

JULY -AUGUST 2023
ISSUE 6.0

LITERATE-LY MAGAZINE

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT:
ED BOROWSKY

ARTICLES:

AUTHORS, ARE YOUR EDITIONS LINKED?

BOOK CENSORSHIP:

A SEPARATE PEACE, BY JOHN KNOWLES

CHARACTER WRITING: 102

CHILDREN'S BOOKS RECOMMENDATIONS

TRUE CRIME BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS"

TONJA DRECKER

TOMMY B. SMITH

BOOK REVIEWS:

AMY'S BOOKSHELF REVIEWS

UNCAGED MAGAZINE

FEATURED SHORT STORY

THE BACKYARD BY

AMY SHANNON PART 2

Literate-Ly Magazine is a bi-monthly magazine (6 issues per year). All rights reserved. Literate-Ly Magazine is a publication of Essence Publications, which is part of a subsidiary of Essence Enterprises. All business Logos of Essence Enterprises are strictly copyrighted and may not be copied or used for other purposes other than that in this magazine. Articles that are published by contributing authors are their own content, and any graphics that accompany those articles are owned by the contributing author.

Subsidiaries of Essence Enterprises:



For advertising, click on the logo below.

Advertising:

- Full sheet Advertisement for ONE issue is \$25.00
- Half sheet advertisement for ONE issue is \$15.00
- Classified Advertising: \$5 per line (including title), up to seven words per line, up to 5 lines and Logo (for \$10).

Reoccurring advertisement (6 issues per year)

- Yearly full sheet \$125.00
- Yearly half sheet \$75.00





Literate-Ly Magazine

CEO and Chief Editor: Amy Shannon

Email address: writeramyshannon@gmail.com

Website: <https://essenceenterprises.com/literate-ly-magazine>

Essence Publishing:

Main Website: <https://essenceenterprises.com/essence-publishing>

Email: writeramyshannon@gmail.com

Amy Shannon's Books: <https://essenceenterprises.com/author-amy-shannon>

About Essence Publishing:

Essence Publishing was created by Amy Shannon, and she is the sole proprietor of Essence Publishing and its parent company Essence Enterprises. Essence Publishing is the publishing company that self-publishes Amy Shannon's books.

The purpose of Essence Publishing is to educate, entertain and provide literary services.

2022-All Rights Reserved.

This issues contributors:

Uncaged Magazine Book Reviews uncagedbooks.com

Table of Contents

- Author Spotlight
- Author Interviews
- Amy's Bookshelf Reviews
- Uncaged Magazine Reviews
- I read Banned Books
- Literary Professional Referrals
- Literary Censorship
- Writing Tips
- Short Story
- Character Writing 102
- Amy's Pick of the Month

Essence Enterprises



Parent Company/Sole Proprietor Amy Shannon
To utilize different tools to help authors at different levels, and with different parts of the literary publishing process.

Email: essenceenterprises1972@gmail.com

Twitter: twitter.com/essenceENT72

Amy's Portfolio:

<https://essenceenterpriseus.com/portfolio>

Essence Enterprises YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChBA46fk3oGlaiFSaaTuIhQ>

Fractured Tears: A Struggle for Justice Expanded Version

Anna Coleman gave her husband one more chance for them to work on fixing what was wrong with their marriage. Ted used that chance to try to kill her. Anna didn't give up or give in, she fought to survive, and she fought for justice, as it became a personal struggle. All she wanted was for the justice system to properly punish Ted for what he did to her, and it took a lot of strength, perseverance, and support.

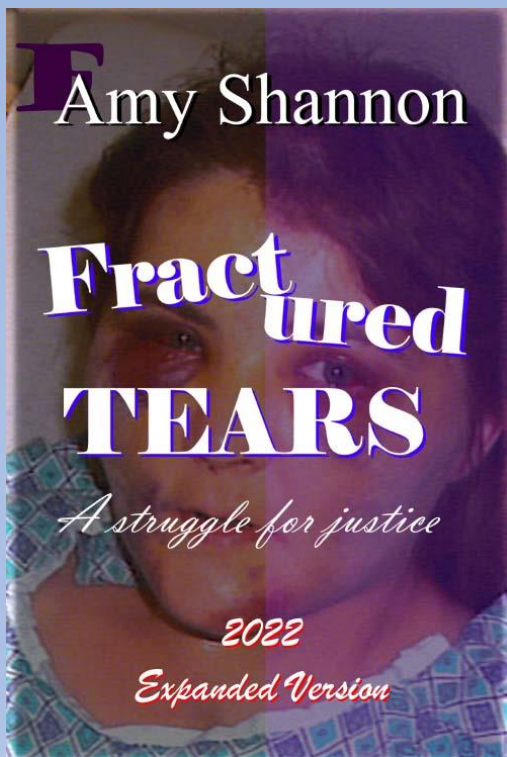
Read how Anna struggles to fight for justice, and deal with her personal issues from having been betrayed and abused by her husband of 13 years.

This is a fictionalized version of the real-life events of the Author.

Warning: This book contains scenes of domestic violence and may trigger PTSD or not be for some readers.

This is an expanded version and Fourth Edition.
Names have been deleted or changed for privacy reasons.

This is both a fiction book based on real-life events and a nonfiction book that tells my story.





Author Spotlight

Author Spotlight

Ed Borowsky



Ed Borowsky is a second generation American, who grew up in a family run furniture business. He spent a lifetime in the Home Furnishings Industry, which shaped his perspective on family, values and life. When he retired at fifty-three, he began writing full time. Thinking he had a book about his career he wrote the first chapter of his first book, titled "It's a Good Day to Liquidate, " a crime drama set in the secret liquidation industry.

Entrepreneurial by nature, he's owned and operated a retail furniture business, a national liquidation firm, a Boston based advertising agency, to name just a few.

When he retired at fifty-three, he began writing full time. Thinking he had a book about his career he wrote the first chapter of his first book, titled "It's a Good Day to Liquidate," a crime drama set in the secret liquidation industry. This book is due for release on June 29 2023.

"This is all I had ever written, when I met a woman at the grocery store who told him about a famous published author who took on a few students to teach the writing craft in his home. After sending him that chapter, he brought me under his wing where I would go to his house weekly for over five years to learn and hone the craft.

His third book, "The Great Mongolian Bowling League of the United States of America", the only book he's published to date won the 2019 International Book Awards. He also writes a popular column for a weekly newspaper in Orlando, Florida. He is about to republish "The Great Mongolian Bowling League" in the fall of 2023

Ed currently resides in Florida with his wife Michele of 35 years. He has three grown sons and 2 beautiful grandchildren.



amazon



Got a blog Tour?



The official Blog of Amy Shannon has moved, but it still participates in blog tours and author promotions.

<https://essenceenterpriseus.com/amy-shannons-blog>

This blog participates in blog tours by creating blog posts that gives information about the author and the book being promoted.

Some blog tours run simultaneously with Amy's Bookshelf Reviews when the review is posted on the blog tour date selected.

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews has a new website at <https://amysbookshelfreviews.com/>

And it also has new rules and requests information. The new request policies have changed, and the way an author makes a request has changed.

<https://amysbookshelfreviews.com/requests-and-rules>

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is also to announce that it has become a book influencer and a professional review for authors, and directly for publishers.





Author Interviews

ustawie...
Chin, z ep...
biżuterię ze Smy...
zwała się Julia, r...
ryginalna - m...
trzesło. Zdjął ze...
znając namalowa...
- wyjaśniła dzie...
furtka.
im ramę...
dziecio...
n cylind...
zębate...
żonym

Wszystko w porządku, chłopcze? - spytał...
otrząsnął się ze swoich wspomnień...
ze pozytywka przestała już grać...
lają mu się.
?...
rozpaloną, oczy mu błyszc...
o swoim ojcu.
stko w porządku? - Jul...
wierdził rudzielec, wsk...
Rozpoznałem tę melo...
... że to cud - stwier...
ze. - Nie w...
e jest łatwo...
Tenecja, i n...
ż rozmawi...
tała Rosse

zega...
- Tak, ale wygląda na to, że...
- Jesteście pewni, że ten...
czy czegoś w tym rodzaju? -
- Istotnie, mógłby używa...
kojniejszym...

pokręcił korbką.
metalowe pręci...
oczą melodyjkę.
nagle tak, jakby
i sama melodia,

zega...
- Tak, ale wygląda na to, że...
- Jesteście pewni, że ten...
czy czegoś w tym rodzaju? -
- Istotnie, mógłby używa...
kojniejszym...

Tonja Drecker

Literate-Ly Magazine: In three words, describe yourself.

Tonja: Calm, adventurous, and reserved

Literate-Ly Magazine: How many books have you written? How many of those are published?

Tonja: Most of my written and published works have been short stories, which have appeared in anthologies, magazines, and a novella. I have written two books to date, one of which isn't really where I'd like it to be yet but hope to get ready for publishing someday. The other one, *Music Boxes*, was published in 2019. Of course, I have more in the making and hope to have, at least, one ready to head out around the end of the summer.

Literate-Ly Magazine: When and how did you start writing or telling stories?

Tonja: Like many authors, I began to create stories as soon as I learned how to write. My first 'novel' amounted to a grand five-page, hand-written work with crayon illustrations and stapled binding. I was six at the time. I published a few poems in school publications but shoved writing aside during college. I didn't really get back to it until after I'd had my first two children.

We lived in Ireland for a short time, and I'd picked up a romance novel from the shelf of a house we were renting. That's when the sudden realization hit that authors are people, too. (Amazing enlightenment, I know.) So, I picked up my pen and rediscovered my love for writing.



Literate-Ly Magazine: Tell me about how you come up with your titles for your stories. Do you create the title before or after you write the book, and does it ever change from the initial title?

Tonja: For me, the titles usually come during the writing process. For *Music Boxes*, I'd used the two words as a temporary title to track my files. I had no intention of keeping the final title that basic, but it stuck. I've had short story titles, which were there before the tale started, and others, which never seemed right even after they hit the press. In the *Shadow of the Eagle's Eye*, a steampunk short story, for example, always seemed to ramble on way too long, and I still don't care for the title even years after it's been published.

Tonja Drecker cont'd



Iceland had put out an advertisement in the harsh post-war years, offering young women temporary job opportunities along with the costs of oversea transportation, housing, and such. With the very rough living conditions during those years, several hundred German women took the chance but didn't realize that it was really an attempt to bring more women to Iceland to marry the single men. Using this as inspiration along with a very sweet aunt of my husband's, who had passed away, I formed the main character for that story. I admire her strength and heart despite her fears and hesitations.

Literate-Ly Magazine: How did you know that you would write in this particular genre? Did you make a conscious decision, or was there an inspiration?

Tonja: I write my stories as they come. My short stories have bounced through several genres and audience age levels: steampunk, paranormal romance, historical, and mystery. That's one reason I enjoy writing short stories so much; it allows quite a bit of freedom. But for fleshed-out novels, I've been sticking more with children's books. There's a wonderful sense of innocent imagination and endless hopes and dreams, which often get lost in adults' heavier struggles. But if the right story idea comes along, I have no problem writing novels in whatever direction inspiration takes me.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Out of all your characters in all of your books, who/what (sometimes a setting can also be an important "character") do you think is the most interesting and why?

Tonja: I'd have to choose the main character of a historical fiction piece, which appeared as a Ubook-novella several years ago, *A Glowworm*. That character meant the most to me and carried the heaviest background.

I lived in Germany for around twenty years and found the stories surrounding the after-war period from family and neighbors extremely interesting. I also learned that

Tonja Drecker cont'd

Literate-Ly Magazine: Without quoting your back cover blurb, tell me about the last book you published.

Tonja: The tale rotates around twelve-year-old Lindsey and begins when her family moves from a small town in Nebraska to the middle of New York. The entire family makes sacrifices so her younger sister, a talented violinist, can attend Julliard. Lindsey's own ballet dreams suffer as her mother places her in a class at the local community center. So, when she meets the ballet teacher at an exclusive dance school around the corner, who offers her classes for free, Lindsey can't believe her luck and is desperate to give it a try.

From here, the tale takes on a darker, fairy tale spin. While Lindsey's becoming the dancer she'd always hoped to be, she's also increasingly aware that everything around her might not be as wonderful as it first appeared. Jealousy runs high between the dancers, especially since only the best are chosen to continue classes with the famous Madame Destinee. First, when Lindsey finds friendship, does she notice that something isn't quite right. One by one, those most dear to her disappear, and all the while, the music box collection on her teacher's shelf continues to grow.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Quote your favorite line from the last book you published.

Tonja: "I only desire your talent..." Am I allowed to admit that it still gives me chills?

Literate-Ly Magazine: Tell me something about yourself that is separate from writing.

Tonja: Most of my life is spent running around on our small farm. I've gone from sheer city girl to...well, all those things farmers need to be. And what a trip it's been! Cows, chickens, ponies, ducks, pigs, rabbits, and more barn cats than I'd like to have (and I'm not even a cat person) mix with fencing, splitting wood, gardening, bush-hogging and tractor repair. I've even learned how to replace water pumps, fix carburetors, and install plumbing. That might be why my writing has slowed down in the last few years.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What is the last book that you read? (Not counting anything you wrote)

Tonja: Oh my. This seems like a straight-forward question, but thanks to my children's book review blog, I read a book a day, and that makes this answer difficult. But I'll say *Being Mary Bennet* by JC Peterson, since I did pick that one up more as 'my own read'.

Literate-Ly Magazine: When writing, do you have a system or something you plan, or do you just write?

Tonja: That depends on the story. Some flow mostly by themselves, and I just write. Others started as an idea but beg to be plotted out on my writer's wall before I get anywhere with them. Usually, it's a mix of free writing and some basic planning. I'm not an outline fan but rather like having a basic summary or an array of sticky notes on my wall, which I can shove around or change at will.

Tonja Drecker cont'd

Literate-Ly Magazine: Why do you write?

Tonja: Only a writer might understand this answer, but I write because the stories won't leave me alone. Not writing is like not eating your favorite treat. You can avoid it, but the desire doesn't disappear.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Do you read your own work a lot? If so, what does it do for you?

Tonja: After a story is published, I avoid looking back and reading it unless it's completely necessary. I have a brutal inner-editor and am frustrated when I see small mistakes, things I wish I'd written differently, or, suddenly, just wish I could change them. So, it's better if I remain far, far away. Plus, there are new stories already demanding attention. So, no time to be distracted.

