

January-February 2025

# *Affaire de Coeur*

Bringing You the Best and Most Honest Reviews

Who Better to Start the Year?

*Pamela Ackerson*



*Deborah Camp*



*Celebrate Black History Month With AdC!  
Our own Lanelle Roberts Brent has a link  
between romance and the history-making*

*Tuskegee Airmen*



January-February 2025

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Dear QWERTY  
“Types of Fiction”

Pam knows fiction. Allow her  
to tell you the difference



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Pamela Ackerson

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Deborah Camp,  
AdC's Spotlight author for February



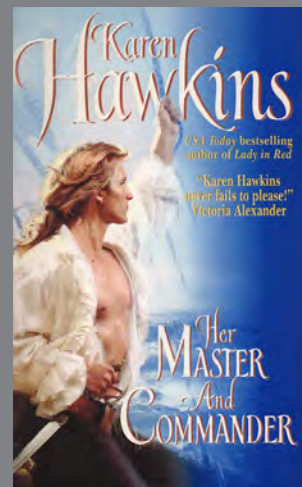
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What's the connection between this plane and Valentine's Day?  
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Debra Parmley brings us  
another Cover Model-  
-C.J. Hollenbach



January -February

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# Dear QWERTY

by Pamela Ackerson

## *Types of Fiction*



**Dear Qwerty,**

What's the difference between grounded fiction, speculative fiction, urban, and high fantasy?

Many publishers and literary agents are getting a bit more specific in their searches for particular stories and it's confusing to new and inspiring authors.

### **Grounded Fiction**

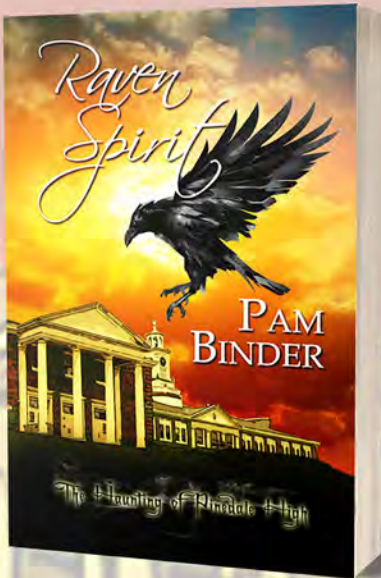
Grounded Fiction is realistic and believable. It could definitely happen, or it will happen in the near or far future with a little bit of magical and paranormal. It can include multiple genres of fiction.

*Dick Tracy*, *Star Trek*, and other various science fiction are examples of realistic, believable fiction that could happen in real life. Wait...what? We're not traveling at warp speed. Well, not yet.

Grounded fiction could also be characterized as low fantasy. These sci-fi authors dreamed about what we have now. Watch phones, cell phones, laptops, computers that talk to us, robots, AI, and space transport vehicles.

### **Speculative Fiction**

Speculative fiction includes differ-



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ent genres usually associated with science fiction/fantasy, supernatural, or futuristic stories. However, the genres may be different but elements remain the same. If you ask or write, what if... it's the best way to understand speculative fiction.

It doesn't apply to the real world. The author is envisioning something that will never happen and writes about what happens when—what happens if...

*Alice in Wonderland* is a perfect example. Since it's targeted toward younger readers, it also has a "lesson". Surround yourself with people who make your heart smile.

A few sub-genres of speculative fiction include: Dystopian, supernatural, fantasy, apocalyptic, superhero, alternative, and urban.

### **Urban Fantasy**

Urban Fantasy is contemporary stories. It's set in cities (real or created) only and includes fiction with diverse, magical storylines. It can include paranormal, romance, and dark stories involving mythical creatures hidden from society.

*The Vampire Diaries* is a classic example of urban fantasy, magical, vampires, werewolves, and shape shifting.

### **Contemporary Fantasy**

Although urban fantasy can be contemporary fantasy, rural and suburban fiction, it also includes fiction with magical and real-world storylines with their settings being in rural and suburban towns.

### **High Fantasy**

High fantasy is science fiction fantasy set in an alternative world where world building is an art. It has all the components of epic fantasy, magic, paranormal, gods, goddesses, and mystical creatures with a lot of adventure, and a quest, where the stakes are high and the adventure even higher.

Think *Percy Jackson*, *Harry Potter*, and *The Never Ending Story* and you'll be right there in the middle of a high fantasy adventure.



*The Spotlight is Shining on...*

*Pamela Ackerson*  
*Ms. January 2025 Calendar Girl*



Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and *Wall Street Journal* bestselling, award-winning author, Pamela Ackerson is a time traveling adventurer. She was born and raised in Newport, RI, where history is a way of life. She lives on the Space Coast of Florida where everyone is encouraged to reach for the stars!

With a rich tapestry of genres at her fingertips, she weaves stories that span from the wild frontiers of the Old West to the intricate cultural tapestries of Native American history. Her work doesn't stop at fiction; she delves into the realms of history, self-help, and marketing, showcasing a versatility that resonates with a wide audience.

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

**P.A.:** My latest book isn't connected to a series. *Enchanted Holidays* is a collection of short stories based on the holidays throughout the year. True to my writing form, they are always filled with hope for a better tomorrow. The next book coming out soon is slightly connected to *Realms of Deception*. Chase needed his own story. We wanted him to have his HEA as well!

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

*would you be?*

**P.A.:** I'd be in the Great Depression, Wisconsin, 1935!

**AdC:** *How do you name your characters?*

**P.A.:** It depends. A few of my characters in the holiday series are actually named after people I've met and are considered friends. The rest are well-planned and thought out. Sometimes I even look up the name's meaning to make sure I've hit my target.

**AdC:** *Have you needed to put a*

*story temporarily aside and then return to it? If so, how long did it sit?*

**P.A.:** *Sweet Realms of Deception* was put aside for about four months while I concentrated on the "House on Cedar Ridge Hills" series, speaking with producers, fundraising, script writing, etc.

**AdC:** *What part of the book was the most fun to write?*

**P.A.:** I love writing all of my stories, although, I'll admit, I do have a few favorites. I like hitting those unexpected twists. Readers have told



#### Sandy's Valentine

##### The One That Got Away

Sandy had always done what was right. She was a nurturing, loving person. Now, she was ready. Ready to live and experience life before it was too late.

A rich tapestry of emotional depth with a profound exploration of life's what-ifs and paths not taken. Delve into the intricacies of personal growth and relationships, all wrapped into the warmth of a sweet, heartfelt love story.

#### Heather's Lucky Charm

To return to humankind to do the impossible--find the woman he would die for... Nolan O'Malley was sent to the abyss for seducing the wrong woman. Once a year, on the emerald-tinted day of St. Patrick, he emerges with a chance to right his wrongs.

#### Fireworks in the Sky

Fate was about to light a spark that would set two hearts ablaze.

Trevor Hudson thought he'd lost his true love, only to realize it was the wrong woman... Elisa Langley's life took a thrilling turn when destiny arrived in a smoke-filled uniform.

#### The Halloween Challenge: The Last Image

Halloween night and the gauntlet was thrown.

The moon cast its eerie glow on the night of All Hallows' Eve as a tale of courage unfolds. Its shrouded history and veiled secrets, beckons the brave to uncover its mysteries.

#### Silvia Bell

A feel-good story of courage, hope, and perseverance and the enduring power of hope and the beauty of finding one's place in the world. With a pocketful of hope, and a dash of reality, she purchasing a rundown fixer-upper, pouring her heart into every repair and brush stroke, and weaving her story into the very walls.

[PamelaAckerson.net](http://PamelaAckerson.net)

[@PamAckerson](https://www.instagram.com/PamAckerson)



me they've expected my books to go in one direction, and boom, there they are in a totally different twist.

**AdC:** *What part of the book was most difficult?*

**P.A.:** I don't really consider it difficult, but I like to make sure I'm accurate with history, settings, etc., so I'm always making sure and double checking.

**AdC:** *Where and when would you travel to if you were given a time machine?*

**P.A.:** Oh, that's a hard one. There's so many places and times. Probably the gilded era, whether it be the UK or the US.

**AdC:** *What is the most unusual goal on your bucket list?*

**P.A.:** Years ago, when I was

diagnosed with cancer, my husband and I agreed that we'd do our bucket list together when he retired. With everything crossed off both of our lists, I haven't created another one, but there are a few places in the US that we'd like to go back and visit.

**AdC:** *What family traditions do you believe should be brought back?*

**P.A.:** Put down the darn phones and tablets and pay attention to life around you. Have a meal together, do things together. Have those good old family BBQs and cook-outs.

**AdC:** *What do you like to do when it's time to kick back?*

**P.A.:** Disney, I'm a Disney girl.

And if we can't run away to Disney, sitting in the screen room and just enjoying the pool, hot tub, or just reading.

**AdC:** *What are some of your guilty pleasures?*

**P.A.:** Chocolate dipped potato chips, Oreos, and oh, bacon, my love of bacon...

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

**P.A.:** Writers Alliance of Gainesville Sunshine State Festival on

continued on page 30

## Sneak Peek

# Sandy's Valentine

by Pamela Ackerson

They both watched their daughter as she fiddled around the house, cleaning, doing laundry, etc.

Their spirits shared time with both daughters, and of course, their favorite vacation spots.

It wasn't easy seeing them so unhappy. Sandy was working through the mourning period better than her sister. But, then again, Sandy wasn't saddled with regrets and guilt.

"I wish they'd talk to each other."

"Who? Sandy and Jake, or Sandy and Cathy?"

She chuckled, "Both, I guess."

"Can't do much about it, honey."

"Well, at least, we can help Sandy."

Sandy's father put his hand out, "The trick with Jake's aftershave was impressive."

"I thought so."

"I wonder why she never threw the bottle away."

"Really, dear?"

"I just want them to be happy."

"Can't argue with you there."

"We mustn't meddle." He put his arm around her. "Let's go to the Bahamas for Valentine's Day. We can check back in a few days."

She frowned, "But...we can nudge."

He grinned, "That we can."

∞ ∞ ∞

Sandy noticed the pictures on the walls and the one of her and Jake on the end table were askew again. Straightening them out, she smiled at the warm memories. For some odd reason they keep getting knocked over and moved somehow.

So weird.

