

MAY 2021
romance,
witchcraft &
warriors

HM HODGSON

WELCOME

Hi, and welcome to my May newsletter!

Thanks for joining me for another trip into the world of writing, romance & magic.

Along with writing & reading adventures and a reader only giveaway, this month you'll also get a totally exclusive sneak peek at *The Last Keeper*!

Cheers,

HMH



THE CRAFT



Since we last spoke, I visited Mount Tambourine, a sub-tropical village secluded in the Gold Coast hinterland. The village has an array of beautiful wineries and cafes and handcrafted-ware specialty shops (plus the fudge shops are OUT OF THIS WORLD!) But one little store caught my attention. It was full of crystals and dream catchers and special, beautiful things.

One crystal in particular drew me in, a chunk of amethyst. I had to buy it right there, and since then a little research revealed that amethyst is linked spiritually to tranquility and calm. It got me thinking about how the witches in my stories would work with natural elements like this. So, keep an eye out in book 3 of my current series when a little amethyst comes along... And given the angst these characters are going through, they could do with a little tranquility (but not too much!)

WRITING ADVENTURES



I had the absolute pleasure of catching up with some fellow Brisbane-based romance writers in early May. We met at the Brisbane Square Library for a day of writing sprints, yummy food and great company. And I added 2,700 words in four hours to my work in progress! The sprint technique we used is where you write for 20 minutes straight... no stopping, no going back and editing typos (I had plenty!) You break for 5 mins, and then you go again.

There's a lot of other writing going on too! I interviewed Sofia Aves for the Romance Writers of Australia June edition of Hearts Talk. Sofia is an amazing author and I loved hearing how she manages to write and self-publish sooo many books, plus look after her three children. Check out the column for how she does it!

In my writing world, book 2 of The Immortal Keepers is in the self-editing stage (due with my editor in early July), and I'm halfway through the draft of book 3. I'm also working on a mystery-project novella, and in the back of my brain am trying to decide between which of two new series to kick off next... One is a paranormal romance with angels & demons, the other is a sci-fi alien romance. Decisions, decisions!

MY CRAFT



Writing goal 2021: self-publish my first novel.

Writing reality: My debut book releases on the 27th June 2021 (Yay!)

I've dreamed of being an author since I was a child, and the pre-order price is just 99c.

Wondering why my book baby is on sale *before* it releases? Well, it's because I'm hoping to have lots and lots of copies show as sold on release day so that my book launches up the Amazon algorithms, and therefore gets seen by lots and lots more people!

So, if you like enemies-to-lovers action-packed steamy romances set against a stunning Australian backdrop, grab this baby now! And if you know someone who loves this type of book, feel free to send them this email :)

Why else should you pre-order my book? You'll get *The Last Keeper* for just 99c! The book will go back to the regular price of \$4.99 on release day.

Your exclusive sneak peek excerpt is below...



Deadly secrets. Sacred vows. Duty over desire.

Order Now

A Sneak Peek

A dash of icy water hit the back of India's hand. She jolted against the old bathroom cabinet, automatically looking up for the leak.

A torrent of water smacked into her face.

Adrenaline shoved through her and she yelped, spluttering. What the hell? Shielding her face, she tried to make out what had to be a bloody big gaping hole in the ceiling of the little hotel bathroom.

Except—the ceiling was perfectly normal.

India stifled another cry as more water poured down, echoing the driving rain from the outside storm. Holy crap, the storm might as well have been inside, beneath the perfectly fine-looking ceiling.

Shit, shit, shit. *Not again.* She needed a spell—needed something to stop this batshit magic—

A knock sounded at her hotel room door. Her heart rammed inside her chest. *Oh no, uh-uh.* No way could anyone come in here.

She darted a look around the small room—towels, she needed towels. Lots of them. But first she had to stop the rain. If only she knew the spell for that. But crap, India didn't even know the spell to make it start.

Then the rain ended as abruptly as it had begun.

The knock sounded again, slightly louder.

"India, this is Simone—the manager here." The muffled words filtered through the door. "I just checked you in."

"Ah, hi," India called out across the room. She swallowed hard, tried to calm her racing pulse. "Just a moment."

"No worries. Just brought you up an extra blanket. And I know the room's small but hope you find it okay."

Okay? *Okay?* India's chest rose sharply beneath rapid breaths. She swallowed and turned around.

The little bathroom was covered in water, small square tiles slippery beneath her boots. The once neatly folded and fluffy towels were now lumpy sodden messes.

Waterlogged carpet, where the bedroom met the tiled floor, squelched underfoot as she took a step toward the bed.

No, the room was not okay. *She* was not okay.

Though thankfully, the water seemed contained—mostly—to the bathroom.

India tiptoed to the door, her dark hair plastered to her neck and shoulders. She slicked the long bangs back off her face. With a deep breath, she opened the door a smidge and peeked out from behind it, making sure her drenched shirt and jeans were hidden even as she forced a smile.

Sure enough, the woman who'd checked her in earlier stood there, a thick wool blanket folded in her arms.

"Hi," Simone said, "hope you don't mind me coming back up, but it gets chilly here at night, even in autumn, so I've brought up an extra blanket. And since the kitchen's closing soon, if you're hungry, I can take your order and have something hot when you're ready."

India blinked. The easy, genuine smile on Simone's face was almost soothing, but India couldn't let her guard down. And she couldn't take the blanket without displaying her wet sleeves. "Thanks for the blanket, but I'll be fine. And I'm happy to come down to order something to eat."

Simone tucked the blanket under her arms and chuckled. "No way, that's not how we treat visitors in the country. And hey, any chance you're related to Liz Jones? I source some of my produce from her and heard through the local grapevine—it's a guarantee of info here in town—that her granddaughter was coming down."

Butterflies took flight in India's stomach. She shifted her feet and ran a hand over her hair. The damp material of her sleeve brushed against her cheek, and she dropped her arm fast. But Simone's eyes only moved over India's hair.

"Oh, wow—you were having a shower." she said. "I'm so sorry for interrupting you. How about I save you a plate of tonight's special? It's chicken schnitzel with mash. The mash is made from Liz's potatoes."

"Um, that'll be great, thanks. I'll just finish up here and then come down." India managed to keep the smile on her face right until she closed the door. Then she sank back against it.

Her grandmother—"Nan" to the family. The reason India had reluctantly returned to her childhood home. Nan was India's only hope of understanding her magic. No way she would've come back otherwise.

Because, holy crap, did she need help with her magic.

Order Now

BOOK REVIEWS



Book 1: The Valkyrie of Birca

A fast-paced action-adventure, heavy on the Vikings, heavy on the steam, heavy on the HEA!

Check out the link below for the blurb and to get your hands on this sizzling Viking romance.

The Valkyrie's Viking



Book 2: The Valkyrie of Birca

This one is on my TBR list - especially after how awesome Book 1 was! Can't wait for it.

Check out the link below for all of the details on the next instalment in The Valkyrie of Birca.

The Valkyrie's Rule

WANT MORE ROMANCE?



I'm not the the only author with a Romantic Fantasy/Sci-Fi book coming out soon! Check out these great stories from a host of international authors for some super-spicy, super-awesome Fantasy, Paranormal and Sci-Fi romances!

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THANK YOU & GIVEAWAY



Lastly, as a thank you for joining my reading group, someone is about to win a \$10 Amazon e-gift card!

And the winner is.... Roxy! Your gift card will be in the email, so watch out for it soon.

Thanks again for coming on this journey with me and I hope to see you again next month for more magic & romance.





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