Literate-Ly Magazine: I play music when I write, and depending on the setting or mood of the story depends on what I listen to. Do you listen to music when you write? If so, what genre or artist/band do you listen to?

Tonja: Silence is golden in my world, but I do find it wonderful that other authors can use music as a subtle push of inspiration while writing.

Literate-Ly Magazine: As an author, I find that the hardest thing to write (for me) is the blurb that will be on the back cover or book's description. When you write, what is the hardest line to write, the first line, the last line or the synopsis for the book?

Tonja: The first line...actually, the entire first pages get trashed, mutilated, flipped, changed, and reconstructed until I'm not allowed to change them ever again thanks to my editor. I never feel good about those because there are so many ways a story can begin.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What does it mean to be a "successful" writer?

Tonja: I think that depends on the writer's goals. Some only want to reach a certain, small audience, and if they do that, they're successful even if never known beyond that circle. Others want to earn enough to live from, and if they achieve that, I'd call them successful.

For me, I've gone way beyond some of my goals, but there are a few more I hope to achieve. Maybe.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What do you want to accomplish, so when you look back at your life, you can say "I did that"?

Tonja: I'm at a point in life, where I'm redefining my goals, figuring out what direction to take next in life, and deciding what I'd like to achieve. I'm more than amazed at what life has brought and enabled so far, and I've now hit one of those strange transition points. So, I'm not sure yet. It depends on what direction my husband and I decide to head from here. The possibilities are nearly endless.

Tonja Drecker cont'd

Literate-Ly Magazine: Do you read books outside of the genre that you write? If so, what genres do you like to read?

Tonja: My reading is across the board and includes everything from fantasy, paranormal, science fiction, cozy mysteries, comedy romances, crime, historical, and I even have a soft spot for scientific nonfiction. Contemporary, poetry, normal romance, and literary novels won't be among the first books I grab, though.

Tonja Drecker:



amazon g



Tommy B. Smith

Literate-Ly Magazine: In three words, describe yourself.

Tommy B. Smith: I'm many things.

Literate-Ly Magazine: How many books have you written? How many of those are published?

Tommy B. Smith: Twelve written altogether. My published body of work includes three novels and two novellas, as well as a short story collection.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Tell me about how you come up with your titles for your stories. Do you create the title before or after you write the book, and does it ever change from the initial title?

Tommy B. Smith: The experience is different with each. With the Mourner's Cradle, the title emerged first, because the term initially appeared in my 2012 novella, *Poisonous. Anybody Want to Play WAR?* gained its title from a phrase I once heard a boy chanting on a playground where kids were playing war games with sticks, rocks, and makeshift forts. *New Era* originated from the actual location of New Era in central Louisiana, near the Black River, but also indicates a new era for the characters of its story.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What is the title of your last published book? What's the title and when was it published?

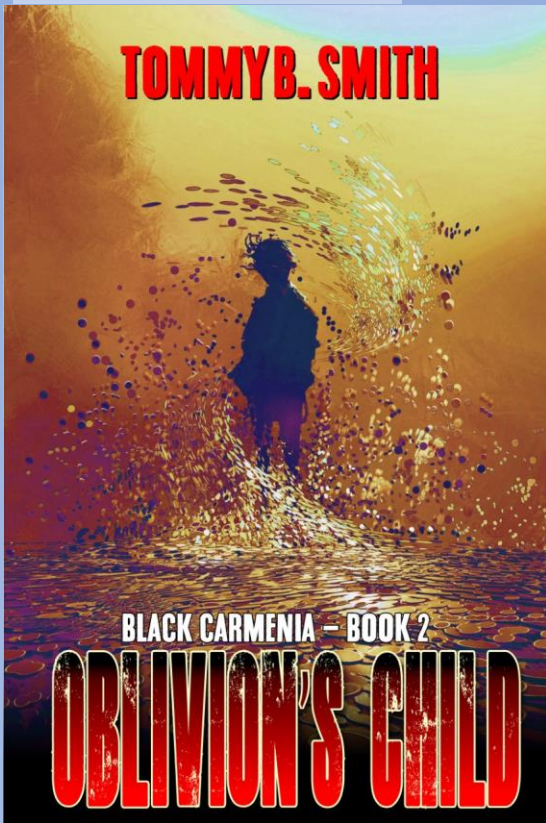


Tommy B. Smith: *Oblivion's Child*. It's the second book in the *Black Carmenia* series, which began with *New Era* last year. *Oblivion's Child* was published digitally in January of 2023, and the paperback released on March 1.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Out of all your characters in all of your books, who/what (sometimes a setting can also be an important "character") do you think is the most interesting and why?

Tommy B. Smith: I've found a few characters I could name over the years, but it has to be a tie between Tabby Reinhart and Paloma. Tabby was an interesting contrast to the otherwise bleak slant of *The Mourner's Cradle*, and her character found a deeper, more prominent, and necessary role in *Anybody Want to Play WAR?* Paloma proved interesting to write in the latter book as well, due to the rich complexities of her character, even while there is still much unrevealed.

Tommy B. Smith cont'd



Literate-Ly Magazine: I know your story is fictional, but what inspired writing it?

Tommy B. Smith: *Oblivion's Child* is a story about stories. It's a tale of the dark avenues of the mind, the darker spaces of the universe, and that which exists between.

Being creative and rather outside the status quo since even my early days, at times to the point that it resulted in certain difficulties with day-to-day situations, inspired the central character of Zander, as well as my appreciation for stories and books.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What sub-genres do you currently write in?

Tommy B. Smith: What I'm doing now is a mixture of psychological and cosmic horror. The *Black Carmenia* series falls into the general category of Southern horror due to its settings and flavor, but also incorporates the elements of both of the above.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Without quoting your back cover blurb, tell me about the last book you published.

Tommy B. Smith: The final chapter of *New Era* opened the gateway for this book, yet *Oblivion's Child* introduces some new characters, including Zander, a nine-year-old boy who lives in beachfront house with his grandmother and catatonic Aunt Helen.

Following the night of a vicious storm, Zander fears that monsters lurk in the persisting darkness. He isn't altogether wrong. There are true monsters in this world, and some of them wear human faces. Some hide in our pasts, waiting for the proper moment to leap into the present and unbalance us at the edge of a gaping precipice.

From the Florida coastline and over the dark ocean bridge to the forests of Alabama and beyond, *Oblivion's Child* is an interdimensional tale of the hidden passageways of the world.

Tommy B. Smith cont'd

Literate-Ly Magazine: Quote your favorite line from one of your stories. Indicate the line, and then the book title.

Tommy B. Smith: “The world never slept, she understood now, even when the channels signed off and the lights went out. Behind the curtain of night, screams pierced the stillness, car horns blasted, glass bottles smashed against streets, strangers banged on doors at two-in-the-morning, drunk drivers careened into telephone poles, and insomniacs fought for their last shreds of sanity.”

From *New Era*.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Tell me something about yourself that is separate from writing.

Tommy B. Smith: I have six cats. How did this happen? Around this time last year, we only had three: BearCat, Luna, and Specter. While opening my garage one day, a cat randomly wandered in. I gave her some food, and she warmed up to me immediately afterward. We brought her in, checked around to see if anyone had lost a cat to no avail, and had her examined at the vet’s office. As it turned out, she was pregnant. Apparently, someone had dumped her in our area, perhaps *because* of her pregnancy.

We took her in and found homes for some of the kittens, with some assistance. In the end, the mother cat, Cleo, and two of her kittens, two orange twins we’ve named Ramses and Riff-Raff, remained with us.



Literate-Ly Magazine: What is the last book that you read? (Not counting anything you wrote)

Tommy B. Smith: *Every Woman Knows This* by Laurel Hightower.

Literate-Ly Magazine: When writing, do you have a system or something you plan, or do you just write?

Tommy B. Smith: It varies between projects. For examples, *Anybody Want to Play WAR?* was a more character-driven story, and I leaned into this one to explore the characters and setting, allowing them to develop quite organically, whereas with *New Era*, connecting different time periods through certain objects and ideas required more organization with the approach.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Why do you write?

Tommy B. Smith: Because I have stories to tell. So many stories, yet so little time.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Do you read your own work a lot? If so, what does it do for you?

Tommy B. Smith: Unless for the purposes of revising or editing, I don’t tend to revisit unless I must.

Tommy B Smith cont'd

Literate-Ly Magazine: I play music when I write, and depending on the setting or mood of the story depends on what I listen to. Do you listen to music when you write? If so, what genre or artist/band do you listen to?

Tommy B. Smith: Music tends to fall into the background once I'm immersed in the writing process. I've left instrumental music playing on occasion.

Literate-Ly Magazine: As an author, I find that the hardest thing to write (for me) is the blurb that will be on the back cover or book's description. When you write, what is the hardest line to write, the first line, the last line or the synopsis for the book?

Tommy B. Smith: The synopsis, no doubt. I've already written the book, and now I'm expected to condense and cram it into a tiny synopsis? Having to do so isn't my favorite task, but sometimes it's necessary for the sake of the publishers' guidelines.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What does it mean to be a "successful" writer?

Tommy B. Smith: Others tout multiple definitions of "success" across the spectrum: making a decent amount of money at writing, writing a bestseller, or landing a contract with a major publisher, among others. Success is relative, though. By my definition, a writer's success depends on the personal goals set and achieved.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What do you want to accomplish, so when you look back at your life, you can say "I did that"?

Tommy B. Smith: There are certain milestones I've reached in regard to published works. I had always wanted to have a short story collection published, and ten years ago, I achieved that. A series as well, which I'm currently writing with the *Black Carmenia* books.

When I can use my abilities to change lives and improve circumstances for others, it's something special. Last year, I had a book signing at the local cat shelter for National Black Cat Day, also an effort to raise funds for the rescue efforts, and I love that I can turn my writing skills toward assisting such a cause.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Any final thoughts that you want to give to your fans or even future authors?

Tommy B. Smith: For any aspiring writers out there, my advice would be to learn what you can, develop your craft, seek your voice, and above all, persist.

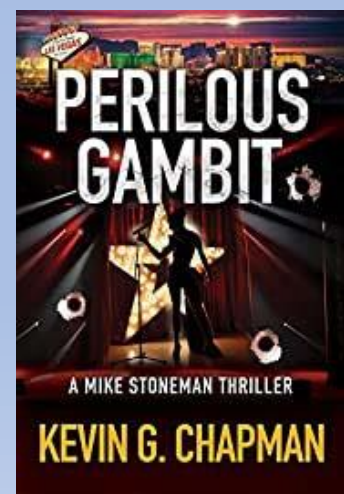
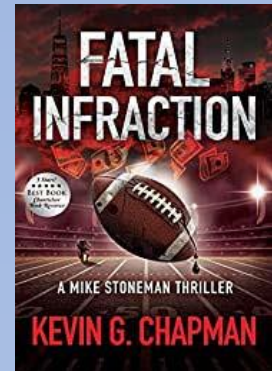
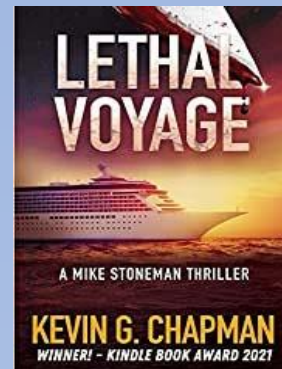
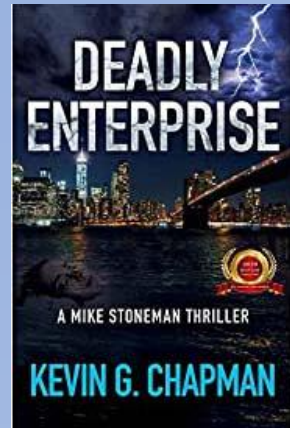
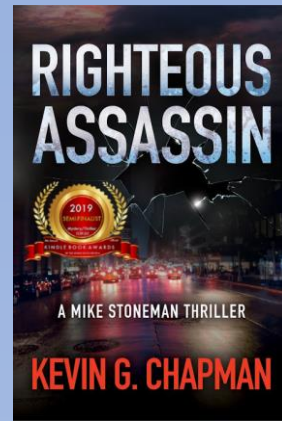
For my readers, expect to see the third *Black Carmenia* book somewhere between late 2023 or early 2024. In the meantime, thank you for reading.



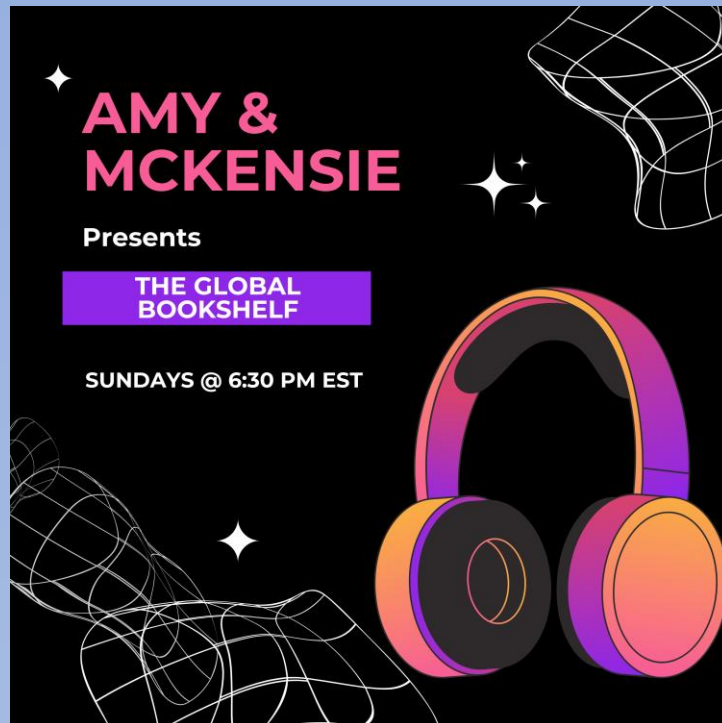
AUTHOR KEVIN G CHAPMAN

The Mike Stoneman Thriller Series

NYPD homicide detective Mike Stoneman and his partner Jason Dickson, are on a bumpy path as partners. They are thrust together to track a diabolical serial killer in Righteous Assassin. They doggedly insist on investigating the murder of a drug-addicted prostitute, over the objections of the top brass, in Deadly Enterprise. Then, after an embarrassing shootout in a Brooklyn hotel at the end of Deadly Enterprise, the Commissioner tells them to get out of town and away from the New York press, so they try to take a vacation. With Mike's love interest, Medical Examiner Michelle McNeill and Jason's recent girlfriend, Rachel Robinson, they board the Colossus of the Ocean for a relaxing cruise to Bermuda. Unfortunately, the cruise ends up being a Lethal Voyage. Back from their adventure at sea, Mike and Jason dive into the murder of controversial NFL Quarterback Jimmy Rydell in Fatal Infraction. Is Jimmy the victim of a racist attack? Was he collateral damage in a mob-run point shaving scheme? Or is there another answer? And why was his body dumped on the Central Park Carousel -- frozen? Mike and Jason need to solve the case before it tears the team, and the city, apart. Then, when they travel to Las Vegas for Jason and Rachel's wedding, Rachel's kid brother is accused of the murder of a fellow drag performer. Mike and Jason have to prove his innocence in order to save the wedding. Mike decides to take a big gamble. Their very lives depend on a Perilous Gambit!