Sandy took a deep breath and thought of Jake. She shook her head. Sometimes she could smell his aftershave. He'd never been in the new house.

She shrugged it off. Perhaps it was her memories playing tricks on her.

The cold, winter-blue suburban sky reflected off the walls of the house. Sandy missed rural living and wished she'd gone with her initial instinct and stayed in the country. Her sister, Cathy, talked her into moving into town to be around people.

She fixed her mop of hair, pulling it up and clasping it so it'd stop falling in her face.

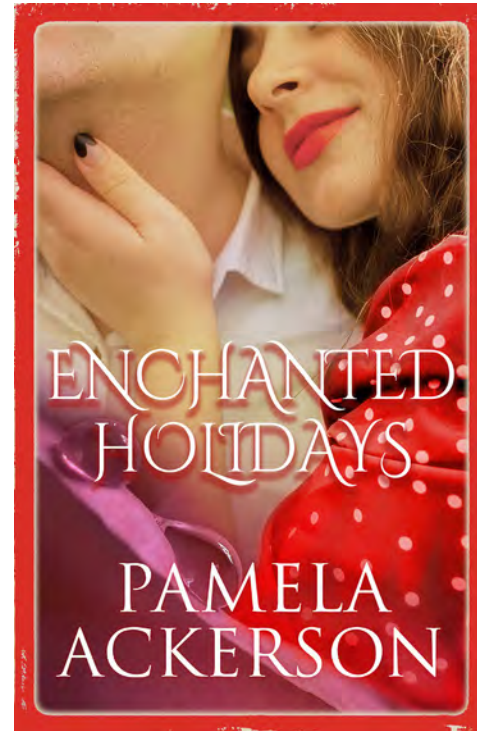
When she was home, memories always seemed to wiggle their way into her conscious thoughts. Some good. Some, well, not-so-good.

Sandy missed her sister and her parents. No relatives lived near and she was pretty much on her own.

Cathy tended to try and run her life, and when the word 'no' crept in, she'd disappear and not answer her phone for a few weeks.

As far as her sister was concerned, Cathy's way was the only way. It'd been like that for as long as Sandy could remember. Most of the time, she'd let her sister have her way. It was easier and well, it was petty things Cathy wanted to control. Most of the time Sandy just didn't care.

Once in a while, she'd stand her ground and, of course, life was unpleasant for



a while.

That ugly word *no* would seriously get in the way.

[Sandy's Valentine on Amazon](https://amzn.to/3Jc3vQ0)  
<https://amzn.to/3Jc3vQ0>

## Books by Pamela Ackerson

### The House on Cedar Ridge Time Travel Series

*The House on Cedar Ridge*

*Locke Manor*

*The Museum*

### The Cedar Ridge Hills Museum E-book Box Set

### Contemporary Fiction

*Skies of Blue*

### The Wilderness Time Travel Series

*Across the Wilderness*

*Into the Wilderness*

*Wilderness Bound*

*Warriors of the Wilderness*

*Out of the Wilderness*

### The Wilderness Series E-book Box Set

### PI Series Time Travel

*Garrett's Ghost*

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At the age of three, Jocelyn's father was murdered by a group of infiltrators who invaded the estate. Traumatized by the attack, Jocelyn never spoke again.

The week of Jocelyn's twenty-first birthday, Lord McKenna returned from an extended European stay, bringing with him the best doctor money could buy in hopes of helping Jocelyn speak again. He also announced the arrival of another guest.

Fraught with grief, Jocelyn decided to leave...

**Gracey:** It had been five years since Gracey had seen her lifelong friend Emily Stanford. Upon her arrival at Emily's home, she meets a tall, dark, mysterious and painfully handsome man, the likes of one she has never seen. One who was about to change her life forever.

**Rebecca:** Robert and Rebecca's lives seemed peaceful and perfect...until a horrific fall storm ripped through their land and changed Rebecca's life forever.

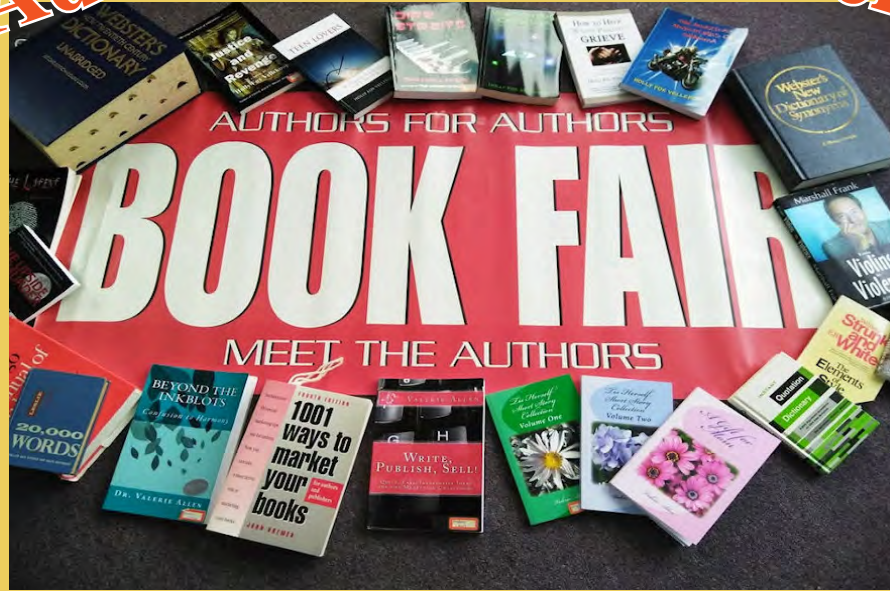


**Bethany:** Lord Andrews and his wife, Rebecca, escorted Bethany to Wellington to be by her brother's bedside. Bethany found herself nursing the patients. One, in particular, was a widower with two small children. Colonel McInnis had a temper so hot, he regularly decorated Bethany's day dresses with oatmeal! Even so, something about him called to her. Perhaps it was the sadness in his eyes?

Sarah thought her life was perfect, but 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 would know that one day, she and Beckham would have it's own story to tell...



# AdC LOVES Conferences



## Meet the Authors Book Fair

Meet the Authors Book Fair was held at the Eau Gallie Civic Center in Melbourne, FL. on November 18 & 19, 2024 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

During the event, attendees were lucky enough to have the book fair at the same time as the Melbourne Arts Festival. We shared a room with incredibly talented authors and many of the finest ceramic and porcelain artists from the Brevard County area.

Both days were filled with meeting fantastic authors and incredible readers!



*Author and Hostess, Dr. Valerie Allen*



*Author Mary Brotherton*

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*Author, Tamalyn E. Scott*

### We bet you didn't know these facts about LUNAR Chinese New Year 2025

The date of the Lunar Chinese New Year differs from year to year. For 2025, it goes from January 29<sup>th</sup> through February 15<sup>th</sup>.

The celebration lasts for 15 days. In the middle of it, the lanterns are released, signifying good luck, wealth and happiness

Animals represent all 12 signs of the Chinese lunar zodiac. They are: the rat, ox, rabbit, tiger, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig

2025 is the year of the 10-13 inch Wood snake, the 6<sup>th</sup> animal in the lunar zodiac sign.

For those who are born under this sign, here is some addition information about your characteristics:

Your lucky color is blue  
Your lucky stone is sapphire.  
You are intelligent,  
intuitive,  
determined (stubborn?)  
private,  
good at talking

Look up your lunar sign. See if they are right about you.

# *Affaire de Coeur Celebrates*

## **BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

*with a love story very close to home*

### **Who Were the Tuskegee Airmen? And What the Heck Do They Have to Do with Valentine's Day?**

**by**

*Lanelle Roberts Brent*

My name is Lanelle Roberts Brent and I am the oldest daughter of George S. "Spanky" and Edith Roberts. I was born in Tuskegee, Alabama, the birth place of the Tuskegee Airmen. I happened to be born there because my father was the first cadet accepted into the pilot program of the Tuskegee Airmen and, after the war, he was sent back to Tuskegee to become the Dean of the School of Military Science at Tuskegee Institute (now University). Tuskegee was also where my parents were married.

February has been deemed the "Romance Month" with Valentine's Day being at the center. However, in my family, March is the "Romance Month" because March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1942, was the day that my parents were married under very "un-romantic" circumstances.

The Tuskegee Airmen, or better known as the "Red Tails", were the first African American fighter pilots in the military. Previously, all black servicemen, especially in the Army and Navy, were relegated to "servitude" duties, such as working in the kitchens, being valets for high-ranking officers,

or digging ditches for the trenches and latrines. This was because:

1. The military was strictly segregated and had been from the beginning; and

2. A survey was conducted at the request of a Southern Congressman after WWI to determine the readiness of the black man for combat. The survey said that

- a. The black man's brain was smaller than the white man's, therefore, they were inherently inferior;
- b. We were a cowardly "sub species" that would run away at the first sign of a fight (totally overlooking all the heroic black men and women who were on the forefront of EVERY war the United States has been in!); and
- c. We would not follow orders (seriously, after slavery?) and could not lead because no white man would follow them, so, therefore, not suited to be commanding officers or officers of any kind.

After the US joined WWII, suddenly there was a desperate need for pilots, combat and bombers, because we were losing badly to superior German airpower. The NAACP and Black Press wrote to the War Department and said, "There is an entire generation of young men and women who want to fight for their country and do not want to do it digging ditches and waiting on officers!" Thus, the Tuskegee Airmen Experience began.

The original group of Tuskegee Airmen consisted of 16,000 men and women, black and white, who were trained at three different military bases. Because the military was still rigidly segregated, besides needing pilots, support staff, ground crews, doctors, nurses, etc. were also needed. It was called the "Black Air Force." The combat pilots were trained at Tuskegee Airfield in Tuskegee, Alabama, the support crew, mechanics, parachute packers, etc., were trained at Chanute Airfield, in Rantoul, Illinois, and the bomber pilots and their support staff were trained at Godman Field, Kentucky. Out of the 16,000 trained, 992 went to pilot training in Tuskegee, Alabama. Over 600



# THE TUSKEGEE AIRMEN HERITAGE CHAPTER OF GREATER SACRAMENTO



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graduated, but only 352 went overseas to combat. Those 352 painted the tails of their planes red, became known as the "Red Tails" and had the best record of any squadron during WWII. And my dad was their first commander.



