

# I.A.M.

Indie Authors Monthly

NOVEMBER- 2017

Connecting Authors with the readers who love them

## ERICA'S KIDLIT CORNER

A Unique Approach To Common Concepts

## BUILD BRAND AWARENESS

Make Yourself Known!

## Who To Watch

Meet romance author Katrina Marie and discover "Cruel and Beautiful World"

## INDIE BOOKSTORE OF THE YEAR

Cast Your Vote!

## NEW INDIE RELEASES

See what's new in novels this month!

spotlight

# Katherine Dell

New YA Author





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INDIE Publishing GROUP 15

INDIE AUTHORS MONTHLY

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GUEST ARTICLES M.J Woods J.T Evans Joseph Carrabis Bruce Arrington

Questions? Send an email to info@indieauthorsmonthly.com www.indieauthorsmonthly.com

STAY CONNECTED WITH US



M.J WOODS

## An Indie Story.

**M.J WOODS** is a NY based author of contemporary romance novels. She writes motivated by coffee and music, also drawing inspiration from her twenty year career in the legal field. She published her first trilogy of full-length novels, *The Amped Series*, in one year and is currently at work on various stand-alone novels. :

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



**T**his November marks my one-year anniversary of becoming a self-published author. Let's keep this between us, but I released my first novel without having any idea what I was doing. Ignorance was my bliss, and I fiercely grabbed hold of one concept: the indie route meant I could call the shots. Covers. Titles. The story. All of it would be up to me. I also presumed I could set my own pace.

I'm a New Yorker so, for me, waiting is torture. We talk fast, we drive fast, we (sometimes) write fast. I've now published a trilogy of full length novels in one year. But I approached the process a bit backwards. I didn't participate in critique groups or talk to other authors first. I didn't even have a Goodreads profile as a reader. Is this the smartest route? Probably not. I'm like the loose-cannon cop no one wants to ride with. Still, as an unknown, I've made progress. Here's the what and how of it.

Work Hard, Often & Anywhere.

My first scenes emerged as scribbles on memo pads. Eventually, I went to my laptop to make sense of where my story was going. This was a long process, including years in between that I wrote nothing. But once inspiration struck, I didn't stop.

I missed my favorite TV shows. I skipped a few family functions to work alone in the house. I went hours without eating, because I was that lost in my story. I wrote everywhere. I ended up with a complete love story, told over three novels. I revised a ton, then hired an editor. I listened carefully to beta readers. All of this paid off when I received compliments for my writing style and clean copy.

Once the words were down, I spent almost as much time designing the books as I did writing them. I insisted on an attractive cover to wrap around my words. I hoped readers investing their time and money would appreciate the packaging, too. From the feedback I received, it was apparent they did.

Realize You Are Not Alone

Beyond writing, an indie has to create their

own public image. A daunting task, especially if an author is an introvert. (\*Raises hand\*) There is no magic button to put everything into motion, either. Blog. Social media. Advertising. Website. (A picture of myself?! Please, no!) But if you want to find your audience and stand out among a swelling sea of indie authors, these are necessary evils.

Instructional guides and free webinars for indie authors are great resources. Some established indies will answer questions directly, if you just ask. From experience, I'll tell you a few kind words from someone you admire may be all you need to propel you forward.

After I published, I joined a local chapter of writers in my genre. I was surprised at the number of traditional authors turning indie who asked me questions about my experience. Yes, I had to be the 'new member' at first. I walked into a room full of people and mumbled an introduction only to be asked, "What do you write?"

To which I replied...uh, romance? I didn't even know how to describe my writing, especially on the spot. Now, several months later, I've made some amazing author friends and learned so much about this business.

Redefine Failure. Accept Success.

The first book signing I attended was as an author. I trudged to the basement of a historic library an hour away, my display in tow. About five people showed up and I sold one book. But, I did not see it as a failure. I was ecstatic to be there. I made sure my set-up was professional, and people noticed. I chatted with other local authors I'd never met.

Three months later, my first two novels were in the front window at a major book retailer in my home city, because I'd been asked to do a signing. When I told my new writer friends this, they asked how I did it (while trying to hide their disbelief). After all, I was an indie and the new kid. Double whammy.

Someone recommended me to a store manager last year, and I was told the store loves local authors. I reached out, and though the store was receptive, a few months passed without a peep. Then, the same manager read my first novel, "Balance". She contacted me

to ask if we could set up a signing. (I said yes, and sold a lot more than one book that day.) She also expressed how eager she was to have her hands on the last book in the series. She told me romance is not her preferred genre, but she found my books were different.

Somehow, I did the impossible and persuaded her to give the genre a chance. I imposed a deadline on myself then: finish the third book, and publish it before the one-year anniversary of my first release. Admittedly it was a wild, grueling ride, but I did it.

I don't have big publisher resources, or immense sales resulting in staggering profit. But after concentrated efforts, I pulled off a small victory as a new indie. I look forward to hearing about your victories, too.

Find out more about M.J by visiting her below!