AMY AND MCKENSIE PRESENT THE GLOBAL BOOKSHELF



Amy Shannon and McKensie Stewart (former podcast cohosts of The After Show with McKensie Stewart and Amy Shannon) now have an exciting new show, The Global Bookshelf, where authors and readers from around the world can connect. More details on our Website and YouTube Channel





**AMY'S
BOOKSHELF
REVIEWS[®]**

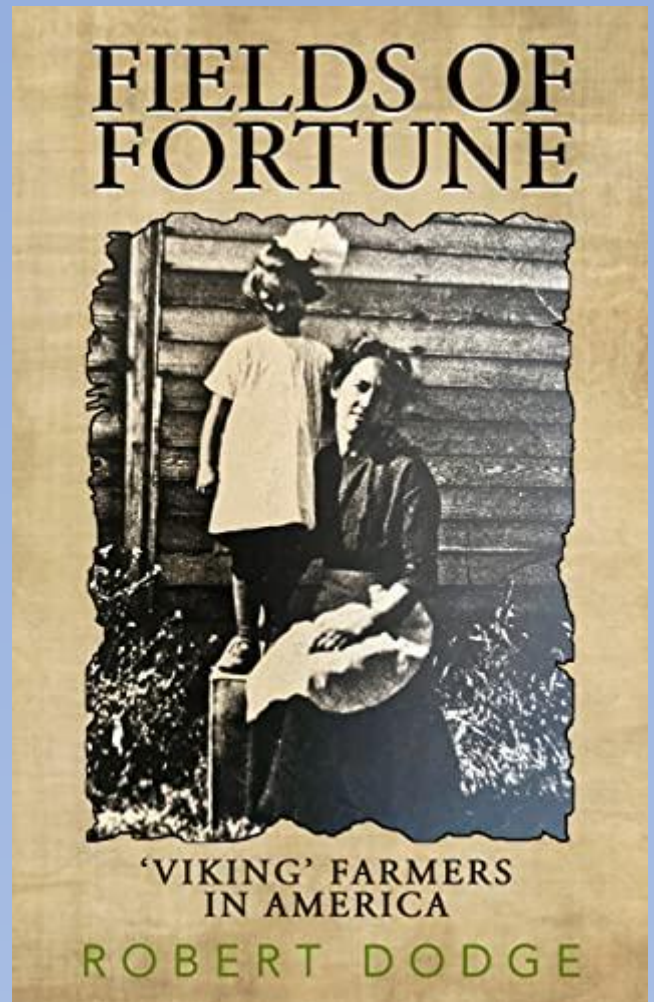
©2022 Essence Publishing Image

Robert V. Dodge- Fields of Fortune

5 Stars

An amazing wagon journey for a Norwegian Family

Robert V. Dodge writes an interesting book about a historical journey for a family of eight in Fields of Fortune. This book gives a lot of information about the journey from Norway in the 1800's about the Olson family, and then, how daughter Nettie fell in love and married Oliver Fortune. The news about the land of the free, and free land up for grabs in American caught many the immigrant's mind. But America wasn't what immigrants were expecting, especially as it was on the verge of the Civil War. Homes were literally divided. It gives a background of characters and the stories to paint a picture of what is leading up to the courtship and marriage of Nettie and Oliver. Nettie and Oliver had a daughter, Irene, but soon, Oliver died, never acquiring the fortune he sought. The story details the strength of Nettie, and then her daughter, Irene. It's a magnificent true story about how hard work can conquer the bad, and not everyone sees the same thing as fortune. It's an amazing story of triumph, and survival in a world that seems at war, even through generations, as the Viking heritage plays a part in the women's strength.



*Nonfiction/History
/Women's History*



L. Diane Wolfe- In Darkness: The Vampire

4 Stars

Great Read.

L. Diane Wolfe writes a paranormal tale with *In Darkness: The Vampire*. I haven't read anything by this author before, and what a hidden gem. I enjoyed it so much, that I have now followed the author and look for more books to read. This book is part of the *In Darkness* series, and this is volume one. The reader is introduced to Anna, who is in a dead-end job that she feels she has to do because of her father, but she dreams of doing something else, something adventurous. Then, she gets her chance, and it's just that one thing she needed, strangers entering the bar, and she just happens to over hear them. Insert the vampires as the mysterious group and little does she know, she could be their food just by offering to help them find what they seek. The characters are so real, it's like being with them within the story. This author is a great storyteller. The reader just embarks on a superb journey. I hope to read more books by L. Diane Wolfe. This journey was very unpredictable. And the interaction between Anna and the vampires is intriguing, especially when she doesn't know if she can trust them or not. However, Ann is determined and tenacious, and determined to get the job done no matter what, even if she is unsure of her own fate

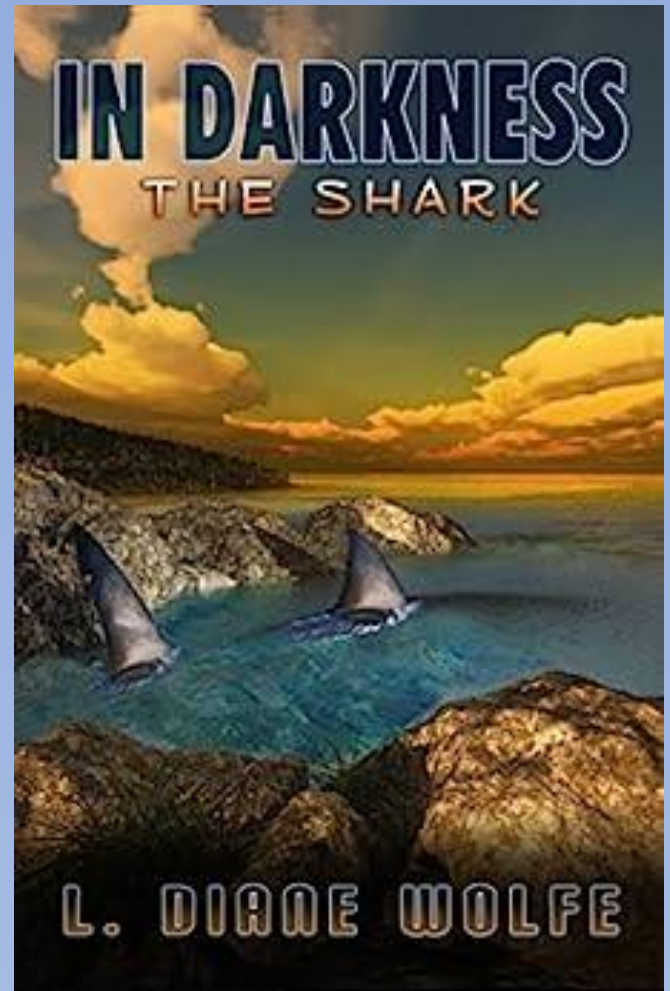
Paranormal

L. Diane Wolfe- In Darkness: The Shark

4 Stars

A Grand Read.

L. Diane Wolfe writes a paranormal tale with In Darkness: The Shark. This book is part of the In Darkness series, and this is volume two. The reader is introduced to Jewels, an introvert who works at an aquarium, and her only friends are pretty much the aquatics she takes care of. Then, she meets Clarence... a talking shark. Something about this shark, she can't get over, but they become friends, real friends, and she learns about trust, something that is hard for her to do. Taking place in Australia, there are great dangers that she doesn't quite understand. Clarence is a great white shark, and has abilities that she doesn't understand, but seems to take in stride. The characters are so real, it's like being with them within the story. The story brings in the believable, even if almost impossible. It is always an honor to read L. Diane Wolfe's books. The reader just embarks on an interesting journey. There is definite character growth in Jewels, and it makes the story seem almost real.



paranormal

Arthur Lee Conway- The Poetic Vibrations of a Matured Butterfly

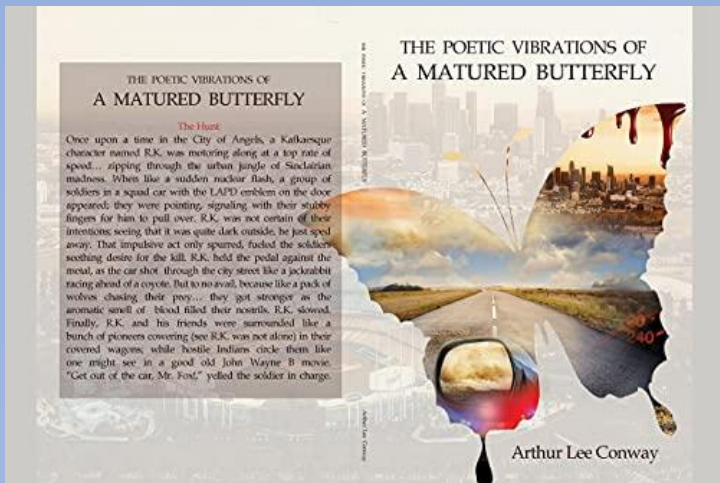
Illustrator: Mr. Hampton R. Olfus, Jr.

5 Stars

Impressive perspective!

This collection of poetry and innovative thinking by Arthur Lee Conway is a remarkable work of words. The words almost vibrate across the pages of *The Poetic Vibrations of a Matured Butterfly*. I enjoyed reading this collection, and entering the mind of this prolific poet. Such a wonderful read. My favorite was *An Abrupt Flash of Hellin Urbania* which starts with 'white jackets flapping and billowing like kites in a March Wind.' I liked this so much, I read many of the poems twice. I also liked the ones where the line starts with **OPPRESSION IS ...** I must say that the illustrations were magnificent, and fit this title, so kudos to Mr. Hampton R. Olfus, Jr. If you like different perspectives, emotions, and thoughts expressed through poetry, prose or lyrical words, you will definitely enjoy this, and see why the title is what it is. I look forward to reading more by this poet..

Poetry/innovative thinking



Cat Shook- If We're Being Honest

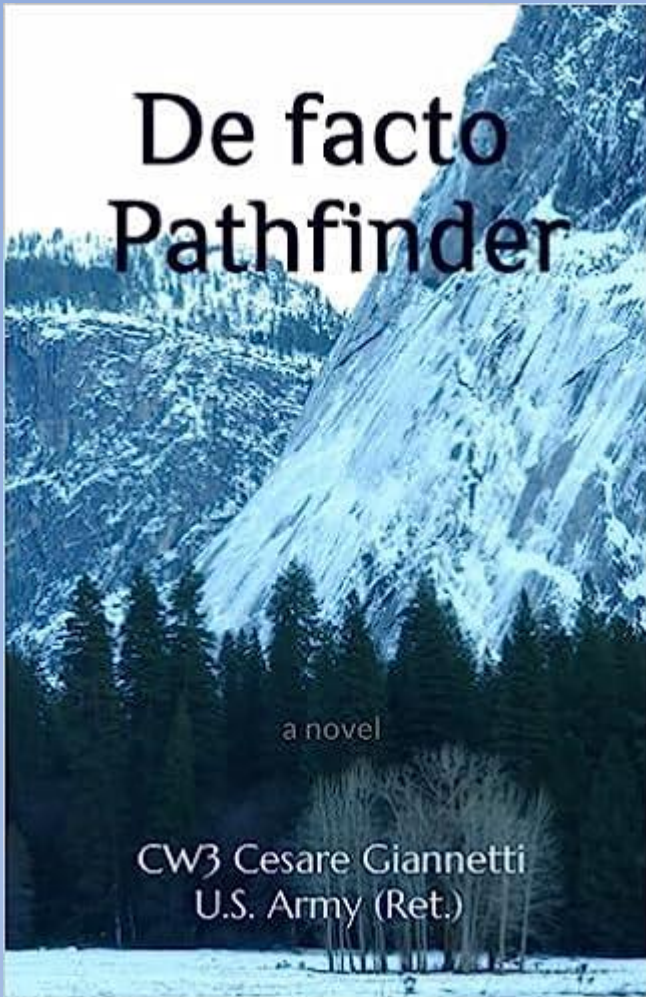
5 Stars

Entertaining.

Cat Shook writes a coming of age, and family-packed tale with *If We're Being Honest*. I haven't read anything by this author before, and what a hidden gem. I enjoyed it so much, that I have now followed the author and look for more books to read. The reader is introduced to Gerry, who dies suddenly. He is the patriarch of the William's family, and hearing about his death, family from across the country hurry to get back home, in Georgia. It was a remarkable story, and a very interesting family, and how the grief process, and the urge to get things out in the open is stemmed from the loss. It's emotional, poignant, and sometimes, kind of humorous. It's one of those funerals that if you attended, you'd sit in the back and just watch. It's a wonderfully told story of a dysfunctional family that many readers can relate to, and enjoy the story. The author weaves a tangled web of story, and captures the reader. Family dynamics and drama are always entertaining when reading about them, but this takes it to a whole new level of uniqueness and grand storytelling. Whatever this author writes, I want to read. It's an emotional rollercoaster. This book captures the reader's attention at chapter 1. A wonderous trail of words. A genuine character driven story!