Authentic P51-D  
Signature "Red Tail" of the Tuskegee  
Airmen

In order to have more pilots to send overseas, the military started the Civilian Pilot Training Program in white colleges across the United States. After pressure by the Black press and the other Black organizations, they reluctantly decided to put the program into six Black "Institutes," now known as Historical Black Colleges/Universities. West Virginia State was one of those chosen, and that's where the Valentine "un-romantic" love story comes in.

Enter George Roberts (Spanky), my dad, who went to college at the age of 15. He was the youngest on the campus of West Virginia State. He graduated in three years, at the age of 18, with a 4-year mechanical engineering degree. Once he had his degree, there was nowhere to go to find work. No one in West Virginia, in 1939, would hire an 18-year-old black youth at a job worthy of his degree. His options were being a busboy at the all-white country club

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Affaire de Coeur



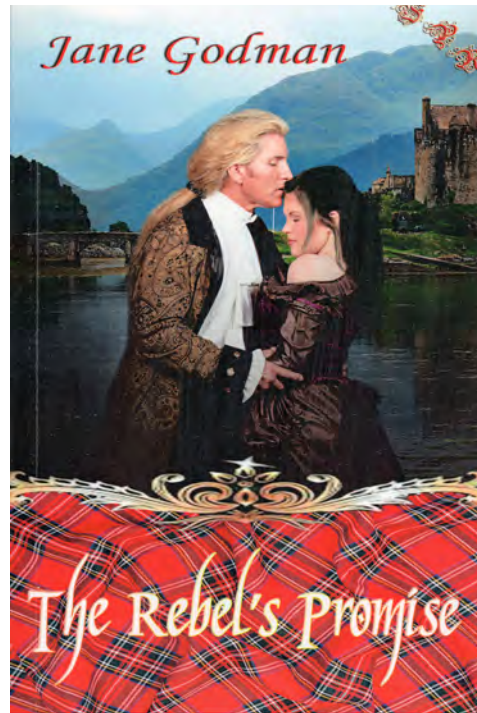
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# Debra Parmley's Cover Model Corner

## features an Interview with **C.J. Hollenbach**



Today I'm excited to be chatting with C.J. Hollenbach, who is a well-known cover model in the romance industry. He was a contestant in the first ever "Mr. Romance Novel Cover Model Pageant" at the Romantic Times Booklovers Convention in San Diego over 20 years ago. C.J. modeled for Playgirl magazine and other national publications. He appeared on TV shows: The Jerry Springer Show, The Joan Rivers Show, The Gordon Elliott Show, The TODAY Show, MTV, Entertainment Tonight, and was a contestant on The American Gladiators. Though his look is similar to Fabio's and brought him national attention, his fascinating experiences and his look are his own. C.J. has graced the covers of dozens of romance novels. He was the first male model to appear on an Ellora's Cave erotic novel.

**D.P.:** C.J., tell us about the first cover you appeared on. How did this come about?

**C.J.:** My first cover was *The Stone Maiden* for Susan King. I shot it in NYC. It came after 7 years of VERY hard work and determination on my part. (I can't believe I stuck with it that long! But, I KNEW I could do it!!) After sending my comp card (modeling pix) to every cover artist and photographer in New York, I had also met a female model in Chicago where we worked a cable TV trade show together. She had been on over one hundred romance covers and was shocked that I had not been on any with my "look." She was a very sweet girl and made a few phone calls on my behalf to a few photographers in NYC that she'd worked with. All it took was for her to say, "C.J. 's a cool guy!" and I was on

my way! Being at the right time in the right place didn't hurt either.

**D.P.:** What a great story of being discovered. You've done so many cover model shoots. 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?

**C.J.:** A favorite photo shoot would have to be someplace warm. Hawaii would be great. But I've also felt that the ruins in Greece would be great. I've always felt drawn to them for some reason.

**D.P.:** Greece is amazing. I could see you on a cover set there. Beyond romance novel cover shots, what other projects or jobs keep you busy?

**C.J.:** Since I'm "retired" from romance cover modeling...mostly because they stopped calling, I fill my days as caregiver for my 92-year-old mother.



She's had several recent health issues. Last year she had an internal blood loss which caused a multitude of problems and then, most recently she broke her hip/wrist. A subsequent surgery and rehab stay followed. Since then, I have been caring for her 24/7. But she is coming along like a champ...

**DP:** *92, that's amazing! I'm glad she has you to give her the good care that she needs. We are all wishing a speedy and full recovery for your mother, and I hope she enjoys reading this edition of the magazine! Now, it's your turn to pick a question. What's one question you wish an interviewer would ask you?*

**C.J.:** Maybe the one question I could have been asked is "Would you enter the Mr. Romance Novel Cover Model Pageant again?" I would have to say "YES!" It's really what started me on this life's journey that has taken me all over the world. It's given me a very colorful and interesting life!

**DP:** *What an exciting experience that must have been and then the journey to follow! Now I want to know, if you wrote a book, what would it be about?*

**C.J.:** Well, since I've already written my memoir *Confessions of A Romance Cover Model*, I would have to say I'm sorry I didn't go into more detail. I've been asked to update it and self-publish. I think I was a little too lighthearted. I could have gotten into some of the backstabbing I endured, and I have the

scars to prove it. My original publisher edited those out when I tried to include them.

**D.P.:** *That would be a fascinating read! I would love to see you update your book, to say what you want to say, so we can read all about it.*

*This question is almost always asked in 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?*

**C.J.:** I still workout like a maniac 6 days a week. At my "undisclosed" age, it takes twice as much effort to look half as good as I did a few years ago. It's a bitter pill, getting older!! I still watch what I eat and try to limit my red meat intake. Sweets, too. I try and fast one day a week. I think most people KNOW what they can and can't eat and in what quantities. They just choose to ignore it.

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

**C.J.:** If nothing else, people should walk around the block after dinner or sometime during the day. Watching your alcohol consumption is also wise. A lot of wasted calories there.

**D.P.:** *It's your birthday dinner and the calories don't count. What's on the menu and what are you drinking?*

**C.J.:** Birthday dinner? Cake for sure. Probably champagne or a Tito's vodka and cranberry. Chicken *parmigiano* is fine by me...

**D.P.:** *Describe the perfect romantic evening:*

**C.J.:** One of my most memorable dates was eating pizza while we watched an old *I Love Lucy* rerun. I said, "If you can find an *I Love Lucy* rerun on the TV, this night will be perfect!" I got my "perfect date!"

**D.P.:** *That would be a fun date. Her shows were so good! Please share one unusual fact about you or your life:*

**C.J.:** Little known fact about my life? I am a pretty decent artist. I started out in fine arts in college, Painting!

I had a professor say I was the only freshman that year with any talent. There I learned what the term "starving artist" meant. I switched to Illustration. Then, to Graphic Design. They didn't teach Romance Cover Modeling at Kent State!

**DP:** *So, you would have that artists eye to help with creating good cover art! Now, eight Quickie questions: Watching the sunrise or watching the sunset and the stars?*

**C.J.:** Watching a sunset. Sunrise is too early in the morning!

**D.P.:** *The beach or the mountains?*

**C.J.:** The beach. I still don't look too bad in a bathing suit at my age...lol

*Continued on page 26*



**Rockets Above Us  
Beaches Beside Us  
and a Book in our Hands**

**The 9th Annual Space  
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you there!**

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*Our Other Spotlight is on...*  
**Deborah Camp**  
*AdC's February Calendar Girl*



*A lover of romance, Deborah writes both historical and contemporary novels. She lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. A former journalist, her first novel was published as one of the first Silhouette Romances through Simon & Schuster. Most of her historical romances (westerns) were published by Avon Publishing. She now deals with Amazon Direct Publishing. She's an avid reader and, yes, romances are her favorite genre.*

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

**D.C.:** No. I'm working on getting more people to read the ones I already have out. Marketing is part of publishing, unfortunately. So, I'm taking time to spotlight my current list.

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

**D.C.:** I would be on the high seas! I'm caught up in pirate romances right now and loving them. I haven't read those since I was a teenager, so it's great fun to dive back into them after so long. I don't think I could write one – I'd have to do a massive amount of research – but I love the descriptions of the ocean, stars, and those sexy pirates!

**AdC:** *How do you name your characters?*

**D.C.:** Names are really important to me. I spend a good amount of time finding just the right names. I try not to have main characters with the same beginning letter – such as David and Diane or Rowdy and Rachel – because your eye tends to see the first letter and your brain fills in the rest, so it can get confusing if you're a fast reader. I often change the names a few times before I finally land on ones that truly fit the characters. This happens because the characters might change as I begin the story. As they change and evolve, their initial names will often become ill-fitting, so I go back to the naming board! It's a process, but an important one.

**AdC:** *What part of the book was the most fun to write?*

**D.C.:** Well, I'd like to say the sex  
*Affaire de Coeur*

scenes, but those are horribly tough to write. After so many books, they can become redundant, so they take a long time for me to perfect. The most fun for me are the first three chapters. That's when I'm creating the world and the people in it. That first scene is crucial – it determines if people keep reading the book or set it aside to do something else. Therefore, I "start in the middle" of something interesting to hook the reader. The tendency for most of us is to build up to a scene, but that's the wrong tactic if you're trying to grab someone's interest. Instead of writing a scene of a heroine getting ready to go shopping, checking herself in the mirror, getting into her car, driving away from her home, and then getting into a car crash, I start with the car crash.

**AdC:** *How much fun do you have*



HERE'S TO

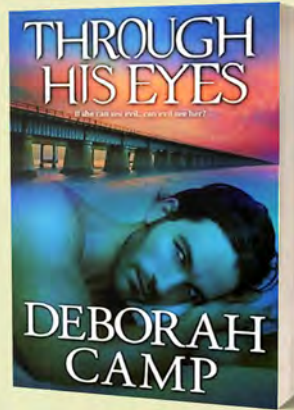
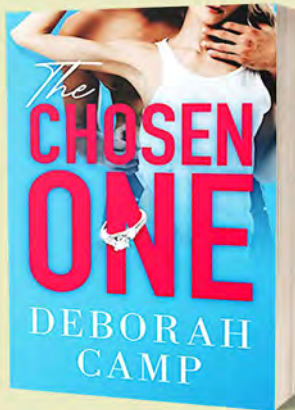
# Another Year

OF BEING A

Deborah-Camp.com

GREAT BOOK

Facebook.com/  
Debby.Camp.44



*coming up with names for your characters and how do you find them?*

**D.C.:** I look through names at the end of movies and television shows and I look through lists of names on the Internet. There are lists of the most popular names for each decade and those are helpful. I use a lot of my relatives' names, too. We have some doozies in our family tree. For example, there's a man named Honey (that's not a nickname, that's his name) and I had an Uncle P.A. (Prince Albert).