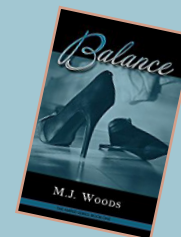
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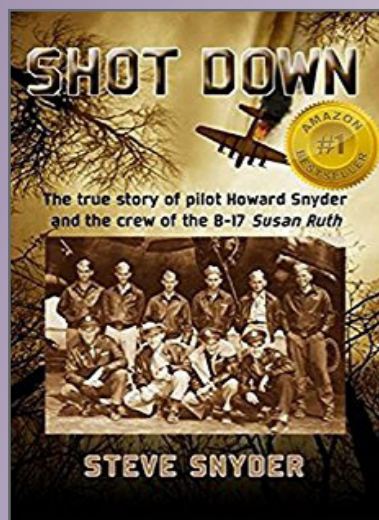
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# REVIEWS

## EDITORS PICK



**Title:** SHOT DOWN  
**Writer:** STEVE SNYDER  
**Year:** 2014

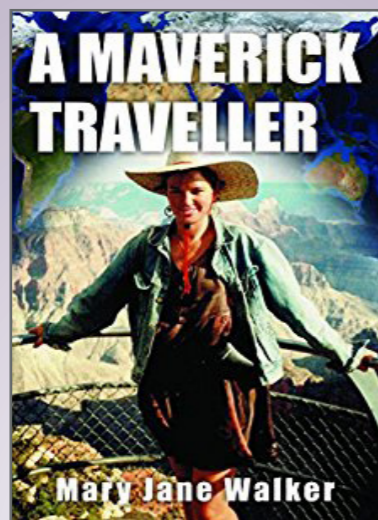
### shot down

Meticulous and endearing tribute to the crew of the B17 Flying Fortress, the Susan Ruth during World War II. Compiled by letters and records left behind, author Steven Snyder, son of the pilot, Howard Snyder, recounts the exploits of the crew from their background, to training, to the fiery crash that caused them to parachute and survive in enemy territory. In a clear and crisp voice, Snyder describes both his father and the world he lived in.

The budding romance with his mother, courtship and finally marriage is tenderly told through personal letters that paint a vivid picture of their relationship. Training, deployment to England and the grueling and dangerous conditions are described in harrowing details. This is how we should learn about war, through the eyes of those who sacrifice so much to keep others safe.

The humanity of listening to their fears, or heartache at being away from loved ones, missing births and other milestones in the home front. We loved this band of brothers, their camaraderie and courage, and when we read the outcome, the unfair vagary of fate, we were saddened by the wastefulness of war.

Heartbreaking and poignant, families and wives at home, showed equal bravery and support. This was a memoir, a love letter from son to father, honoring him for his quiet dignity and courage. It is a wonderful snapshot of people performing admirably under the worst of conditions, where some gave everything they had.

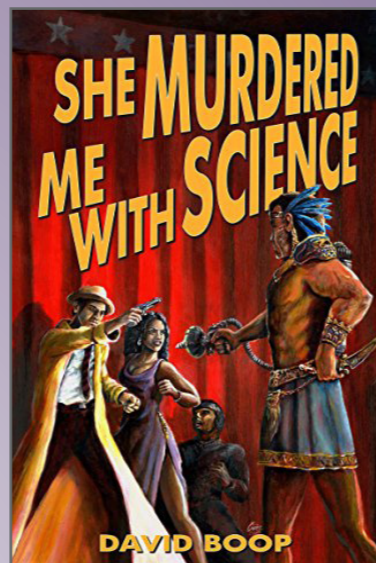


**Title:** A MAVERICK TRAVELLER  
**Writer:** MARY JANE WALKER  
**Year:** 2017

### a maverick traveler

Indian novelist Anita Desai has said, "Wherever you go becomes a part of you somehow." And so, Mary Jane Walker crisscrosses the globe taking a bite of out local life wherever she goes. She calls herself a Maverick Traveller, and perhaps the wanderlust is ingrained in her DNA, her surname is Walker, after all. Either way, from an early age she had the need to not just see the world, but visit it and get to know it as well.

Walker records a rambling memoir filled with fascinating tidbits of information of the many cities she passed through, collecting bits and pieces to store away. While she learns about the history of each place, she absorbs the "feel," the political climate, and the people as well as the place become part of her. The stories and experiences shape her life, guiding her to the next fork in her personal road. Walker lives the life many dream of, and while she stockpiles experiences from pit stop along the way, we think she leaves each locale a little richer for knowing her, the time spent there mutually satisfying for both the location and herself.