*Coming of Age/
Family/Drama*



F/Military/Veterans

CW3 Cesare Giannetti U.S. Army (Ret.) - De facto Pathfinder

5 Stars

Very impressive story telling

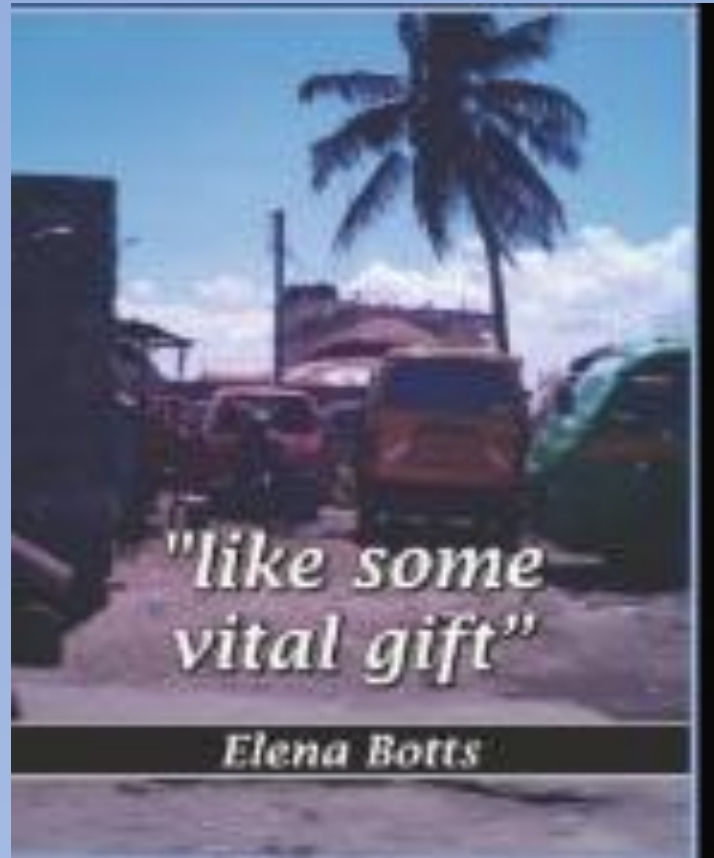
Cesare Giannetti writes a dramatic military tale with De facto Pathfinder. I am a big fan of Cesare Giannetti and read whatever this author writes. He uses his experience in the Army to write these wonderfully, magnetically charged stories. The stories work and also provide insight into the lives of veterans, especially those who need help. This author has talent for showing the story. I've read his biography book, and his other fiction stories, but these may be fiction stories, but they are extremely true to life. The reader is introduced to Chris Longo, a veteran, who was working in a job he finds extremely dull, a state run veteran agency. Longo needs a purpose, something that makes a difference, something that helps out others. After he quit his job, he is offered another one, a chance of a lifetime that is the perfect fit for him. Helping other veterans, who lost their way, their path. A job with no title, except the one he gives it. De facto Pathfinder. This is one of those books that grabs you from the start and pulls you in. The author weaves a tangled web of story, and captures the reader. The story is endearing and heartbreaking. This is a magnificent plot that kept this reader turning the pages. Chris Longo is a formattable character. This is a genuine character driven story!

Elena Botts- As if some vital gift

5 Stars

Magnificent poetry collection!

This collection of poetry by Elena Botts is a remarkable work of words. The words almost glide across the pages of *As if some vital gift*. I enjoyed reading this collection, and entering the mind of this prolific poet. Such a wonderful read. My favorite started with *i'm sorry i bit my wrist*. I liked this so much, I read many of the poems twice. Elena's work is heartfelt, and deep, and sometimes a bit dark, but so are emotions. I always enjoy reading poetry, as each poet's works are individual to the poet, and what comes from their thoughts and their hearts. If you like poetry and prose, I recommend reading many of Elena's work. Another one that stands out in my mind starts out with *I want to bury myself in the Hudson river ... i want to vanish i want to be made of blood...* One thing that is unique to Elena's work, from what I've read, is the use of all lower case letters. I look forward to reading more by this poet.



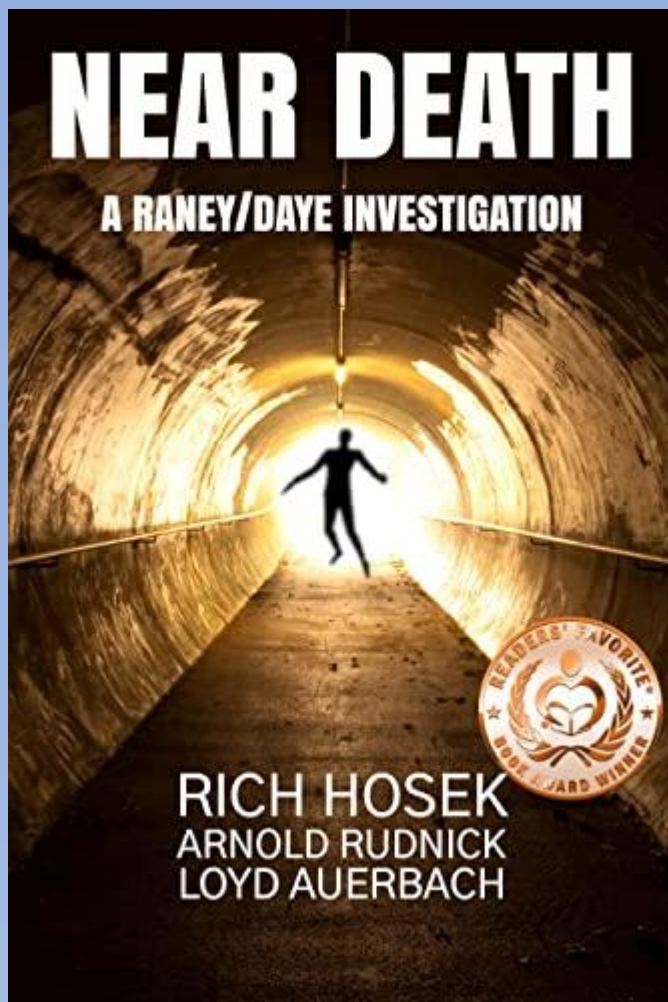
Poetry

Rich Hosek, Arnold Rudnick, Lloyd Auerbach- Near Death

5 Stars

This will make you a believer!

The team of Rich Hosek, Arnold Rudnick, Lloyd Auerbach writes a dramatic paranormal, don't go into the light, tale with Near Death. I haven't read anything by these authors before, but I sure will read more of their work. This book is part of the Raney/Daye Investigation series, and this is volume one. The reader is introduced to Dr. Jennifer Daye and Detective Nate Raney. Jennifer is a parapsychologist, and believes in things that one can't always see, and that there is something beyond death. On the other hand, Detective Raney, is pragmatic, even after he is shot and clinically dead. This is a magnificent story that takes the reader on a ghost hunt, and the search for answers. Raney experienced something, when he died, but even he isn't sure of what it is. It's an intriguing paranormal story, that you just don't want to put down. The characters are so real, it's like being with them within the story. The author's technique of raw, magnetic characters and great plotlines is a gift. It's a great story to follow and try to figure out what will happen next. Some of the pages, you end up reading slower than others, so not to miss anything. I can't wait to read the next book in the series, After Life.



Paranormal

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews has been reading books (forever) and writing reviews for any author of most any genre since 2014, with no apparent end in sight.

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews also has a new website. amysbookshelfreviews.com

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews does have other features and options for authors. Amy's Bookshelf Reviews even does Video Reviews.

For "legacy authors" (repeat authors) who want a review, just send an email, and you'll get your title on the VIP Legacy Author shelf, unless you are in a hurry and want another shelf to be on. -

For "legacy friends" (repeat representatives), who want reviews for their clients also have options, and some are already designated as priority or preferred legacy friends.

So, check out Amy's Bookshelf Reviews, and if you need assistance, there are how-to videos on navigation and how to request a review if you're a new author to the site.

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is a not-for-profit business and does not charge for reviews, but donations and gratuities are always welcome to keep the site up and running and to allow Amy's Bookshelf Reviews to purchase books to make the review a "verified purchase" on Amazon.com



UNCAGED BOOK REVIEWS

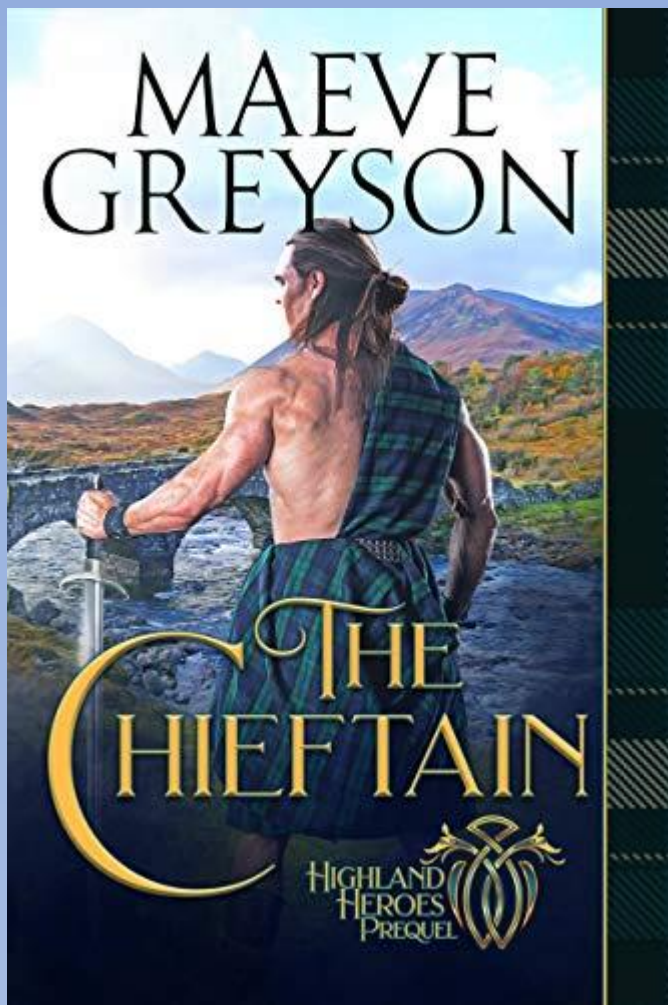
PROMOTING INDIE AND SMALL PUBLISHED SINCE 2016
UNCAGEDBOOKS.COM

The Chieftain
Maeve Greyson
Highlander Historical

5 Stars

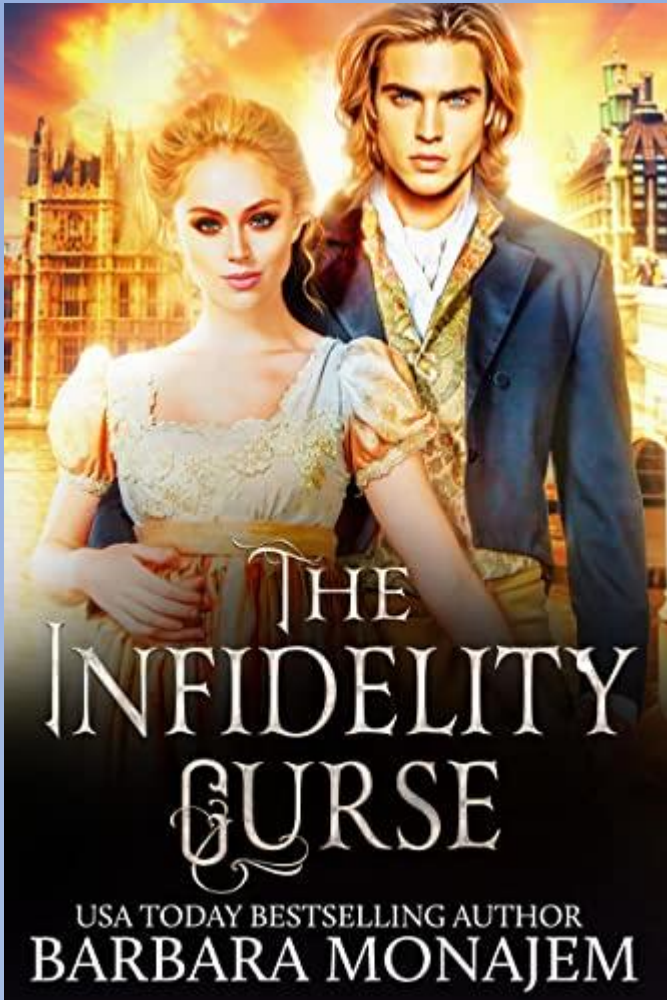
Alexander and his men live their life as mercenaries, since illness took away most of his clan. When he is on one of his missions, he is shot and taken to a clan where Catriona mends the injured and gives them sanctuary. But Catriona's brother is evil, and as the next in line to be chieftan, with a fast ailing father wants them gone.

This is a nicely paced Highlander, and it's been a minute or two since I read one. The romance between Catriona and Alexander is one that they must face danger and loss to get to their HEA. The secondary characters will each get their own turn at a story in the series and I'll keep reading. Eventually you come to a point in this book where you just want to read it all the way through, so make sure it's not a work day the next day.



Highlander Historical

The Infidelity Curse **Barbara Monajem**



Historical Regency

5 Stars

Lucretia was married off to an older, cruel man, and she endured his abuse for years before he died. Lucretia being pregnant, is fearful that the new guardian will try to take away her baby. But what she doesn't know, is that the older earl that Lucretia's dead husband, Sir Matthew had arranged had died before he did, so the guardianship went to his son, Giles.

This is a slow burn romance, and a lot of things come to light within the pages. There is romance, mystery and even danger. Lucretia and Giles will need to learn to trust each other and to love each other without curses or secrets. Secondary characters are engaging, and even the children in the story are likeable. Leave it to this author to come up with an original story and just the right amount of danger to sweep you deeper into the story.