*AdC: Where and when would you travel to if you were given a time machine?*

**D.C.:** I would go to Greece right now. That's a place I've wanted to explore since I saw the Disney film "The Moon Spinners" and I read the book by Mary Stewart.

*AdC: What do you do when you can't quite get into writing mode?*

**D.C.:** I make myself stay put and

keep at it. That's what you do when you're at any job – just keeping working until it's quittin' time. Quittin' time for me is after I've written 10 pages.

*AdC: What traditions do you believe should be brought back?*

**D.C.:** Men walking on the street side when they are with a female and standing up from the table when a woman returns to the table. Also, men entering an elevator ahead of a woman and allowing her to leave the compartment ahead of him. I love those considerations. Oh, and men removing their hats when they are indoors. That's one that really bugs me. Almost no one does it anymore. Guys wear their baseball caps everywhere! Even to weddings, funerals, and to court!

*AdC: What do you like to do when it's time to kick back?*

**D.C.:** I've been coloring in adult coloring books. I used to love to do that when I was a kid, and I find that it's still

something that relaxes me. I've never been artistic, and this is the closest I've come to creating a picture – other than with words. I used to love embroidering and crocheting, but I don't do that much anymore. I also watch a lot of TV.

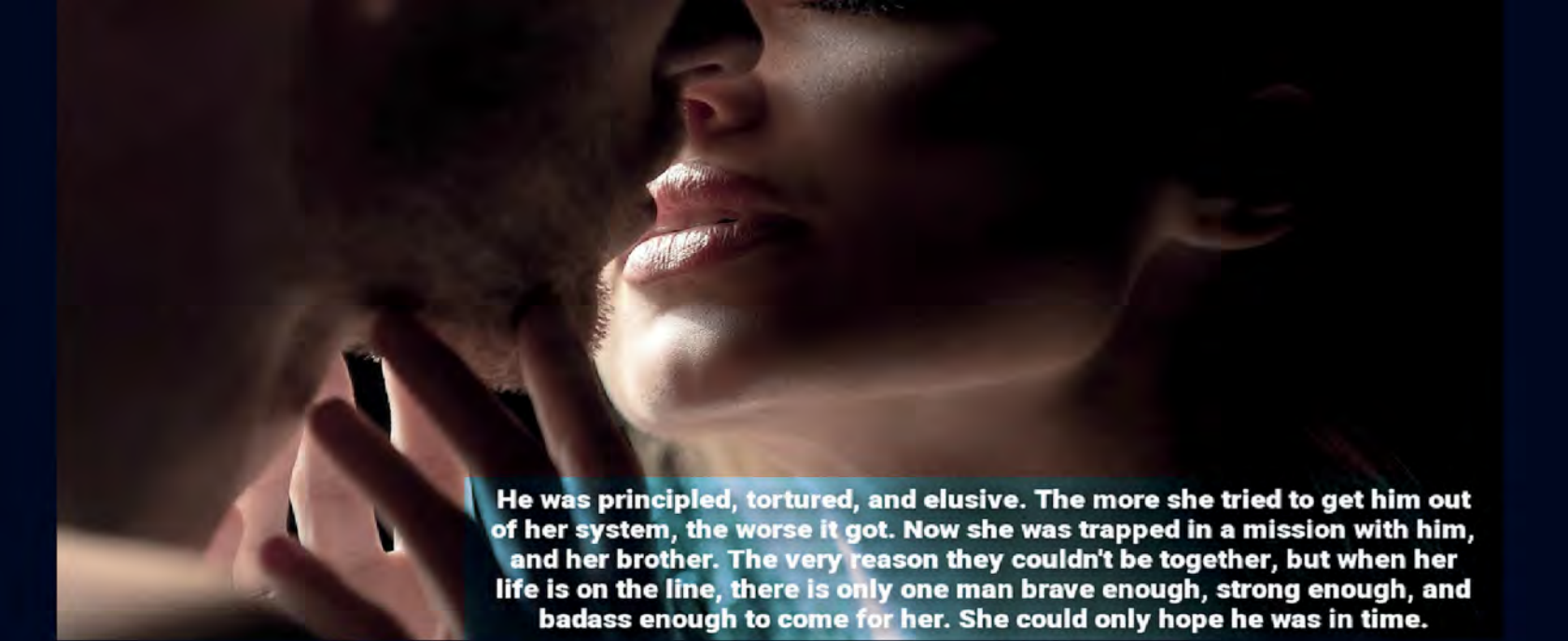
*AdC: Is there something you've always wanted to learn to do?*

**D.C.:** So many things! I'd love to play the piano by ear. I'd like to learn several different languages. I'd like to learn to ride a cutting horse and rope a steer. The list is long!

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

Personal web page: Deborah-Camp.com

Facebook: Debby.Camp.44



He was principled, tortured, and elusive. The more she tried to get him out of her system, the worse it got. Now she was trapped in a mission with him, and her brother. The very reason they couldn't be together, but when her life is on the line, there is only one man brave enough, strong enough, and badass enough to come for her. She could only hope he was in time.

All in all the time.

## SEAL Team Alpha

[www.zoedawson.com](http://www.zoedawson.com)



Another brilliant book in this series, highly recommended. D-Day (Drew) and Helen, Buck's sister, have fallen for each other hard but their relationship is totally against the team brother code. Helen works as a nurse with a team providing medical care to poorer countries, and ends up being kidnapped whilst in the Philippines. D-Day's team goes in to rescue her and things do not go smoothly. Drew and Helen's relationship is intense, but he cannot totally acknowledge his true feelings, not only because of the brother code but because of an incident which happened whilst he was a teenager. Will he push his feelings to one side or will he come to terms with his past? I became totally immersed in this storyline, it's well written, and I cannot wait to read Zorro's story. -- Anne (Izzie) Goodreads

SEAL Team Alpha  
CURRENT RELEASE



Excerpt  
*Nailing Mr. Nasty*

by Deborah Camp

Jack sent her one of his perennial scowls and moved on to his boring pickup, hefting his muscled frame into the driver's seat like he was mounting a noble steed. Taylor leapt into the backseat that was covered with a dog blanket. Sam took her time joining them, easing into the bucket seat and crossing her legs. She barely got her harness clipped before Jack gunned the engine and the truck lurched forward.

"First stop is City Hall to check on some permits that should be ready. Then on to the job site."

"Oh, so we will be at one of the construction sites?"

"Something wrong with that?"

"No, not at all. Lucy said she hardly ever left the office, so I wasn't sure if I would be stuck inside all day."

"Lucy hates to be around dirt."

"I don't mind." She gave him a meaningful once-over that he didn't miss.

"Right," he said, sighing with a shake of his head. "I'll do a walk-through and point out what's on schedule and what isn't, what needs to be done, and what needs to be done over. I want you to record every, single detail. You got that?"

She nodded. "Got it, Boss."

He put on the aviator sunglasses, but she could feel the barbed glance directed at her. "This is serious, Striker. Lucy is the best manager I've ever had and she claims you can fill her shoes. I doubt it and I'm doubting it more every minute. This is my business and I've poured everything I have into it. You fuck up my business, you're gone. I don't care who you're pals with. You'll be out on your ass."

"I've only just started this job and you're already threatening to fire me." She shook her head and chuckled softly. "Lucky for you I was raised by and have worked for fussy budget blowhards, so I have developed a tough outer shell."

Red color crept up his neck and into his cheeks, but he breathed in and out once or twice before he spoke to her again. "I'm not a blowhard. When I say something, you can bank on it." He cleared his throat. "I heard that your old man used to be in construction."

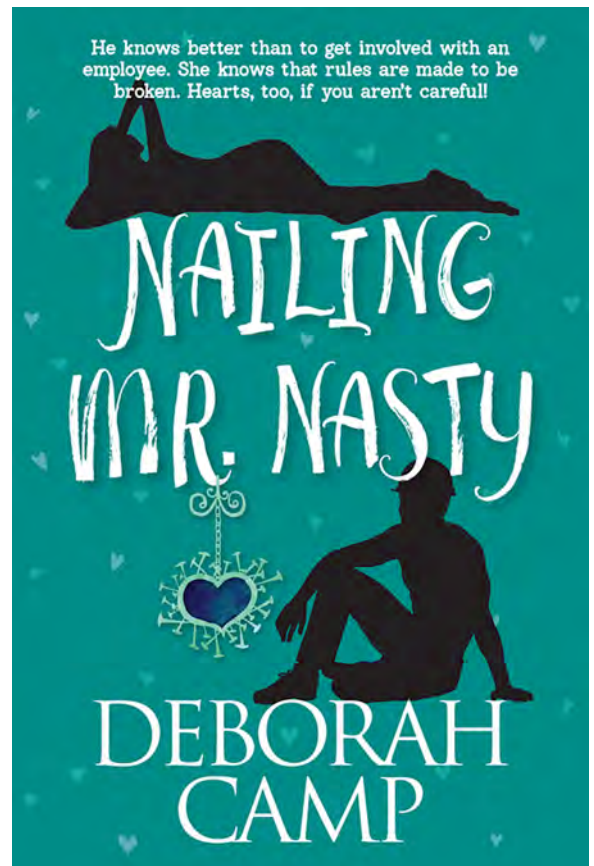
"He worked on a crew before he and Mom married. He's a mechanic with American Airlines now. Cusses and bellows when things don't go his way, but he has a soft center." She tossed him a grin. "I love the old gum-ball. What does your dad do?"

He lowered his brows, making her think of thunderclouds. "He's a machinist at Learner Fabrication." He whipped the truck around a corner, slinging Sam sideways against the door. "Back to business. The rest of our permits should be ready and I'm scheduling some inspections. Make note of that. The walkthrough we'll do, noting what needs to be done, is called a—"

"Punch list," she finished for him, earning another quick glance.