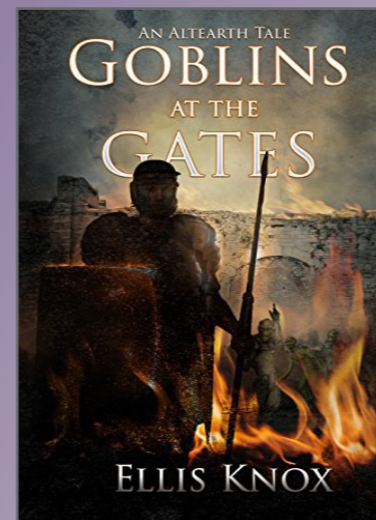
**Title:** SHE MURDERED ME WITH SCIENCE  
**Writer:** DAVID BOOP  
**Year:** 2017

### she murdered me with science

Entertaining and fun, She Murdered Me With Science is a throwback to the crime thrillers of the fifties laced with science fiction. Dr. Noel R. Glass is a down on his luck private investigator with a twist. He knows things about forensic science and can read a crime scene better than anyone else in Industry City.

A former scientist, he is stuck in a downward spin after an experiment gone wrong ruined his promising future. Now a drunk, he works on his secret water-powered car all night and gumshoe duties during the day. No cliché is safe, Boop uses them all shamelessly, creating colorful characters and a twisty plot that keeps the reader engaged.

In Glass' black and white world the promise of the future and the inventions we take for granted are perfect fodder for the science fiction imagination. Highly addictive, it will be interesting to see where Glass will find himself next.

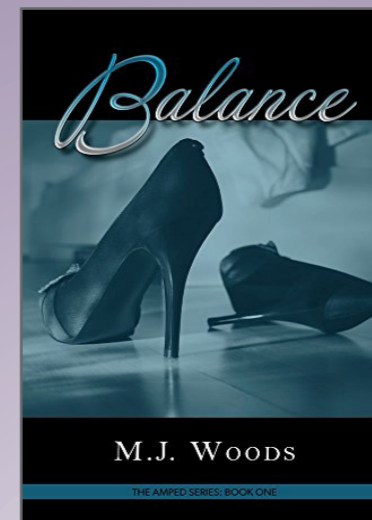


**Title:** GOBLINS AT THE GATES  
**Writer:** ELLIS KNOX  
**Year:** 2017

### goblins at the gates

Exciting alternative history about a General in the Roman Legion who must join forces with one of his enemies to battle a supernatural horde of invading goblins. Detailed and finely thought out, Knox creates credible characters that ignite the imagination. We especially loved the relationship between Julian and Avital.

The battles were filled with gory details, the conflicts with the goblins were epic as they were frightening. Filled with an otherworldliness, yet anchored with enough history to feel real, this is a great book to lose yourself in with engaging characters that stayed with us long after we closed the book.



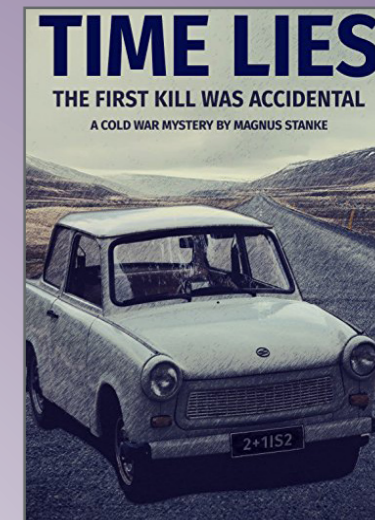
**Title:** BALANCE  
**Writer:** M.J. WOODS  
**Year:** 2016

### balance

Alexis Greene has lost her husband. She is a widow, still in her twenties, is bitter and lost, out of balance. Aiden Pierce's life has been an elevator ride, starting out as low as one can be with a meteoric rise to both fame and fortune. He is bored, unsatisfied and troubled with night terrors born of his abused childhood.

"Life is a big bag of suck," for both of them and when opposite ends of a business deal bring them together it's a slow, sexy sizzle to the finish line. Alexis is no weak and submissive female, and Aiden is well...perfect. MJ Woods writes grown up romance with a real story.

Told in alternating chapters in the first person, she captures two distinct voices and manages to develop characters that are not cliché. Balance is what both characters need and it will be interesting to see where the next book takes them in their journey together.



**Title:** TIME LINES  
**Writer:** MAGNUS STANKE  
**Year:** 2016

### time lies

Time Lies is a complicated thriller, the tale of sibling rivalry, and the scars of the past shaping the lives of those affected. Brothers Kurt and Toby live in a house with their bed-ridden father. As twins, they often confuse people by swapping personalities, and though one is deemed the good one, the boys often fool people by assuming the other's personalities.

Just like the wall that separates East Germany from West Germany, the past is shrouded by secrecy. This was a great book. We ended up thinking about it all night—replaying scenes—it had a darkness that people who read the genre will like. There are parts that an American audience won't identify or understand. Not sure if they'll remember the paranoia of the Cold War or understand life in Germany post-WWII—the feeling of isolation. It read like a black and white film noir of the 60's.

In the end, while Cold War Germany is the backdrop, it is a book of kidnapping and murder, motivated by sinister intentions. Stanke craftily creates a tapestry of unlikely characters, then weaves them into an intricate design, capturing the reader and tying the unrelated threads into a neat conclusion.

Dark and calculating with surprising twists, Time Lies will satisfy crime/thriller readers.