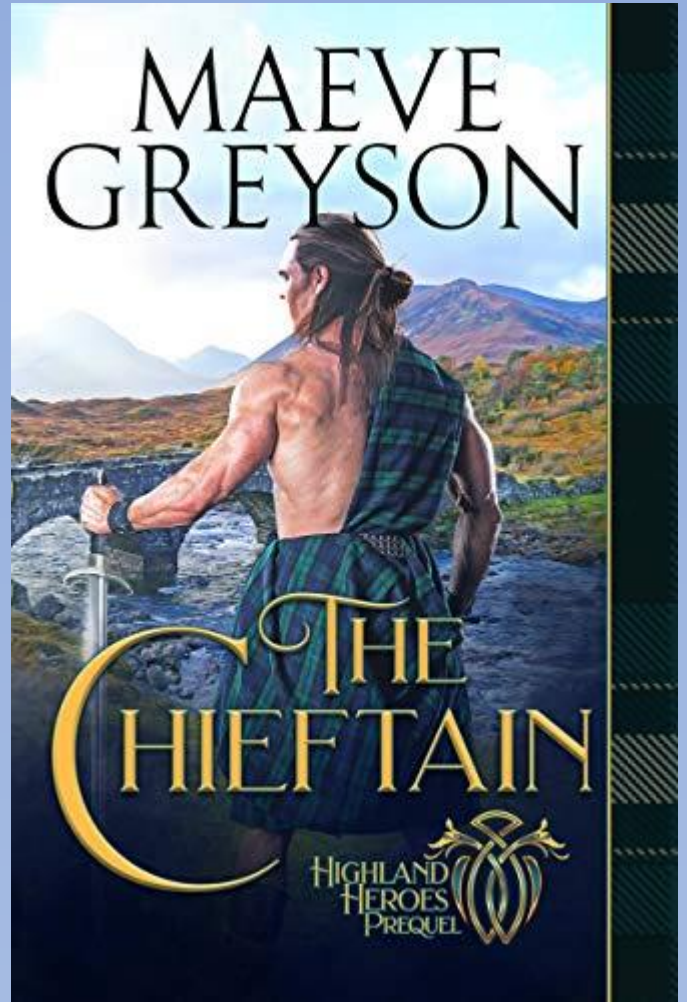
Bear's Dream

Christina Lynn Lambert

4 ½ Stars

This first book in a series is a good start, and the main characters are easy to like. Ellie leaves her job as she is being undermined in her work by a spiteful co-worker. A chance meeting with A.J., the shifter who killed her twin brother in a special op, shows her that he isn't the heartless man she always thought him to be. When A.J. offers her a job at a shifter resort that his brother and him are opening, Ellie takes the job because of being blackballed in her town.

This book has a good amount of danger, bad guys you will truly hate, and the romance heats up between A.J. and Ellie. As they come to know each other, their feelings grow stronger. But A.J. will find out the dark path Ellie's brother was going down before he was killed, will it destroy the relationship? Nice story with some fun moments, danger and hot sex scenes.



*Shifter
Romance*

Brightblade

Michael Suttkus & C.T. Phipps

4 Stars



Dark historical Fantasy

This is a start of a series that is a spin-off of sorts from others, set in the same world. I didn't read any of the other series, and had no trouble keeping up with this one. Ashley is a psychic with telekinetic abilities, and is working as a bounty hunter when we first meet her. In this world, Detroit has been taken over by the vampires and it's now known as New Detroit. The jobs in this supernatural underbelly are not career boosters by any stretch. As she works as a bounty hunter, she really sets out to find her missing brother, and along the way, she gets involved in a scheme to raise a vampire and get a magical wand that can cure vampirism. The supernaturals in this book are not the romanticized versions you see in other books, but they are also not complete monsters.

The cast of characters are well done, and for the most part, developed well enough that I could get a decent handle on them. My favorite has to be Zadkiel, Ashley's magical sword that has an angel embedded. Overall, I like the action and the series and am interested to see where it goes from this book.

Literary Professional Referrals



Essence Enterprises has rebooted the Literary Professional Services Bulletin Board. (If you were on the bulletin board on the old sites of The Official Blog of Amy Shannon, Amy's Bookshelf Reviews, and Genesis Book Promotions, your information has already been added to this new bulletin board).

Private Referral List (Free)

If you would like your services to be listed on my private referral list (which just means that it is NOT listed on the Bulletin board, but still in my list of services to be referred), still needs to be vetted, and the requirements to be on this list are the same for private and public referrals.

Bulletin Board (Public Referral list)
\$50.

If you would like your services to be listed on the (public referral) bulletin board, it must meet some requirements, and requires also a price of \$50 (US).

). This fee covers the bulletin board (you can have an image of your business card, or a list of your website, services, pricing link, etc... and a lifetime advertisement in Literate-Ly Magazine (for the life of the magazine).

Literary professionals include but are not limited to:

Publishers (any type)

Literary Agents

Literary Book Reviewers/Influencers

Literary Publicists

Literary Podcasts

Book Blog Companies

Cover Designers/Illustrators

Editors

Literary magazines

Literary Professional Referrals



Requirements for both lists:

To be on either the public or private referral list, the professional **MUST** meet these requirements:

- Been in business for at least 2 years
- If a new business, have been in the profession for at least 2 years.
- Have a professional website
- Have a portfolio (if illustrator, cover designer, etc.)
- Have a blog or website where reviews are posted (for book reviewers)
- Have at least one current client

If you wish to be on either list, email me at writeramyshannon@gmail.com and put either "private list" or "public list" in the subject line, along with your required information. Do not send any images at this time.

Once approved, you will be notified by email. If you're to be on the public list, you will receive an invoice from Essence Enterprises for the \$50 plus a \$5 billing fee. If you want an image for your advertisement, you can reply to the approval notification with the image.



Literacy Censorship

Book Censorship: *A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles



A Separate Peace is a horrific and brilliant fable about the dark side of adolescence set at a boys' boarding school in New England during the early years of World War II. Gene is an introverted, lonely intellectual. Phineas is a reckless athlete who is attractive and taunts others. Like the war itself, what happens between the two friends one summer robs these guys and their world of their innocence.

Several high schools banned the book *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles, mainly due to the reasoning of “offensive language” or “a trashy sex novel.”

The story was about two students, Glen and Phineas (Finny) who attend a boarding school. They become friends and then guilt over an accident that injures Finny, plagues Glen. He tries to admit his part in the “accident” that caused Finny to fall and shatter his leg. Eventually, Finny dies during surgery and Glen feels that he has become a part of him. The connection between the two characters, in an all boy’s school, raises controversy, as if the story had a sexual connotation or it used offensive or unsuitable language. The story is usually provided to high school students, and should be part of the curriculum. The discussion of the book with students should be open, not only to the story but also address the issues of why it is considered banned. Though there are curse words or vulgar words in the text, there is no use of the “F” word. In today’s classrooms, students speak worse than the words they may read in the book. A few giggles in the classroom because of the use of curse words do not mean that such a book, such a piece of literature should be banned. A classroom teacher should introduce the book and have the story read and discussed in an open discussion. The friendship between the two boys can be perceived in different ways, so the students should be allowed to be open about how they feel the connection between Glen and Finny relate to each other before and after Finny’s death.



Writing Tips

Authors, are your editions linked?



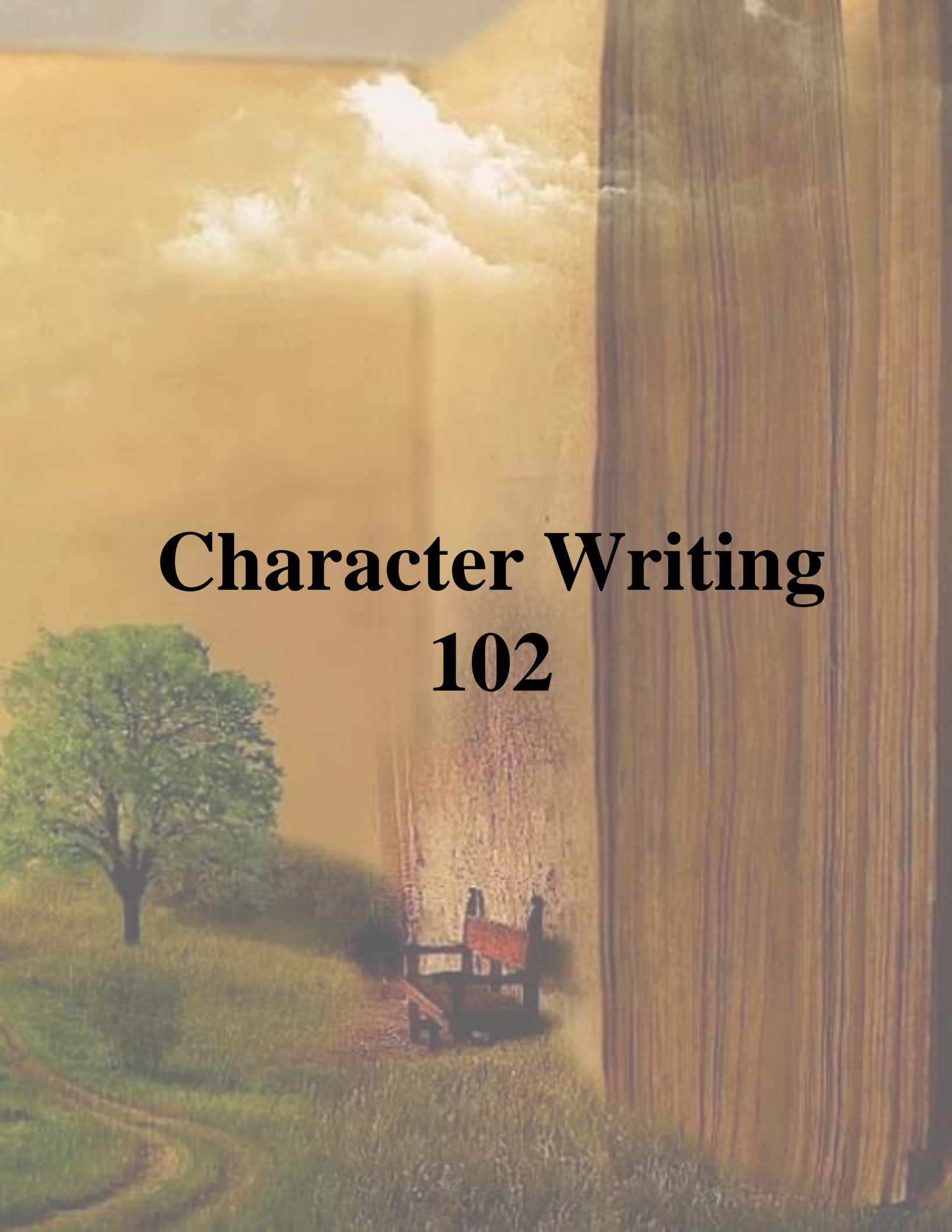
Authors, if you use Amazon to sell your books (self-published or otherwise), you should make sure that your editions of your books are linked to each other. What does this mean? It means when a reader goes to your book and can see there are editions for print, kindle and (maybe, audio). This is better than a reader who wants to read a paperback, but found the kindle edition and has to search again for the paperback version, if there is one.

Now, if you're only releasing in one format, this is obviously unnecessary. But, if you are among the authors, new or experienced, and have not even thought about connecting the editions, this is to show you that it's important and should be done.

Amazon is not the only one that links books together. Goodreads also allows the author to add new editions, even multiple printings and formats, and linking them together.

The process is not hard, and you can search the help menu at any of the sites, and they usually provide good information on how to do it.

This information is not about having an author page on amazon, but that is also helpful, so you can have all your books listed in one place, under your author/pen name. It also helps when authors have the same or similar names.

The background is a painting of a rural landscape. On the left, a large green tree stands in a field. In the center, a small house with a thatched roof is visible. A dirt path winds through the foreground. On the right side, a large, vertical wooden plank is superimposed over the scene, partially obscuring the landscape. The overall color palette is warm and golden, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

Character Writing 102

What's in a name? Character Development

One thing I find important, at least to me, is when I'm reading a book in first person point-of-view (POV), is to know the name of the character who is doing the narrating. Sometimes it takes pages for me to read to know who is doing the talking. If the reader can get a sense of the narrator, or if there are multiple first-person stories within the one book, the reader should know who is narrating and telling their perspective.

There are many ways to "gather" names, such as observation, people you know, people on social media pages, names of characters on television or in a movie, or even in a baby naming website or book (Yes, a real book).

The best part of naming the character is that the writer can change the name if it doesn't quite fit the story or the character itself. Maybe a nickname doesn't quite come out of the character as the writer wants.

Character qualities can also determine how a character is named, sometimes a name just "fits" the character, and other times, a writer may want to use the "opposite" to show uniqueness of the character.

When naming the character, speak the name out loud. How does it sound? Is the name too "soft" or "gentle" to fit the character, or is the name too "hard" or "rough" to fit the character? Does the name feel right for a villain or for a good guy? Is it a hero or heroine name?

Writers can select a name based on the name's meaning, and how it may fit the character. The name "Ajax" is a Greek word that means "eagle," and Achilles means "warrior." I'm not saying name a character Achilles, but the meaning may fit the story or the character, depending on what the writer is working on. And maybe Achilles would make a great name, and it could also be shortened to whatever you want, such as "Lee" or "Ace". A nickname does not have to be a common nickname; it can be whatever the writer or character feels is right.

All humans have names, so I believe that all characters should also have a name, even if it's just a first or last name.

First Names: First names are the identity of the character. Creating a character is like naming one of your children, but there are also differences. It should be thought out, and the name should or try to reflect a part of the character. Many times, in writing, as in real life, nicknames may take the place of a first name.

In my book, *Contrary Measures*, when I first started writing for the main character, I called her Emily but when I finished the first chapter, I realized that name did not fit the character. So, I renamed the main character to

What's in a name? Character Development

“Rayna,” which gives the name some strong qualities, but it is not the same as a name I came up with later in another book (more like Saga), and her name was Raina, but spelled differently, and for a specific reason (her parents named her *Raina* because she was conceived in the rain).

Observations: Writers may note names they hear in order to use them later. I’ve kept a names database, and found when creating characters, especially the main characters, I seem to have an unconscious liking to names that start with E or M, and am fond of the name (or variations) of the name Alexander (Alexis, Alex, Xander, etc....).

Sometimes the name says it all. My character *Sunshine Rainbow Savvy Macavoy*’s name says it all. It describes where she came from, and she calls it her “free love name.” She prefers to be called “Savvy,” and her friends and clients do call her that, but her family always calls her “Sunshine.” (She’s a woman who dresses like she just walked off the hippie commune she grew up in, and she’s also a private detective, who has authority issues, and sometimes she drinks too much).