"Hey, I watch HGTV and DIY channels, too. Punch lists, wainscoting, shiplap, hardwood floors. I know the lingo. Or some of it. I've been reading about construction work on the Internet, too."

He found a shady parking space a block from City Hall, rolled down the windows to allow plenty of ventilation, told Taylor to "stay put," and set off without checking to see if Sam followed him. She did, staring holes in his back as she had to almost trot to keep up. There was no need for him to



be such an ass, she fumed, but she pasted a pleasant expression on her face. Letting him know that he was irritating would only spur him on. She'd learned that, with grouches you didn't fight fire with fire. You doused them with buckets of smiles and good-natured kidding.

As they entered City Hall, Sam pulled her slim voice recorder and her cell-phone out of her bag. She set the recorder to voice activate and pulled up the note taking app on her cellphone. Armed and ready, she followed Jack into the first-floor permit office, which already had lines of men in work clothes and a few in suits. Glancing around, she spotted only two other women. Yep. This was still very much a man's world. Jack removed his sunglasses and took his place at the back of the shortest line, his face set in furrows of impatience as he glanced at his watch and heaved a sigh of frustration. He looked over his shoulder at her.

"You'll be doing this for me after today. I have better things to do than stand in line."

"Tell me what you're waiting for and I'll take it from here."

"No. This is training day. Stay alert and learn. I don't want to go over these things

*continued on page 23*

# P U Z Z L E R

*One sure bet for a Valentine's Day gift is Chocolate. What do you know about it?*

## Across

2. This amphibian is made of caramel, chocolate and pecans.
5. The chocolate is found inside of these.
6. Dried and fermented seed from which many products are made.
8. Square and chocolate maker in San Francisco.
9. This cake-like dessert contains chocolate, eggs, flour, and sugar.
13. French pastry that has a filling inside and chocolate on the top.
16. Pudding like dish that is lighter and airier.
19. Form of chocolate used on # 20 Down
20. Most popular chocolate candy bar.
22. A chocolate cake with red dye added to the batter. Red \_\_\_\_\_.
23. This chocolate cake has icing made of pecans and coconut.
26. This chocolate contains no solid cocoa.
28. Swiss chocolate maker who used puppets in their ads.
30. A town in Pennsylvania known for and named for its chocolate production.
31. A soft chewy candy not made of chocolate.
32. Supposedly the best chocolate in the world is made in this country.

## Down

1. Only state in the U.S. that grows cacao.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ House cookies made from chips.
3. Swiss chocolatier known for its balls (in three colored wrappers) and its truffles.
4. The chocolate liquor.
7. The English chocolate with the bunny logo.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ of Venus, an Italian chocolate candy.
11. This kind of chocolate is allegedly

good for you.

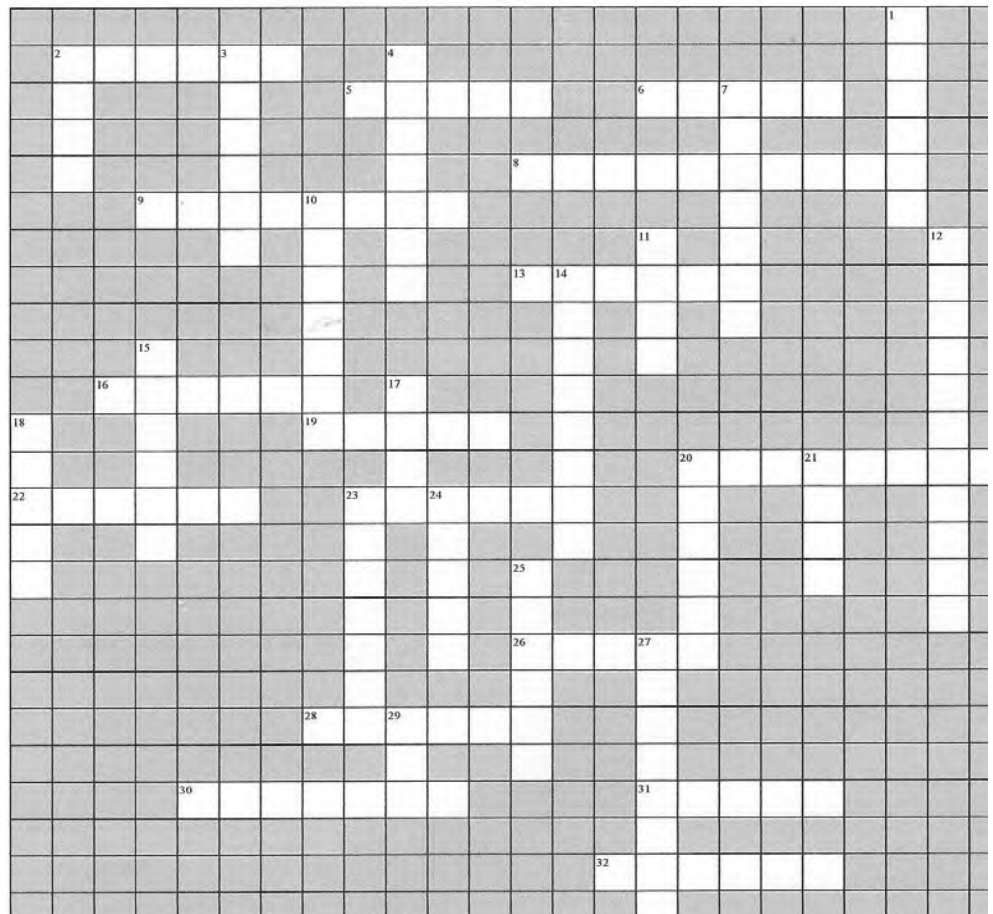
12. Country where chocolate milk was invented.
14. The chocolate in clue #11 Down contains this stimulant.
15. This lady rode naked through the town and got a chocolate named for her.
17. Cacao comes from this.
18. This cake is chocolate with chocolate icing – \_\_\_\_\_'s food.
20. When chocolate is poured over vanilla ice cream and topped with a cherry and whipped cream.
21. \_\_\_\_\_ Gauffe, up-and-coming tennis star.
23. A mixture of chocolate and cream used as a glaze, icing, or pastry filling.
24. This company specializes in chocolate and peanut butter (ET).
25. Hot cocoa is a drink made from this.



27. This expensive chocolate is made of double cream and high-quality chocolate.

29. Chocolatier who started in the Northwest.

Answers on page 24



# 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

### The Forever Rule (The Cage Family #1)

Carrie Ann Ryan

Self-Published

E-book

B0CRQK1ZMK

★★★★★



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](http://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](mailto:adcreviews@att.net)

The moment Blakely met Aston Cage, she knew my life had changed. A single dance later, and she thought they were both all in. Until he ghosted her.

Aston made himself walk away from Blakely after his family's dirty laundry hit the news. His father's secret family complicates everything. In order to keep their inheritance intact, they were forced to do monthly dinners with both sides of the family.

*The Forever Rule* is a missed connection, workplace, big city meets small town romance featuring Aston and Blakely. Each book can be read as a complete standalone. And a Happily Ever After is guaranteed!

After the best "meet cute,"

*Affaire de Coeur*

Blakely gets ghosted and then slammed by her boss and fired. Now she's been blacklisted in her field, and she must face her ghosts if she's going to ever work again. This is a fun rom-com that I heartily recommend.

*D. Antonio*

### Mr. Nice Spy

Tiana Smith

Berkley Publishing Group

E-book

978-0593550335

★★★★

In the follow up in Tiana Smith's "My Spy" series, pyrotechnician Andee Paxton has always wanted to know exactly who her father is. When she takes a DNA test, she soon discovers her father is Holt, a notorious international criminal and arms dealer. He has his henchman abduct her.

The CIA Agent assigned to her case, Adam Chan, happens to be with her at the time, and she says he is her boyfriend to keep him safe. Now they

# Contemporary Romance

are both trapped in a very dangerous situation with their violent kidnapper and his organization. Sure, it's nice to have time together to get to know each other, but that time is limited and under threat from Andee's father, who wants to groom her to be the heir to his criminal enterprise and his world-altering plan. Can Andee and Chan work together to foil Holt's dangerous plans before it's too late, and will their romance survive the process?

*Mr. Nice Spy* has the same fast-paced, enjoyable quality as its predecessor. Both main characters are extremely likable that readers will root for. Andee is a sympathetic, every-woman character who behaves realistically in the atypical situation she faces. Chan is absolutely dreamy and the type of guy you'd want to be kidnapped with if you were in that situation. He's sweet, sexy, caring, and an extremely capable operative.

Tiana Smith handles his partial deafness very well, depicting how he manages it and his job as a CIA officer. They have great chemistry together, with nice steamy kisses and interactions that work well with the ongoing storyline. While most of the secondary characters could be more developed, they serve the story well. The action scenes are good, and it's rewarding to see how Andee and Chan's strengths and skills are used to help them out in their situation. Readers who love a good spy movie with a nice dose of romance will enjoy *Mr. Nice Spy*.  
*Danielle Hill*

## Salacious Attraction

**Becca Jameson**  
**Self-Published**  
E-book  
B0CZH1SPWM  
★★★★★



*The arrangement is simple...  
until things get complicated.*

## Pawfully Wedded

**Diane Kelly**  
**Self-Published**  
E-book  
B0DQP3JV86  
★★★★★



Fort Worth Police Officer Megan Luz and her fiancé, firefighter Seth Rutledge, will soon be walking down the aisle—assuming they live to see their wedding day...

A series of bogus reports of active shooters has rattled the Fort Worth police department SWAT team. If the bogus shooter calls aren't enough to keep their first responders on their toes and on edge, an elusive arsonist seemed intent on pushing the city's firefighters to their limits.

The fire and police departments teamed up to track the sinister offender, whose offenses hit closer and closer to home.

This intriguing story tells the tale of fire and crime meshing not in a good way. This story had me guessing and left me with a big smile.

*D. Antonio*

Brynn is barely scraping by. Even two part-time jobs aren't enough to cover her tuition and rent. The only excitement in her life is the billionaire bachelor who comes into The Grind several mornings a week.

