora is explored richly and darkly. The variety of stories also shows that while the Diaspora share a Sub-Saharan black African ancestry, there is so much diversity in the individual cultures and experiences of its members. A few of the stories deal with folklore and legends, which is this reader's favorite kind of horror/scary genre. Lessons taught and passed down from one generation to the next aid the current generation in evading dark fates, and in some cases, creatures of myth awake to protect those of that heritage from the real life horrors of racist violence against their community. Science fiction horror is also well-represented in this collection. Some of the stories are quite opaque in meaning and very bizarre. Their subject matter is not easily categorized or explained in any way. Readers who enjoy the just plain weird --and value asking themselves, "What did I just read?"--will also find something appealing here.

Without calling out specific authors over others, there are some very talented writers in this collection, and each story is worth reading for the experience. Readers who consider themselves horror fans who enjoy quality, thoughtful writing, and in particular want to explore the black experience in their horror, should definitely check out this collection.

Danielle Hill

had many potential enemies after his years in internal affairs. But would any of them be angry enough for murder?

With her usual combination of investigative skills and instinct, Eve must first decide if this is indeed a murder, and if so, who hated Greenleaf enough to kill him? If it was a murder, how did the culprit pull it off when there was no sign of forced entry and the doors were locked?

J.D. Robb once again satisfies with a mystery coupled with Eve's ev-

er-evolving romantic relationship with her husband, Roark.

Hannah Rowan

C H I L D R E N' S



The Pranky Monkey

Alexandrina Andre

Self-published

E-book

B0CG76M8P7

★★★★ 1/2

Written and illustrated by Alexandrina Andre, *The Pranky Monkey* features Sophie, a playful and happy monkey. She loved watching the other monieys play, but felt left out because they never asked her to join in on their games. She decided to play some harmless tricks and by doing that she learned about the magic of friendship.

This is a wonderful story and perfect for a first reader or to have someone read to a smaller child.

Lauren Calder





Alice on a Friday Night

Dessi Kikki

Words on the Water Press

Ebook

978-6197643268

☆☆☆ ½

Alice is a young woman in Eastern Europe in this coming-of-age novel by a debut author. The story is basically a slice-of-life as we follow Alice through her experiences that include drugs, alcohol, sex, and an eating disorder.

In her efforts to make some sense of her life, Alice travels to a country that seems to be the USA, though the author doesn't really specify the location. She gets no more satisfaction from that experience than she did in her native land, where she returns to be with her small group of friends.

With questionable friends and even more questionable decisions, Alice is hard-pressed to find a productive purpose in life.

Alice on a Friday Night gives a peek into one very specific type of

young woman and delves into her rather scrambled thought processes and leaves us hanging in the end as we try to guess her uncertain fate.

Hannah Rowan

The Hunting Moon (Luminaries, 2)

Susan Dennard

Tor Teen

Hardcover

978-1250194145

☆☆☆☆

Winnie Wednesday has achieved her lifelong goal. She's a monster hunter. There's only one problem. She cheated. People are relying on her, and Winnie has no idea what she's doing.

The night of the trial, Winnie was bitten by a werewolf. Facing certain death, she took a chance and jumped off a waterfall. Now Winnie's the most popular girl in town. Everyone wants to be friends with "The Girl Who Jumped." People think the reason she jumped was to get away from the

werewolf. In reality, Winnie was trying to escape The Whisperer, a monster that no one else has seen.

The town is convinced that the werewolf is the main danger to the community. And since werewolves can pass as humans, testing centers are being set up to find out which of the townspeople is a beast in disguise. The pressure is on to discover them quickly. No one wants the search to disrupt the Masquerade, the biggest party of the year. Dignitaries are coming from around the world to attend. Nothing must interfere. Certainly not a monster that no one except Winnie has seen. Can Winnie kill the monster before more people die?

It is imperative that one read the previous book before starting this one. Without that background information, this novel is very confusing. While it doesn't end with a cliffhanger, one is still left anxiously awaiting the next installment in this fantastic trilogy.

Sheila Griffin

Late!

Didn't quite make in the last issue



Includes all genre and all time periods

Cassiel's Servant

Jacqueline Carey

Tor Publishing

E-book

978-1250208354

★★★★★

Kushiel's Dart introduced the world of Terre d'Ange and a young courtesan named Phèdre, who was chosen by Namaah to serve in pleasure and pain. Joscelyn was the bodyguard who becomes her companion as Phèdre becomes the only person who can save her country from treachery. Now, it's time to see the story through Joscelyn's eyes.

In Terre D'Ange, the people follow the faith of Elua, the son of Jesus, born when His blood was shed at Calvary, and His angelic companions. Joscelyn Verreuil is the middle son of his noble family, sworn to serve in the Casseline Brotherhood, dedicated to Cassiel, the Perfect Companion. He is taken from his family to start his training at ten years old. The book spans those ten years, showing the cost of Joscelyn's vows and what shapes him into the man he is when he meets

Phèdre. When he is selected to be Phèdre's protector, it's far from what he desired. Their values seem absolutely contradictory in many ways. However, an act of betrayal puts them in mortal danger and terrible hardship, an experience that binds the pair together in a way that's deeper than the skin.

Cassiel's Servant is a still an epic read, despite its much shorter length than *Kushiel's Dart*. Joscelyn, an enigmatic, highly romantic, larger than life figure in the previous book, is even more appealing when the story unfolds through his eyes. He struggles with his vows to serve Cassiel (through celibacy) and by upholding his vow to protect and serve his charge even up to death. As he grows to love Phèdre, that vow changes and blooms like a flowering tree. He grows from a young man whose narrow view of the world initially and narrowly shaped his values to an increased understanding of human nature and the complexities of emotion, from sexual desire, familial love, and the desire to serve one's country even at the cost of self-sacrifice. Joscelyn's fighting skills are beautifully depicted, as he demonstrates the time

and discipline of ten years of training in the Brotherhood. He is a fully and beautifully realized character, whose flaws make him even more lovable.

Readers who enjoy large scale stories about political intrigue will appreciate the depth of that narrative in what initially seems will be a more intimate story. Despite the far-reaching, epic scale, Carey keeps Joscelyn and Phèdre central to the happenings. These two beloved characters have the reader on the edge as they find themselves in harrowing circumstances, relying on their unique skills and learning to trust and support each other. The magic is intrinsic for the worldbuilding of this novel, but it's subtle and never used as a crutch. However, there are moments where the reader is reminded in such awe-inspiring ways of the otherworldly and the spiritual underpinnings in this series. There is so much to love about this book. Readers who were enthralled by the "Kushiel Legacy" series will feel like they have come home again with *Cassiel's Servant*.

Danielle Hill

**Capital City
Author Event
Montgomery, AL**

**75+ Authors
Book Signing
Event**

May 17th to 19th, 2024

Meet and Greet

Fun

Games

Did we say lots of fun?

**Facebook.com/groups/
CCAEReadersGroup**