Names of friends and family: Caution when using names of people familiar to the writer, sometimes readers (or even those with

The same name) believe the character is based on them or that is how the writer sees them. This can be difficult when the only thing like the real person is having the same name. Another way around this, the writer can take a name, and then change it. Such as using the same first initial of the name, but creating a different name, or using a name that rhymes with the name, such as using *Greg* instead of *Craig*.

Uniqueness: Some names are unique, as I showed in the example of *Savvy Macavoy*. A unique name can be one of an adjective, such as using *Savvy*, as I did, or in another case, I used names like *Essence* and *Edge*, who are children of a single father named “Ethan.”

The story may almost require uniqueness, or even “made up” names, that fit with the genre. Writers of science fiction (sci-fi), fantasy, paranormal or any genre like that, may lend to more creativeness of creating the character and his, her or *its* name.

Conversational Reflections: When using first names, especially in dialogue, think of how often names are said within conversation. Usually, in a real conversation, people rarely

What's in a name? Character Development

say each other's names during conversation. A person may be called by their name, if being called to, or in the start of the conversation. Also, how often does someone call you by your first name? In my house, I can say that my kids call me mom (sometimes my son calls me "woman" as a term of endearment, and maybe legacy as I did that to my mother). I hardly hear someone call me by my real name, and when someone does, it's the start of a conversation.

Surnames: Surnames are just important or maybe more important to get right than the first name. Some genres, such as crime or police procedurals may refer to people as their last name, or their rank and last name, or a nickname derived out of their surname, rarely using the first name.

Writers should also think of the character's background, race, nationality or origin. A character that is supposed to be Italian, will probably have an Italian first and last name, unless there is something that lends to it being different. Also, when a son is named after his father, in Italian, that son is not considered Junior, but may be called "Sonny." In my saga, there are characters, Terry and Carey Markum, brothers. They think they are half Italian, because of an Italian mother, but later discover they have

a father they didn't know about, and he is Italian. This information adds to the name *Markum* not being of Italian descent, and then the men try to figure out if they should keep their name or change it to their rightful surname name. It also lends to a story about identity and wondering about their past.

If writing for characters with a background that is unfamiliar to the writer, research should be done, and when the research is done, it should be done with several different sources, not just "Google," or another popular search engine. There may be at least one person reading the story who knows if it makes sense or not.

Historically, some surnames were derived based on the occupation of the head of the household, such as Smith (for a smith, which refers to some type of craftsman), Shepard, or even Farmer. A writer can create a specific surname to help describe the character the writer is writing for. In a story I wrote (in a different pen name), "Ten Shades of Black & Blue" by Royal Henry Bleu (my alter ego), the serial killer is named "Drake Hunt." The Hunt character is hunting down abusers and killing them.

Some names are more common, such as Smith, Jones, Williams, Taylor, etc. A study about the "Most common surnames in Britain and Ireland revealed," (BBC, 2016), showed

What's in a name? Character Development

that more than 80% common surnames were native to the UK and Ireland. “Smith (more than 400,000 bearers according to the 1881 census, compared with 500,000 today), Jones (more than 300,000 in 1881; currently 400,000), Williams (just over 200,000 in 1881, nearly 300,000 now), Brown and Taylor (both just under 200,000 in 1881, now more than 250,000), Johnson (just over 100,000 in 1881, now more than 150,000), and Lee (just under 50,000 in 1881, now nearly 84,000).” (BBC, 2016).

Writers can do an internet search on surnames and origins.

Nicknames/pet names: There are many reasons for giving a character a nickname or pet name. The pet name is from one part of a couple to another part of a couple, or something that a parent may call their child, or child calls their parent (and I'm sure there are other reasons as well). When creating a pet name or using the common pet names such as “honey, hun, baby, darling, dear, etc...” it is important to know who the pet name refers to, and if it is consistent. There may be a reason behind more than just out of love or whatever. In some regions, some pet names may be more common than others, or in some cultures, individual pet names may be only common for their culture.

Nicknames are also derived in real life, so behind the fictional story, there should be some nicknames, when it feels appropriate. It is also important to let the reader know that *so and so*, is named one thing but called another, and maybe give a reason why. Nicknames can be derivatives of their birth name, such as shortening a name, or a name the character prefers over their real

What's in a name? Character Development

name. Giving a back story or reason behind the nickname can add to the plot of the story.

Example: In my MOD Life Epic Saga, Terry usually refers to his wife, Raina, as “Doc” (mainly because she’s a doctor,) and she calls him “Baby,” or “Terry”), and only calls him by his full name, “Terrence,” when she is angry with him or wants his attention. In the same Saga, Alex refers to her husband Jim, as “Babe” and he calls her “Angel.” She’ll only call him “James,” when she needs his attention. He only calls her by her birth name,” Alexis Jane,” when he needs to make a point.

In my *Passionate Retribution* series, the main character “Carly” is called “Ki-Ki” by her best friends, Derek and Peter, but called “Caroline” (her birth name) by her father and aunt.

Raina or Rayna is sometimes shortened to “Ray,” as is “Raymond.” There are cases when two characters share a name, but the name can be spelled differently to differentiate the characters, or it shortens one name while the other remains its full name.

In my MOD Life Epic Saga, Jim has a grandson named after him, but his grandson is called “James.” Jim’s son, Matthew is referred to “Matt” or “Matty,” while his other father is called “Matthew.” There are also two

Characters who have the same sounding name, such as a female character “Karrie” and a male character “Carey.” The two don’t get mistaken for each other. In one case, I had a character named John, and another named John that had passed away. When the “deceased” character reappeared, I had the current John, die. I don’t rewrite history; I make room for what would be a better plot.

One thing that writers like to do is create unique spellings for standard or common names, and that is fun and creative. Nicknames, first names, or even pet names should not be overly complicated, and hopefully the reader will also be able to pronounce it. This can also go for names from other cultures or origins that are spelled or pronounced a certain way. Some writers make allowances for this information by creating a list or a “glossary” of sorts, at the beginning of the story to show how to pronounce some of the names.

A painting of a rural landscape, viewed through a window with a wooden frame. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the foreground, a dirt path winds through a field of tall grass. To the left, a large, leafy green tree stands prominently. In the middle ground, a small, rustic house with a thatched roof is visible. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall atmosphere is peaceful and nostalgic.

Short Story

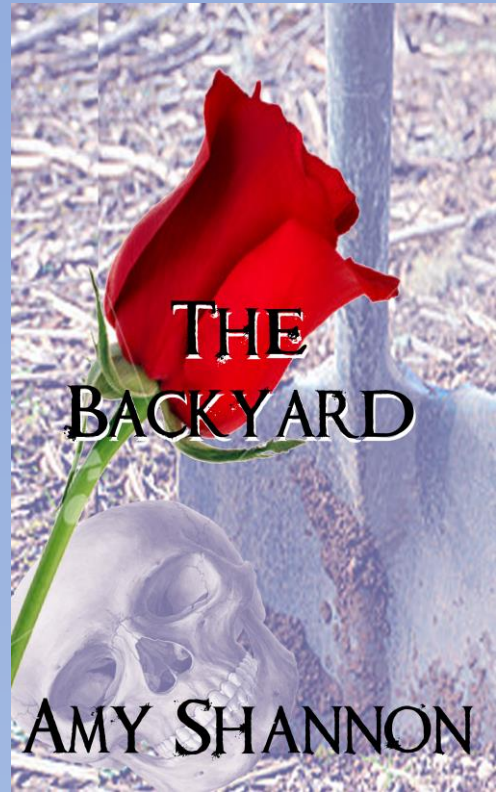
The Backyard by Amy Shannon (Part II)

Part 3

George

It was a quiet night of writing again. I tried so hard to gain something, some inspiration, but nothing came. I closed my eyes to let my fingers lead the keys where my mind wanted to go, but a sudden break in the silence interrupted my writer's block. I stood up and walked over to the window. The window in my office faced my back yard, but still, I couldn't see over that eight-foot fence. I opened my window a crack, just to see if there was anything behind the shadows of that fence. There was about an inch between the ground and stained planks that made up the fence. I could see the shadow linger down the line, it was slow, and parts seemed long. I couldn't imagine what it was, but it did sound like something was being dragged. I don't know why my neighbor, Lyle, made me curious, but he did. Something about him, drew me to him, but I wasn't quite sure if that was a good thing or not.

I remembered how some of my large bags of seed and feed for my lawn were heavy and I dragged them, too, so I just assumed that's what it was. He was feeding his roses. Made me more curious about those roses. I'm sure they were glorious, and I could imagine exact and precise straight rows of different but pure-bred roses. I don't think he would be a hybrid-rose person, but I could be wrong. Something about Lyle has a purity to it, and purity doesn't always mean good, it can mean anything.



I'm sitting here, thinking of my neighbor, when I should be wondering who the killer in my story is going after next. I've done my studying of sociopaths and psychopaths, but this story needs something more, something gritty, with an MO and signature unlike other serial killers, but fitting the mold of a serial killer. My mind should focus on this story, but the shadows from the outside are drawing me in.

Again, I am drawn to the window, wondering what Lyle could be dragging, be digging, be ... doing in his back yard. I wonder just how many roses does this man have? This curiosity is killing me. It'd driving me nuts. The shadow makes me nervous, does he realize I'm staring out the window into the darkness of my yard? Does he know I'm focused on his shadow? If he knew, what would he do? This is ridiculous.

The Backyard by Amy Shannon (Part II)

My curiosity sent me to the kitchen, grabbing the bottle of whiskey off the counter, and I poured about an ounce into my coffee cup. At night, nothing like a mix of caffeine and booze to keep the inspiration flowing, but tonight, it was all about the curiosity. I set the coffee maker up again, after pouring the last bit into my cup. I turned it on again, knowing this would be a long night. I opened the door that led to the back yard, wondering if the bit of light from the dim light kitchen would show focus as I walked out to the back porch. The fresh air was plummeted by something, something foul in the air. I'm not sure what the stench was, but it was definitely something rotten, smelled like something dead, probably a dead animal or something.

I stepped back into the kitchen and was about to close the door when I heard the distinct breaking of the soil by a shovel. I could hear it almost sing as it dug into the dirt. Then, I closed the door quickly, like I could feel him staring at me through the fence. Lyle made me feel uneasy, but so damned curious about him. It wasn't attraction. I'm definitely not attracted to his physique, though he was quite built, uh, for a guy, but something about him drew me to him. Scared the hell out of me, but also intrigued me. Yes, Lyle was some kind of character that I felt I needed to dissect and figure out. Yes, there was something about Lyle, and I wanted to get to know him,

better, inside, and out. I drank down my now cold coffee and whiskey and poured another cup. Something inspired me to sit down right away at my typewriter. The words came to me, almost merrily. I could hear Lyle's whistling in the distance. Beethoven or something. Then, yes, right on cue, the polka started up. It got louder and louder. I think I figured out his pattern. Didn't matter, I wrote all night, with the great inspiration of Lyle and whatever he was doing in his backyard. Somehow, I had to find out, if only to finish my story.

Part Four

George

Another night of writing, and the few hours I slept after that long wonderous night, I felt very refreshed. I also had great dreams, and though I don't remember all of them, I remember that Lyle had a starring role. I don't know why this man intrigued me, and I felt so drawn to him. It had been a while since I've been drawn to something, someone. In my travels here, my long car ride, I've met the occasional stranger, and we connected. Connected on a deep level, but it never lasted. I never wanted it to last. Those blue eyes that drew me in, were only just the beginning of my connection with the strangers. I've, of course, left them behind, and they helped enhance my story, but this one, is all about Lyle. I had to figure out what he was doing and how it compared to

The Backyard by Amy Shannon (Part II)

what my imagination thought as I wrote about the neighbor and his back yard. Something was pulling me toward his yard, and I knew, somehow, he was pulled toward mine. I needed to make my yard impressive, something no one would dare to want to look beneath the soil, beautiful at its face value. Hmm, what could I do.

As I sat on the sofa and tried to gain what the news anchor was telling me about the forecast, I heard a rumble of his motorcycle. I immediately jumped to my feet. I didn't realize Lyle had a *Harley*, but when I looked out the window, it was more magnificent than I imagined. The black and red bike glistened as Lyle, dressed in leather pants, and a leather vest that hardly covered his bare chest, straddled the seat. His blue eyes stared in my direction as he put on the helmet and dropped the eye shield. Yes, he must've known I was watching him. I think he must think that I wanted him, and I did, but not for sex, for something else. I needed him for the story.

He slowly pulled out of his driveway, being cautious and not reckless as I would expect him to be and rode down the street toward the main road. I could hear the roar of that magnificent twin cam engine of that piece of art. He was out of sight, and the roar dwindled the further away he rode. Now, was my chance, and I don't know why, but I had to do it. I had to see his back yard.

I slipped on my sneakers and hurried toward the back door. I went out to my porch and looked around the yard for something, something that would allow me to peer over the fence. No, I couldn't go on his property, but I had to look. That nasty decomposing scent would've disgusted anyone, but me, it drew me in, as it contrasted the scent of the roses emitting from his garden. I had to see his rose garden. I couldn't see anything in the yard I could use, but I remember the garage. The previous owner must've left a few things here, and one was a ladder. I hurried to the garage and grabbed the large step ladder. I carried it carefully to the far end of my yard and set it against the fence. I carefully climbed it, eventually peering over into his back yard. I was astonished by the seven rows of roses, red, white, purple, pink, yellow, blue, and even a row of black roses. Long rows, taking up the almost the half acre that made his back yard. The bushes were close together, but it looked like there were some areas that just had holes that needed to be dug. I looked around and noticed that there was something strange, close to the house. A pile, pile of compost, and round objects that looked similar to rotting pumpkins or something, no, wait, they looked like heads, but that couldn't really be heads, right? I went to lean forward and get a better look, but one of the rungs of the ladder gave way, and I fell to the ground.

I don't know how long I was out, but I woke

The Backyard by Amy Shannon (Part II)

up to the roaring of that twin cam engine of his bike, pulling into his driveway. I slowly sat up, and noticed the ladder, lying on the ground next to me. I could feel the warm blood drip down my face, so I wiped it away with my sleeve. I stared at the blood on my sleeve as I stood up, and when I got to my feet, I noticed him there, standing in my yard.

“See anything interesting?” he asked.

“Actually, not what I thought it would be,” I responded.

“What did you think?” he stepped closer to me. “Oh, you’re bleeding,” he pointed to my forehead.