Asher's infatuation with the gorgeous co-ed frustrates him. When he finds her asleep on her books in the break room at Edge, he decides to take action guaranteed to purge her from his system.

It's perfect. She needs money, and he needs a fake girlfriend, but neither of them expects the chemistry that consumes them.

This is a seriously steamy fake dating tale. Becca Jameson takes the readers into the hearts and minds of two very different people who turn out to be just what the other needs. Very enjoyable.

*D. Antonio*

## Spiral

**Bal Khabra**  
**Berkley**  
E-book  
978-0593818282  
★★★★½



Sage Beaumont is a hard-working ballerina who aspires to be a principal in the Aurora Ballet Theater. Elias Westbrook is a rookie, recently drafted hockey player for the Toronto Thunder, who has yet to score a goal. They both could use a career boost, and pretending to be dating to enhance their social media presence is the way to go. In the process they find so much more. Sage has learned to rely on herself, denying her own needs to provide for her brother; and Elias has closed himself off from romantic relationships because of a past mistake. But being together provides a profound emotional bond that has been missing from their lives. When they achieve their career goals, how will they be able to end their fake relationship that has become very real?

*Spiral* is a fake dating relationship book with authentic characters and real emotions. Elias is a wonderful guy. His degree of caring and consideration

# Contemporary Romance

## Shattering Dawn (The Lost Night Files Book 3)

Jayne Ann Krentz

Berkley

E-book

B0CWG29RGF

★★★★★



Amelia Rivers, a member of the Lost Night Files podcast team, hires private investigator Gideon Sweetwater to catch the stalker who has been watching her. Amelia suspects the stalker may be connected to the shadowy organization responsible for the night that she and her two friends lost to amnesia—a night that upended their lives and left them with paranormal talents.

Gideon suspects that Amelia is either paranoid or an outright con artist, but he can't resist the chemistry between them. He takes the case despite his skepticism. For her part, Amelia has second thoughts about the wisdom of employing the mysterious Mr. Sweetwater. She is wary of the powerful attraction between them and deeply uneasy about the nightmarish paintings on the walls of his home. She senses they were inspired by his own dreamscapes.

Readers finally find out what happened during the Lost Night in this thrilling adventure that wraps up the "Lost Night" mystery series. Amelia is smart, sassy, and empathetic. Gideon is grumpy and gifted. Between the two of them, they manage to air the mystery that has plagued Amelia and her friends. I really enjoyed this exciting episode.

*D. Antonio*

### *Spiral continued*

for Sage makes readers sigh with contentment. Although he guards and exercises so much control over himself, his actions speak louder than words, such as cooking and baking for Sage and giving her massages, showing what a real sweetheart he is.

Sage is plain-speaking, nurturing, and fun, with a unique ability to bring Elias out of his shell. Watching them fall in love provides that serotonin boost that romance lovers crave. The way they watch out for and support each other is relationship goals. Khabra establishes an emotional connection that makes their sexual encounters so satisfying, which is great as this book gets very steamy. Their friends and family are intrinsic to their story because it's very apparent how much they love them, and both Sage and Elias work so hard to make their families proud of them. Readers are sure to fall in love with this couple and their relationship. The inclusion of diverse characters is great, but more exploration of Sage's

ethnic heritage would be appreciated as she seemed very racially ambiguous for most of the book. This book incorporates tidbits of the lives of hockey players and ballerinas in a way that is naturalistic, adding to the three-dimensional feel of the characters. *Spiral* is a thoroughly enjoyable steamy contemporary romance with real heart.

*D. Antonio*

### *Camp excerpt continued*

I'll take it from here."

"No. This is training day. Stay alert and learn. I don't want to go over these things again with you."

"Look, I know about permits."

"Your last job was working for a science fiction writer. Reading a few articles on the Internet doesn't make you a construction pro."

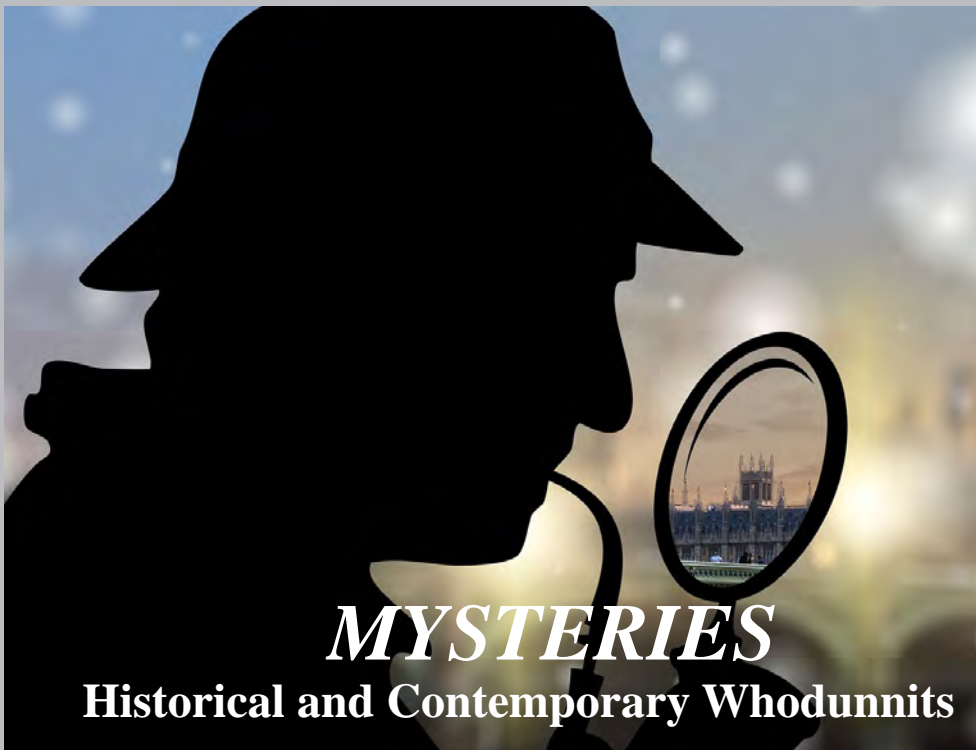
Up close, she could smell his aftershave – Light Blue? – and she could see that he had a heavy beard. He'd shaved that morning, but the outline of his whiskers showed through already. Dropping back a half-step, she appreciated his height.

Being tallish at five-nine, she gauged that he topped six feet by three or four inches. He must have women salivating over him, she mused, her gaze sliding down his perfectly proportioned frame. If he wasn't such an ass, she'd be one of them. Just as she'd thought, he was ruining his good looks with his bad personality.

He glanced back at her again and caught her ogling him. "See anything you like, Striker?"







## MYSTERIES

### Historical and Contemporary Whodunnits

#### **She Doesn't Have a Clue**

*Jenny Elder Moke*

**Minotaur Books**

Trade Paperback

978-1254354969

☆☆☆

Mystery writer Kate Valentine could be living the plot of one of her novels when she attends the wedding of her former fiancé and current editor on an isolated private island off the coast of Seattle.

Kate is suffering from a serious case of writer's block that she hopes to remedy during this trip, but she gets more than she bargained for. Trapped by a fierce storm with no cell service and a wonky generator, she is thrown in with a group of wedding guests who each have their own agendas. Fellow authors are distressed by budget cuts and lack of publisher support and resent Kate for her success. Family members are distraught about the matriarch's announcement that she intends to deed the island to charity and deprive them of their inheritance. Romantic rivalries and intrigue abound.

In the meantime, Kate comes face-to-face with Jake, former surfer dude and travel guide who was the subject of one of Kate's first successful

writing projects and the object of her steamy fantasies and unrequited crush.

When Kate stumbles on the seemingly dead body of the bride the night before the wedding, she becomes a suspect because the bride is marrying Kate's former fiancé and because the method mirrors a plot in her latest novel. She is forced to team with Jake to try to prove her innocence, but in the process they discover yet another body. Kate tries to channel her character, Loretta Starling, who would know how to handle these challenges, but it's not quite working out.

*She Doesn't Have a Clue* has all the elements of a Gothic novel with the isolated mansion, the creepy servants, the contentious relationships between guests who may have reasons to want other guests dead, inheritance battles, and business challenges.

Kate balances her attempts to clear her name by finding the real killer with her efforts to resist the growing temptation to give in to a romance with Jake, though she believes a family curse makes her not good enough to hold on to a man.

*She Doesn't Have a Clue* is full of suspense on both fronts: the murder mystery and the potential romance. Both are enough to keep pages turning well into the night.

*Hannah Rowan*  
*affaire de Coeur*

#### **He's To Die For**

*Erin Dunn*

**Minotaur Books**

Trade Paperback

978-1250360625

☆☆☆

Rav Trivedi is an unlikely candidate for a New York City homicide detective. The son of a British noble and a former fashion model, he is known for his impeccable designer, outfits and his refined tastes. As the youngest detective on the squad, he's already subjected to good-natured ribbing from his fellow officers, but his elitist tendencies add fuel to the fire.

Rav has a solid history of solving cases, so he is assigned to take the lead on a case involving the murder of music executive Dick Vanderford. One of the primary suspects is Jack Vale, frontman for the New Knickerbockers' band. Rav's taste runs more to classical music, but his partner clues him in to the cult-like following of the band. When Rav lays eyes on Jack, it's difficult to focus on the case. He is immediately attracted to the rock star's good looks as well as his surprisingly gentle demeanor.

Jack Vale's life is riddled with bodyguards, managers, groupies, stalkers, and the memory of his best friend and bandmate's recent death. Rav can't be sure whether his perception of the case is colored by his infatuation with Jack, especially when some facts seem to point in Jack's direction.

The story gives some insight into the grittier side of the music business and the surprising difficulties a person faces when they become a super-star. Each character has an agenda and seemingly a motive that makes them a possible suspect. A stalking fan who seems intent on killing Jack doesn't make the case or the relationship any easier.

Take a murder with many suspects, many red herrings, and many surprises, and add a blazing love affair between two unlikely heroes, and you have a story that will keep you guessing.

*Hannah Rowan*



## The Legacy of Arniston House

TL Huchu

*Narrated by Kimberly Mandindo*

**Tor Publishing Group**

Audiobook

B0CW4JP66S

★★★★

Ropa Moyo is a magician whose goal is to make a living to support her grandmother and sister. She walked away from an apprenticeship to a Scottish Magic official and now works for the English Sorcerer Royal. Her grandmother is murdered, and she becomes the prime suspect. Ropa has to uncover her grandmother's secret connection to a magical conspiracy, both to avenge her death, and to save herself, as a cabal seeks to resurrect a powerful and dangerous foe.

This is an atmospheric and immersive book to listen to on audio. The narrator, Kimberly Mandindo, has a great voice and is excellent with the various characters. Her Scottish accent is authentic and brings the reader right into the book's setting. In Hucho's hand, magic is written as an established discipline with a long and storied tradition and well-defined set of rules for its practitioners, although different cultures have a unique way

with it, such as English, Scottish, and Zimbabwean magicians (like Ropa and her grandmother).

This is a dark story that pulls no punches. It seethes with Gothic atmosphere, and has moments that feel downright horrific. Ropa is a ghost talker, who can banish evil spirits and access the realm of the dead, and those scenes are quite chilling. While Ropa is still a young adult, she has been seeking her way in a world that is closer to dystopian than contemporary. Ropa learns some hard lessons about her family, their heritage, and herself through the unfolding story. At times, things feel confusing, but ultimately find its way to a thrilling climax that leaves the reader on the edge of their seat. Readers who enjoy urban fantasy with a unique spin, heavy with well-described and defined magic, will enjoy *The Legacy of Arniston House*.  
Danielle Hill

### Cover Model continued

**D.P.:** *Primitive camping or luxury hotel?*

**C.J. :** Definitely a luxury hotel. If God had intended us to sleep outside, he never would have invented The Hilton! Room service anyone??

**D.P.:** *Snow skiing or water skiing?*

**C.J. :** I learned how to snow ski in high school. We'll go with that.

**D.P.:** *Favorite movie?*

**C.J. :** Favorite movie? Probably *All About Eve*, such great characters and well written dialogue. Great acting too. Academy awards all over the place in that one. My second choice is the original, black and white *Titanic* with Clifton Webb and Barbara Stanwyck. Such human drama. Chokes me up every time!

**D.P.:** *Best book you ever read?*

**C.J. :** Best book I've ever read??? *Confessions Of a Romance Cover Model!!* What else???

**D.P.:** *Favorite sport to play?*

**C.J. :** Best sport to play? Volleyball...

**D.P.:** *Favorite sport to watch?*

**C.J. :** I don't mind watching golf. Kind of relaxing, even though I don't play...

**D.P.:** *C.J. , thank you for chatting with me. It's been fun catching up with you. Before we say goodbye, how can fans stay up to date on your latest news? Do you have any news or announcements to share?*

**C.J.:** Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/C.J.hollenbach>

*Debra Parmley writes romantic suspense, military romance, historical romance, urban fantasy romance, and fairy tales. She lives in a motorhome fulltime with her husband as they travel the U.S. She has interviewed cover models since 2011 and enjoys sharing interviews with readers of Affaire de Coeur Magazine. She loves to hear from you! Readers and Models who wish to schedule an interview contact her at [debra@debraparmley.com](mailto:debra@debraparmley.com).*



# Booty

## Reviews from other genre

### **Bonded in Death**

*J.D. Robb*

**St. Martin's Press**

978-1250370792 Hardcover

978-1250370808 E-Book

★★★★★

In this 60th installment in J.D. Robb's "In Death" series, Eve Dallas is faced with a case with origins in the 2020's, when killer and former spy Conrad Potter resurfaces after spending 30 years in prison.

Way back then a group of operatives calling themselves The Twelve fought against rebels in a world war now known as The Urbans. In 2061, four of the group are dead and eight stay, one of whom is the killer intent on getting revenge for the years he was incarcerated.

Eve catches the case of an Italian businessman who is gruesomely murdered after being lured to New York under false pretenses. Shockingly, she discovers that their taciturn and proper butler, Summerset, was one of The Twelve, as was the murder victim. It's a race against time as the killer plans to lure the remaining seven to the city to

take delight in watching their painful deaths. Then Potter plans to disappear, using the vast wealth he has amassed from traitorous activities during The Urbans, and that has grown during his years in prison.

The remaining seven gather in Eve and Roarke's heavily fortified mansion, where they can be safe while lending their ability to help Eve solve the case.

Eve's usual cohorts and Roarke take on this diabolically skilled opponent with their usual aplomb in a riveting tale full of twists and turns, where they must use every resource at their disposal to defeat a villain with far too many tricks up his sleeve.

*Hannah Rowan*

### **This Cursed House**

*Del Sandeen*

**Berkley**

E-Book

978-0593639535

★★★★

Jemma Barker flees from Chicago and the emotional fallout from a

broken relationship she leaves behind, impulsively taking a job as a governess to a family who live on the outskirts of New Orleans, the Duchons. She immediately realizes that things are not as they seem when she meets the family, very light skinned black people who hold themselves above darker black people, including Jemma. They react to Jemma in a variety of ways, from indifference to downright dislike. But they need her to break a curse that binds them to the house they inhabit and continues to claim the lives of family members. Jemma realizes that she has her own personal reasons to stay and try to break the curse, including revelations about her own traumatic heritage.

*This Cursed House* is a bona fide Southern Gothic story. From the New Orleans/bayou atmosphere that's impeccably conveyed, to the family members who are afflicted with madness and despair that they cannot escape from the bondage to the past. The house itself creaks and groans from the weight of the secrets it carries, and the sense of the uncanny drips from the narrative like Spanish moss on live oaks. The characters are walking wounded, bent down by the weight of their ancestral

# Booty

heritage. Jemma carries emotional damage that has crippled her in ways that she must heal from in order to be her best self. She is haunted by the rejection she has suffered as well as literal haunts as she sees ghosts.

Although the cast of characters is small, each one has an important role with an impact on the narrative. While this is far from a comfortable read, *This Cursed House* is an effective and chilling paranormal novel. Sandeen unflinchingly deals with the topic of chattel slavery of black Americans' ancestors, and the dehumanization, cruelty and violence that was intrinsic to the practice. At its heart, this is a novel about the heavy weight of secrets, the ugly and destructive power of racial hatred and bigotry, and yet, it also shows that there is hope that the past can be overcome, people can be set free from the mental and emotional shackles that imprison them.

*Danielle Hill*

## A Witchin' Pitsgiving

*Renee George*

### Barkside of the Moon Press

E-book

B0DFJ26D6J

★★★★★

Thanksgiving in Moonrise has never been this witch-tastic!

Lily Mason is a shifter-turned-sleuth and has decided to host a Thanksgiving feast for her family and friends. The night promised to be a blend of love, magic, and laughter. However, an uninvited guest mysteriously appeared, and the festivities were thrown into chaos.

Witch Hazel Kinsey, her mate Ford and her familiar Tizzy came for the pie, but stayed for the fight.

*A Witchin' Pitsgiving* is a fun Barkside of the Moon Mystery-Witchin' Impossible Crossover. Lily and Parker invite their friends to a Thanksgiving dinner. Without giving it away I can only say ... this is a fantastic story.

A magical mash-up of holiday cheer, unexpected surprises, and supernatural shenanigans, where the cozy charm of Moonrise meets the quirky,

witchy vibe of Paradise Falls.

*D. Antonio*

### Pam's Books continued

#### The Gingerbread House

*Living the Wright Life*

#### PI Time Travel E-book Box Set

#### Historical Fiction

*Dear Margaret,*

#### Nonfiction

*I Was Just a Radioman (Pearl Harbor survivor, Black Cat, and decorated veteran.)*

*The Prequel to Be More Successful with Marketing and AdvertiZING*

*Be More Successful with Marketing and AdvertiZING*

*I am a Runner — the Memoirs of a Sep-sis Survivor*

*Simple Herbal Recipes: Return to the Olde Ways*

*Writer's Success Secrets — Wall Street Journal, Amazon, and Barnes & Noble Bestseller!*

#### A Granny Pants Story (Children's Stories)

*The Long and Little Doggie*

*Riley Gets into Predicaments*

*Available in Spanish:*

*El Perrito Largo y el Perrito Pequeno*

*(La Serie del Perrito Largo y Pequeno)*

#### Short Stories

*The Halloween Challenge: The Last Image*

*Silvia Bell*

*Sandy's Valentine*

*Heather's Lucky Charm*

*Fireworks in the Sky (July 2024)*

*A Rosa for Russell ~ Historical Fiction Short Story*

#### The Clere's Restaurant Short Story Collection

*Sunday at 7*

*With a Side of Love*

*Winds from the Past*

*The Throuple with Love*

*Affaire de Coeur*

*The Best Catch of His Life*

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Fortune Cookie Wisdom Journal

**\*Almost all of the books are available as audio, e-book, paperback, hardcover, and in Large Print at 16pt.**



Have a good moments day,  
Pam

PamelaAckerson.net



Y  
A

## **The Whispering Night**

*Susan Dennard*

**Tor Teen**

E-book

978-1250339492

☆☆☆

In the conclusion to the “Luminaries” series, Winnie Wednesday’s life seems to be getting better. She’s moving forward in relationships with friends and her boyfriend, Jay. But there is a foe who is coming to town, a powerful member of the Dianas, rogue witches, who are feared by the group that is just coming to accept Winnie as one of their own, the Luminaries. Winnie must expose secrets from the past that involve her lost father, her family legacy, and cast doubt on whom she can trust.

*The Whispering Night* has intriguing world building, with different groups that include human monster hunters and witches and sorcerers, as well as a bestiary of creatures. Winnie’s internal narrative about the different species is a point of interest as the story goes along. The creatures were really intriguing and fun to learn about. Winnie is a likable main character—endearingly awkward, very intelligent, but de-

termined to grow in her hunting skills. Her commitment and caring for others is a strong point of this book. However, Jay, her emotionally tortured boyfriend, is underutilized and isn’t in the story enough to be such an important character.

Some secondary characters stand out, but others feel less developed. The forest is so well personified, it is a character in itself. On the other hand, the main villain exudes menace and a dark allure that makes readers want to learn more about them. It feels as though some plot points get introduced but don’t seem to go anywhere, giving a feeling of lost potential. The narrative does not advance much at all until close to the climax, which is disappointing for a conclusion to a series. The pacing is unbalanced and requires commitment and trust from readers that something exciting will happen in the end. Fortunately, the climax is very compelling and features some beautiful, description writing that significantly improved the overall rating for this book.