“Yeah, no big deal. Damn ladder.” I started walking toward the house, and he grabbed my arm. “What’s this?” I looked at his hand as he gripped my arm.

“You know what happens to nosy neighbors?”

“You make them listen to polka?” I grunted.

“You know?” his eyes grew wide, and I could see those beautiful clear blue eyes staring back at me.

“I know enough,” I commented. “You’re perfect.” I shrugged his hand off my arm.

“Perfect? For what? I’m not gay, you know,” Lyle said.

“Never said you were,” I smiled. “I was curious, so I looked. No big deal. I knew there was something amazing about you. As I said, you’re perfect.”

“Again with being perfect?” Lyle stepped closer. “I could invite you over for polka and gardening.” He sneered.

Yes, I knew he was trying to scare me. I felt this connection with Lyle, but he was going to be a challenge. He liked what I liked, except he didn’t tell his story. I did. As with anything, I not only write what I know, but what I want to know, and what I want to know, I do. I experience.

Maybe he would. I wanted to experience it to the end, just what he had planned. I just had to get the story out. I had to figure out how it would end. “Maybe,” I smiled. “I have work to do.” I headed to my house without looking back, but I could feel his eyes on me. I closed the door behind me and leaned back against the door. I never took my storytelling home with me, I just wrote about it later. The inspirations, the connections, but I think it was time, I learned from someone else’s experience.

I headed to my office and sat down behind the typewriter. I just got more inspiration, and I continued to write, even though the blood lightly dripped and then dried down my face. It gave me inspiration.

As I finished typing the last line of the second to last chapter, I stared at the words, *the music played louder and louder, drowning out the shovel*

The Backyard by Amy Shannon (Part II)

digging, and screams of the spirit as it descended to hell. I wasn't sure what else would happen, but there was at least one more chapter to finalize this story. I was surprised that I didn't need the night owls to howl while I wrote. I stood up quickly when the door knocking startled my thoughts.

Yes, it was Lyle. I remember his eyes staring at me, and then, it went blank

Part Five

George

It went blank, for Lyle. I invited him in, and when I was shutting the door, he turned around quickly, as if to inject me with whatever that clear liquid with a slight yellow tinge was in the syringe he tried to plunge into me. My hand raised up, grabbed his forearm, and the other hand cracked him in the side of his head. He was very surprised, as he dropped to the floor in unconsciousness.

It wasn't how I planned, but I needed to experience Lyle, first hand. I have no idea what that pale yellow liquid is, but I had to find that out, too. I pocketed the syringe, and then grabbed Lyle's legs, dragging him into the kitchen. I used the duct tape, taping his feet together, along with his arms, behind his back. I even pressed a fresh piece of the durable gray tape across his face.

I wasn't planning on this, but it was the perfect way to curb my curiosity. When I finally moved here, I picked this road for a purpose. Very little neighbors. Now, I didn't realize that I'd have such a distracting yet interesting neighbor, but I knew the lay out of the road.

I searched his jeans pockets, pulling out his wallet and keys. He had a simple plastic key chain with the logo *Polka Town* in red letters printed on it. The ring contained his house key, the key to his car and motorcycle, and two keys that looked like they belonged to some padlock. I shoved those in my pocket. I brought his wallet to my office and sat down at my desk. I opened the bottom drawer, pulling out an old shoe box, filled with the wallets of my travel connections. I dropped in the wallet, and then closed it up. I had business to take care of, so I returned to the kitchen.

Lyle was gone. At least his body wasn't lying unconscious on my kitchen floor. The only sign that he was there was the torn pieces of gray duct tape lying on the floor. Then, I heard his footsteps behind me, the scent of bleach overwhelmed my senses, and then, it went dark, yet I could feel the pain and burning of the deep cleansing of my veins. I wanted to scream, but I didn't. I couldn't.

I knew my curiosity would be satisfied, if not the way I wanted, the way I planned, but it would be satisfied.

Part III and the conclusion in next month's Issue.



Kevin M. Sullivan- Ted Bundy: The Yearly Journal

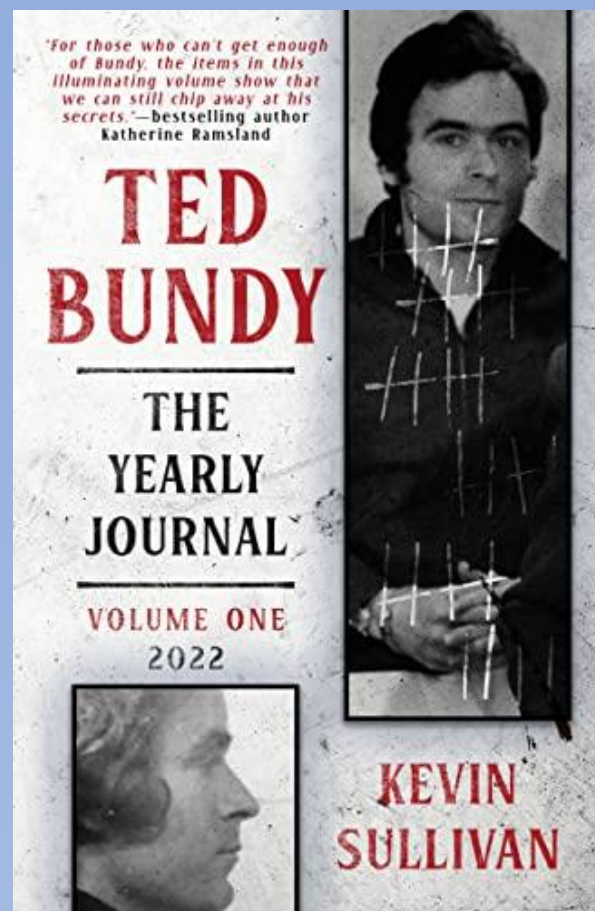
Due to Kevin Sullivan's extensive writing about Ted Bundy (which has produced six books), he's become a sort of magnet over the years, drawing out many people who were part of the Bundy story, but have otherwise kept a low profile over the decades; and these first-person contacts continue to this day. As such, this is the first book in a new series of books, whose aim is to bring new revelations to the public about Bundy, the victims, the murders, and the almost murders that failed Bundy for one reason or another.

Find more about Kevin Sullivan at <https://wildbluepress.com/true-crime-author-kevin-m-sullivan/>

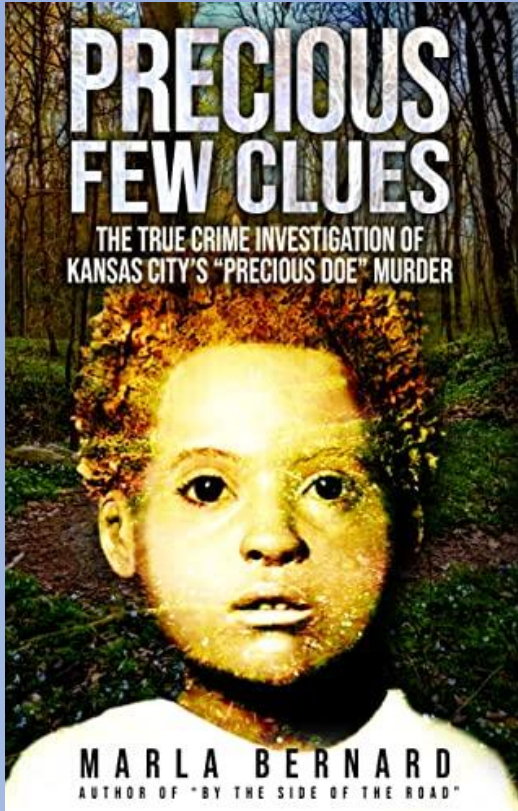
4 Stars

There is always more to learn

Kevin M. Sullivan writes about Ted Bundy, the infamous serial Killer in Ted Bundy: The Yearly Journal. I am a fan of true crime stories. This is the second book written by this author that I've read. Sullivan is pretty much an expert on Ted Bundy, having had written at least 6 books about Bundy, his crimes, and his victims. He feels there is always more to learn about Bundy, and there is a lot of information he gathered over the years. He also writes this book, because there are many people that were involved in this case, one way or the other, that are no longer around. This book was written very well. He talks about the discussions and interviews with Bundy, and how sometimes, he would say something cryptic or make an obscure comment to someone, and it may not have been revealed yet, or realized it was some important clue to help discover more of his crimes that he had yet to confess to. Bundy has admitted to abducting and killing 30 women and girls, but the authorities feel that there are a lot more he never discussed. Maybe exceeding 40 or 50. Sullivan writes, "During one of Bundy's third-person confessions prior to his true, end-of-life confessions of murder, he mentioned a serial killer (himself) who was responsible for the deaths of a half dozen young girls. So, whatever the true number happens to be, we can all safely say there are more murder victims he's responsible for than the total he gave at the end." I applaud Sullivan for sharing the stories of Bundy, as going into the mind of a depraved man, isn't the easiest thing to do, let alone dissect.



Marla Bernard - PRECIOUS FEW CLUES: The True Crime Investigation Of Kansas City's "Precious Doe" Murder



On an unseasonably warm April evening in 2001, the headless body of a tiny girl was found discarded in a makeshift dump site in the woods on the southeast side of Kansas City, Missouri.

One long night turned into four long years for Sgt. David Bernard and the Kansas City Police Department's 1020 Squad. They followed 1,500 leads, had a replica of the child's head sculpted from her skull, and ultimately conducted the single most extensive area canvass in the KCPD's history.

Erica Michelle Marie Green, aka "Precious Doe," captured the hearts of not only the dedicated detectives who fought tirelessly to identify her and her killer but of an entire community.

Find more about Marla Bernard at <https://wildbluepress.com/marla-bernard-author/>

5 Stars

One of the most horrific crimes ever!

Marla Bernard writes about the Precious Doe Murder in PRECIOUS FEW CLUES: The True Crime Investigation Of Kansas City's Precious Doe Murder. I am a fan of true crime stories, but this one really broke my heart, especially as being a mother, and having been a survivor of domestic violence. This is the first book written by this author that I've read. The story goes back to 2001, the story of Erica Green, but for most she was referred to as Precious Doe, because when her tiny body was found, she had been decapitated, so she wasn't identified right away. This book was written very well, details about not just the case, the clues, the perpetrators, but how everyone involved in this case was affected. I have heard stories of a broken system, abused children that are reported to social services, but yet, go on being abused. This struck me not just as terrifying and almost screaming how can someone do this to a child? but as a mother and a survivor, who would die first before letting any of my children be harmed. A few days after her body was found, her head was found wrapped in a trash bag! Yes, a trash bag. In 2005, her mother and stepfather were arrested, and in 2008, they were both convicted and sent to prison. This is a case that hit home for a lot of people, especially Sgt. David Bernard, and his wife, the author of this book

Michael Morford and Michael Ferguson- The Case of the Golden State Killer

By the creators of Criminology: a complete chronicle of the Golden State serial killer investigation, including photographs and documents.

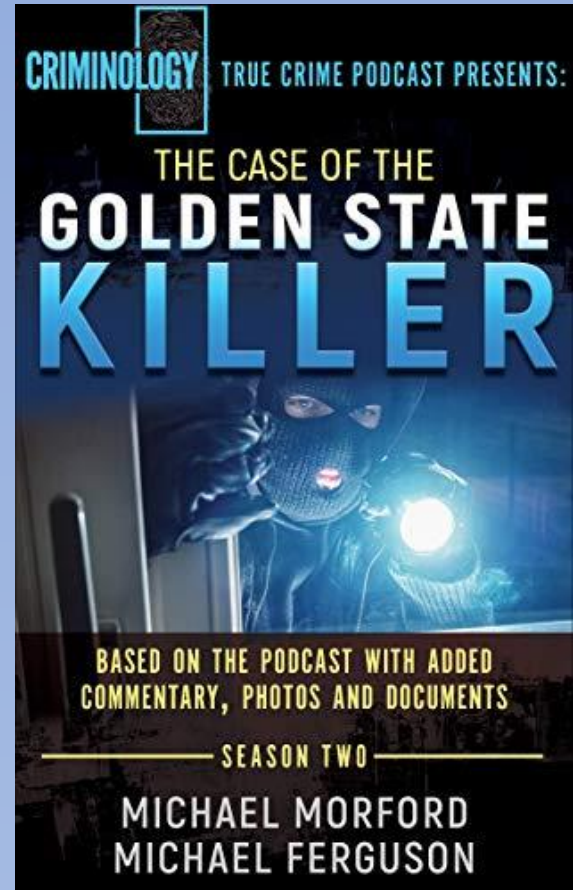
In 1976, a serial rapist terrorized California's Sacramento County, breaking into homes and leaving a trail of destruction behind him. As the masked predator expanded his turf, his evil urges drove him to murder. In Northern California, he was known as the East Area Rapist. In Southern California, he was called the Original Night Stalker. When his crimes were finally connected, he would become known as the Golden State Killer. By 1986, he had committed a staggering tally of crimes, including at least 12 murders.