The author has a way with words when writing magic. Readers who are willing to invest in a story for a prolonged payoff will enjoy this modern fantasy full of fantastic creatures, dark

magic, and strong relationship bonds.

*Danielle Hill*



**Saturday, June 28, 2025**

**VIP Entry 10:30-11:30 AM**  
**General Admission Entry**  
**12:00 PM - 4:00 PM**

**The party doesn't stop**  
**when the signing ends...**

**Readers, be sure to grab**  
**your tickets to the Police**  
**K-9 Evening for the K-9s**  
**from 6:00 - 11:00!**  
**6-7 VIP Entry**  
**7-11 General Admission**

**Columbus Georgia**  
**Convention & Trade**  
**Center**  
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**Columbus, GA 31901**

**RomanceAtlanta.com**

# Late!

Didn't quite make it in the last issue



Includes all genre and all time periods

## The Village Library Demon-Hunting Society

CM Waggoner

Berkley Publishing Group/Ace

E-book

B0CQWX5YMY

☆☆☆☆

Sherry Pinklewhistle is a small town, upper New York State librarian with a knack for solving crimes. It seems like a whole lot of dead bodies and murders, when you think about it. She begins to believe that something just isn't right. Her cat, Lord Thomas Cromwell suddenly starts talking to her, and tells her that an ancient demon demands that she keep solving crimes, and someone close to her becoming the next victim makes that an imperative. Can Sherry work with her small circle of friends, including the new, young, handsome priest, a newly widowed, cosmopolitan art gallery owner, and her skeptic therapist friend, to figure out what exactly is plaguing their town?

*The Village Library Demon-Hunting Society* is tailor-made for fans of cozy mysteries mixed with episodic, ensemble paranormal TV shows.

There's something very innovative about the feel of this story. While aspects feel familiar to fans of genre fiction in this niche, the execution feels very fresh. The pace is very leisurely, but things progress nicely towards the conclusion. The cast of potential suspects is diverse—with murky pasts and motives that make them quite morally questionable—bringing to mind British mystery and crime shows.

While not overtly gruesome or bloody, the dark side of human nature is more than evident. Sherry's own past ties very well into the overall story, as her compulsion to solve crimes relates to past trauma. When the demonic angle comes in, it makes for some well-written and nicely spooky scenes to remind readers that something very unnatural is going on in this town and with this situation.

The humor is good, more on the wry and subtle side, fitting for this overall narrative. Small town life has its share of quirks and this is cleverly examined in the story. While initially it was hard to figure out where things were headed, the destination is satisfying, leaving the door open for future paranormal sleuthing for Sherry and her friends.

Danielle Hill

*Affaire de Coeur*

*Pamela Ackerson Interview cont.*

January 31 - February 1, 2025, at the Best Western Gateway Grand in Gainesville, Florida;

Space Coast Book Lovers, June 18-22, 2025, at the Radisson Resort at the Port in Cape Canaveral, FL;

Romance Atlanta Writers and Readers in June 27-28, 2025, in Columbus, GA;

Literary Love Savannah in July 10 - 13, 2025, in Savannah, Georgia;

I'm on a waiting list for Pensacola Tropicón and Orlando Reads... we'll see.

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

**Personal web page**  
PamelaAckerson.net

**Twitter**  
@PamAckerson

**Facebook**  
Facebook.com/pam.ackerson.7



*TA article continued*

worthy of his degree. His options were being a busboy at the all-white country club or working in the coal mines. So, his mother told him to stay in college for an additional year. He didn't really want to do that until the freshman class arrived on campus and he spotted a pair of long legs and hair going around the corner of the library. In order to find out who they belonged to, he decided to stay. And that was the year the Civilian Pilot Training Program (CPTP) came to campus.

My mother was an accomplished musician who wrote music, sang opera, played classical piano and, by the time she graduated, could sing in five languages. Dad was a brilliant engineer who couldn't carry a tune or hear the beat and had absolutely no rhythm. They were the perfect match!

After spending the year becoming an accomplished pilot and convincing my mother he wasn't just a "big-headed, obnoxious boy", they decided to marry when she graduated. Then, he discovered that to be accepted into the Tuskegee program, he had to be single. So, he asked my mother if she would wait for him, and when she said, "Yes" (reluctantly, according to her), he promised that as soon as he got his wings, they would marry.

Mom graduated from college, got a job and started planning her wedding. She wrote her own wedding songs, was making her wedding dress and waiting for the "Big Day." On March 7th, 1942, the first class of Tuskegee Airmen graduated at Tuske-

gee. Edith, along with her mom and George's parents drove to Tuskegee to see him graduate. As the impressive ceremony was over and all five men had received their wings, the commanding officer said, "Wait, folks, I understand we have a wedding to perform!" and called my mother up to the stage, where Dad proudly waited for his bride. After the ceremony, Mom asked him, "What were you thinking?" He looked at her, extremely puzzled, and said, "I promised you that we would get married as soon as I



Major Spencer "Spanky" Roberts and Mrs. Roberts (1943).

got my wings!"

No, she didn't kill him. and their love lasted until his passing 42 years later. Together they met the challenges of WWII, Korea, and Viet Nam, moving to multiple residences, including to the Far East (while 6 1/2 months pregnant), having four children and becoming part of, not just Black history, but American history.

The Tuskegee Airmen went on to become one of the most decorated squadrons in the war with accomplishments that were beyond what anyone could imagine they could do, including shooting down the first German jet. Their love story lives on as we, their children, continue to tell the story of the first Tuskegee Airman and his lady. Oh, and since Mom didn't get her big wedding, we gave her one on their 25th wedding anniversary.



The Roberts Family in 1964

The love story of my parents is just one of many stories that are unique to the Tuskegee Airmen. To keep their stories alive, our chapter, the Tuskegee Airmen Heritage Chapter of Greater Sacramento, gives presentations on the history of the Tuskegee Airmen Experience and personal stories from the children of these pioneers, showcases original Black press newspaper clippings from WWII, attends airshows, and raises money for scholarships for graduating high school seniors and single parents interested in continuing their education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs by selling TAHC merchandise. We have T-shirts, ball caps, beanies, books, patches and posters.

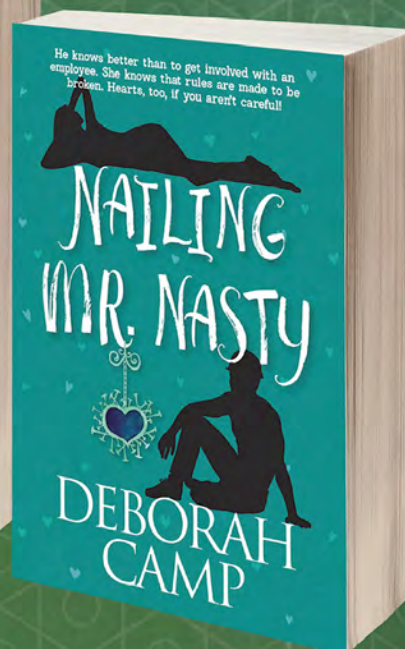
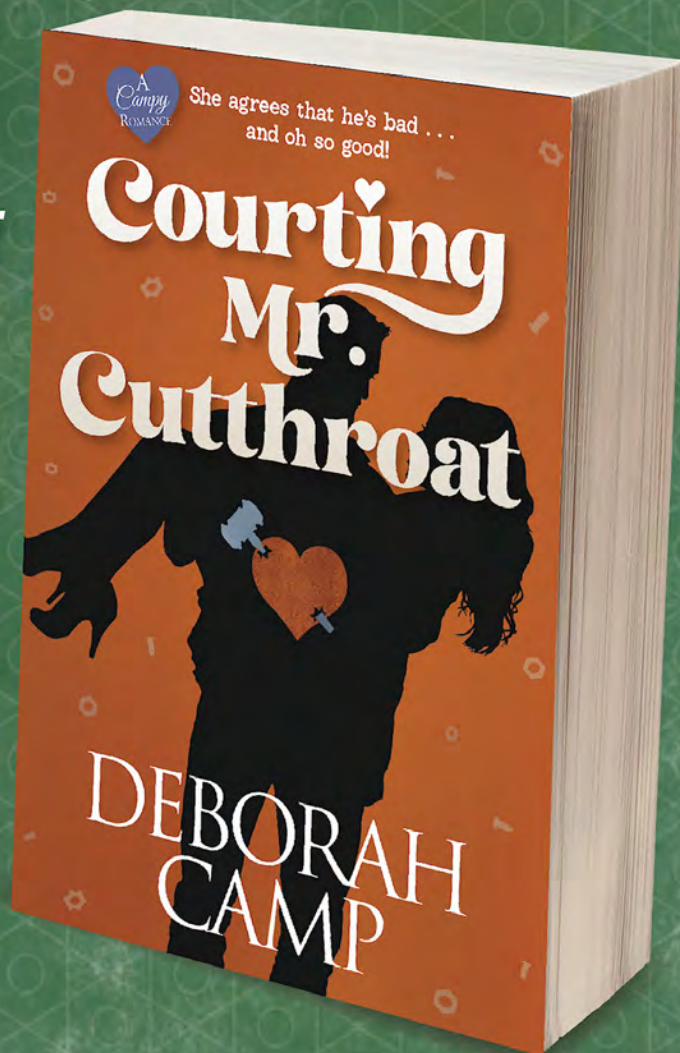
Look at our calendar for an event that we are attending near you. We'd love to meet you and share our stories. And, if you or your organization are interested in having us do a presentation, please feel free to contact our PRO/Logistics chair, Leigh Roberts at [redtailsfighting99th@yahoo.com](mailto:redtailsfighting99th@yahoo.com).

Feel free to order from our website, [taheritage.org](http://taheritage.org), for promotional merchandise. We know you will wear it with pride as we do!



CLASS 42C. After Graduation. Top: Lt. Colonel Benjamin O. Davis Jr., 1st Lt. George S. Roberts, 1st Lt. Mac Ross, (bottom) 2nd Lt. Lemuel R. Custis, 2nd Lt. Charles DeBow.

*He was the town's hell-raiser and she was his salvation. Now that he's back, will he claim her heart or break it again?*



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