Find more about **Michael Morford and Michael Ferguson-** at <https://wildbluepress.com/new-true-crime-book-life-golden-state-killer/>

5 Stars

The solving of this case was long overdue

Michael Morford and Michael Ferguson writes about the rape and murders in The Case of the Golden State Killer. I am a fan of true crime stories. This is the second book written by these authors that I've read. They have a podcast, and after reading their work, I will definitely tune in to "Criminology True Crime Podcast." This is the story of a rapist and killer who was known by many names, Original Night Stalker, Visalia Ransacker, East Area Rapist, and then the Golden State Killer. It was only after there was DNA testing that linked many cases from around the Sacramento area, and then moving forward. The book details the investigations, how the cases were linked, and all of his crimes, as they didn't always include murder. The photographs and case documents can be disturbing, but also interesting. A note, that in 2018, Joseph James DeAngelo Jr. was charged with kidnapping and abductions, since the rapes from the 1970's statute of limitations had ended. He made a plea deal and plead guilty to several counts of murder and kidnapping, and was spared the death penalty. He got life without parole. This book was written very well. These authors write with dignity to the victims, and share aspects without too much emotion, which needs to be removed, but respect isn't removed from the writing. The Case of the Golden State Killer is a definite recommendation by





Recommended Children's Books

Mark Poe- Danny and the Dreamweaver: A Mysteriously Artful Fantasy

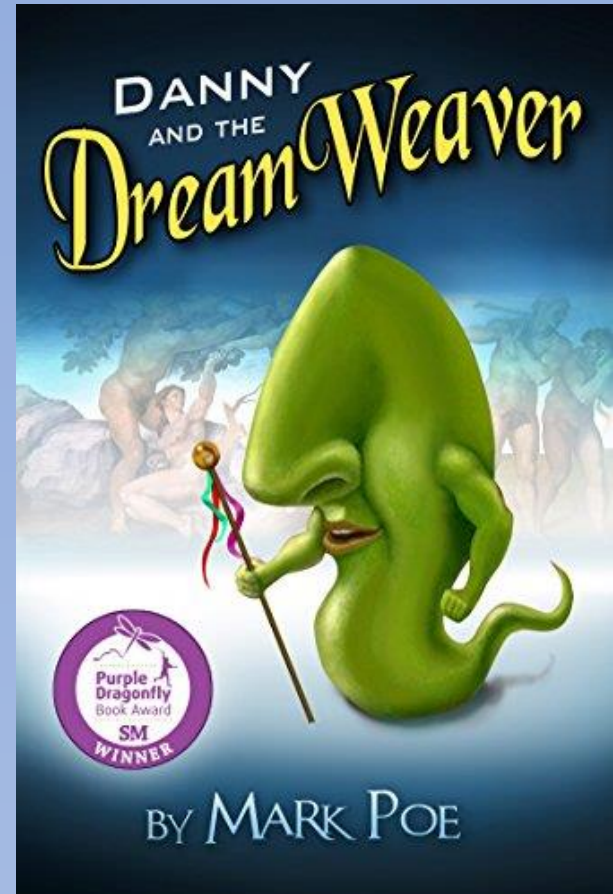
Danny is a ninth-grade, video game junky with an attitude. He daydreams in school and has a long-standing rivalry with his neighbor.

Yet Danny soon finds himself ensnared in a bizarre dream, one orchestrated by Nostrildamus; an odd-looking creature with a huge nose and no eyes yet can somehow see into the future.

Taken on a time-traveling hunt to solve an art-related mystery, Danny meets wacky looking artists, including Michelanjello, Hippopotamus Bosch and Jackson Polyp, while Nostrildamus tries to impart subtle pearls of wisdom.

Yet, what effect, if any, will all this have on Danny?

Find more about **Mark Poe-** at <http://richdisilvio.com>



4 Stars

Entertaining read.

Mark Poe writes a mysterious middle grad tale with Danny and the Dreamweaver. The reader is introduced to Danny, a very cocky young man who believes that school is boring, and scoffs at anything his teacher tries to teach. He seems like the typical ninth grader, hooked on video games, and daydreams in school instead of listening. Then, Danny enters the dream world, and meets Nostrildamus, a dream weaver, who tells him stories. Danny isn't part of his own dream, he's watching it as if the stories told were movies. I like that Mark Poe has some interesting sketches in the story, giving it a little extra delve into the reader's imagination. Nostrildamus is a large nose-like figure without eyes, but can see and show Danny the future. Danny follows the dream weaver on this time traveling adventure to solve a mystery, and the story is quite humorous. This author brings the story to life. A genuine character driven story!

Karl Beckstrand - Samuel Sailing: The True Story of an Immigrant Boy

Eleven-year-old Samuel can barely contain his excitement to sail with his family from South Africa to live in the United States—then he contracts typhoid fever.

World War I has broken out. Samuel's parents have sold their business, their home—everything—to purchase passage on a freighter to the USA. Now their boy is in the hospital; and even if he lives, no ship will let him aboard for several weeks. Meanwhile, Atlantic crossings may not be possible for long.

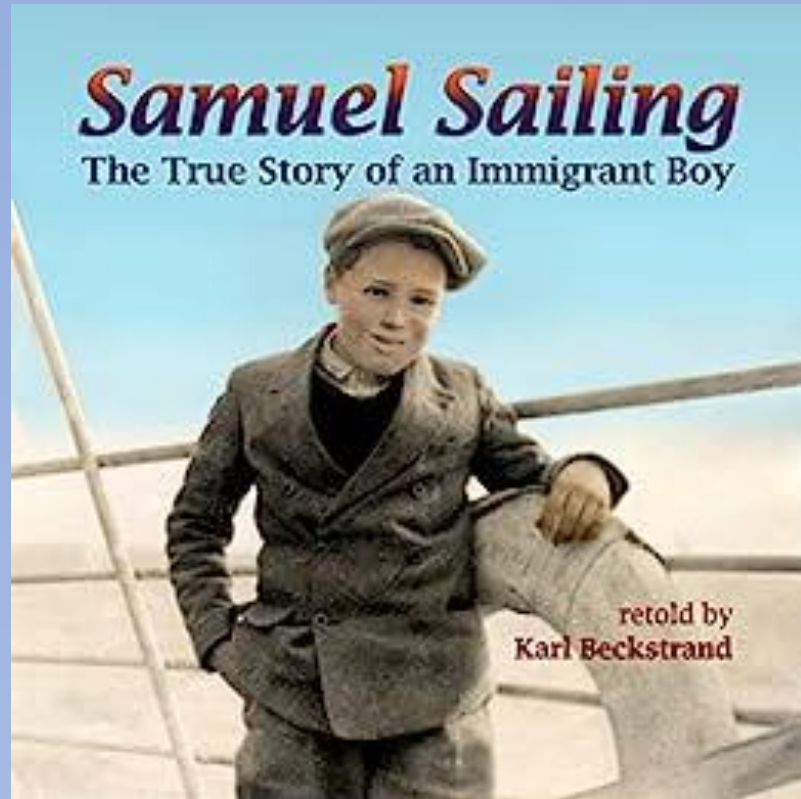
Experience this family's heart-wrenching choice and its consequences through the eyes of the brave child who lived it. Stories of real immigrant children fascinate readers and transcend culture and time (35 pages/70 vintage images for children ages 6 – 11 years, 1st – 6th grades, ESL/ELL/ESOL/ESE).

Find out more about Karl Beckstrand at <http://KarlBeckstrand.com>

4 Stars

An interesting journey for a new life

Beckstrand pens a wonderful true story in *Samuel Sailing: The True Story of an Immigrant Boy*. This is book four in the *Young American Immigrants* series. I've read all of them now, and they are standalone stories, but all are amazing journeys about young children that immigrate to America and have harrowing experiences. These are true stories that are written through the perspective of the children. Beckstrand shares the story and retells it, as this one is about Samuel Martin Beckstrand. The story is told through words and old photographs that document a family's history and travels. It was a poignant and heart-filling story, even with the obstacles, it was also about survival. Survival and living, real living, and the longing to find that new place, a place called home.



Audiobook-**John Holmes- Lily Upshire is Winning**



A young teenager without parents or siblings, Lily Upshire takes the world on her own terms. When she finds something wrong with her favorite drink, she just wants the big company that made it to say sorry to her. But the adults in her life have other ideas, seeing everything in terms of money. As the company makes ever more extravagant overtures to avoid apologizing to her, she remains unmoved. She's more concerned with what makes her life miserable: the school bullies, most of her teachers, and the scammers and catfish online. To gain self-confidence, she begins boxing lessons. When she realizes her name is more important to the world than she is, she hits upon an idea that changes everything. The once-solid walls of the behemoth corporation slowly begin to melt.

Find out more about John Holmes at <https://johnholmesauthor.com/>

4 Stars

Great Listen!

John Holmes tells a YA satirical tale with *Lily Upshire is Winning*. I haven't listened to anything from this author before, and I really enjoyed it. I did read the print version of the story, and enjoyed it, but I also really enjoyed this audiobook. The listener is introduced to Lily Upshire, a young orphan without any support at all. She is strong-willed and has to deal with a lot of issues that can affect any teenager, adults not paying attention to her, school bullies, and teachers. Lily doesn't have a lot in her life, but here, she finds out that something is wrong with her normal drink that she loves. She lets the company know, to no avail. She knows what she needs to do to pull out her inner strength. She is a tenacious young woman, who is the only one in the world who will take care of her. The characters are so real, it's like being with them within the story. It's a great story to follow and try to figure out what will happen next. Lily is one character I won't soon forget. This narration really brought this story to life. This book deserves both a read and a listen!



AMY'S BOOKSHELF REVIEWS

**AMY'S
PICKS OF THE
MONTH**

©2022 Essence Publishing Images

L. Diane Wolfe- In Darkness: The Shark

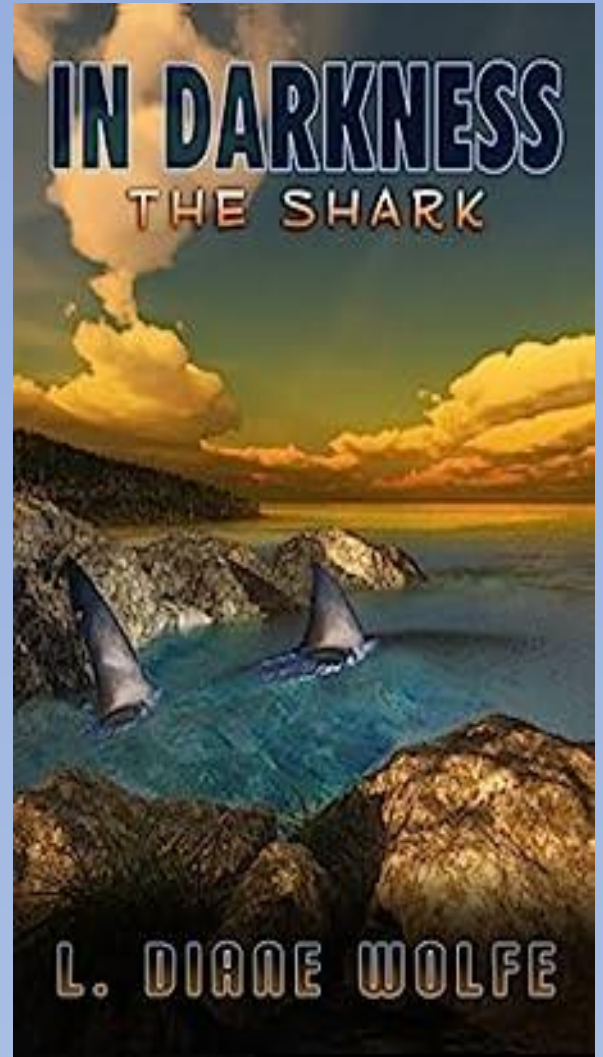
Genre: Paranormal
Series: In Darkness
Volume: 3

About In Darkness: The Shark
Souls shrouded in darkness...

Focused on her studies and duties at the aquarium, Jewels prefers her solitary life. Burned many times and short on trust, she has more in common with her aquatic friends than the people around her. But she never imagined coming face to face with a shark named Clarence...a shark who talks!

As their friendship grows, Jewels must overcome her deep set mistrust. There are dangers, both in the Australian ocean and on dry land. Can Jewels depend on the great white or will his animal nature betray her?

Find more about L. Diane Wolfe at <http://www.spunkonastick.net/>



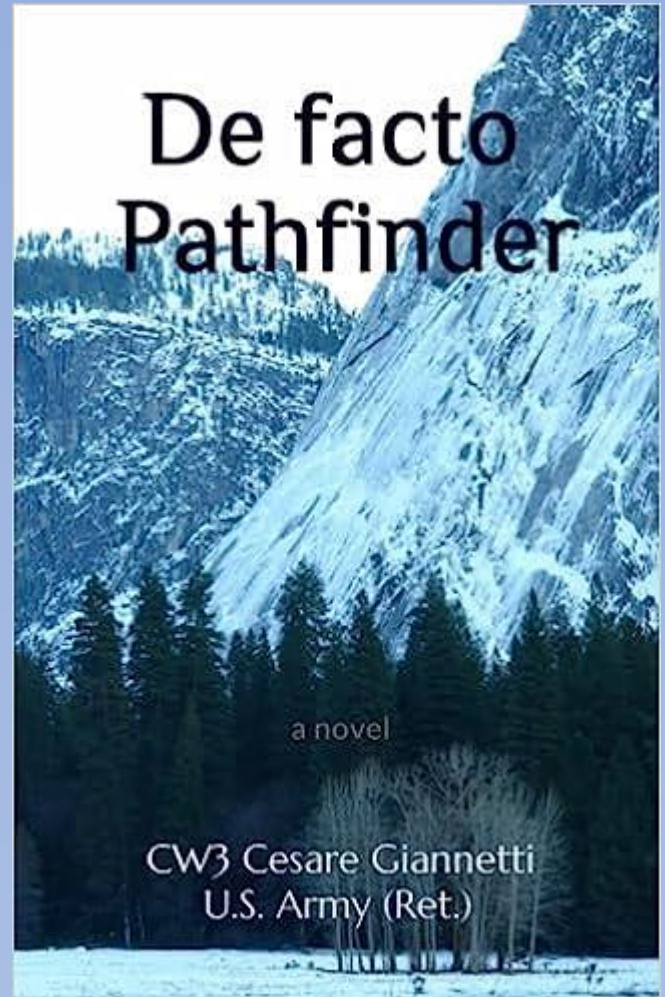
CW3 Cesare Giannetti U.S. Army (Ret.) - De facto Pathfinder

Genre: F/Military/Veterans

Chris Longo served in the military for five years, but that was two decades ago. Today he's just a regular middle-aged man working at a dull state-run veteran agency. After feeling disillusioned that he's not making a real difference there, he decides to quit and seek a new start. Yet only months later, he's contacted by his old employer and the DoD. He is told his interaction with the veterans were of great value. He's asked to lead a national pilot program that would have him traveling around the country to counsel some veterans in dire need who have lost their way. His mission: help them find their path back. He accepts the job of "De facto Pathfinder"—the title he conjured up since the position didn't even have one yet. On his journey, Chris will meet some interesting people and see some beautiful country. But most importantly, he will discover these veterans' pain and struggles and how each has a gift. And that together, they may all find their path back.

Find more about CW3 Cesare Giannetti U.S.
Army at

<https://www.amazon.com/stores/CW3-Cesare-Giannetti-U.S.-Army-%28Ret.%29/author/B07CSDXW2K>



Ed Borowsky- It's a Good Day to Liquidate

Genre: Crime/Drama/Organized Crime

About It's a Good Day to Liquidate

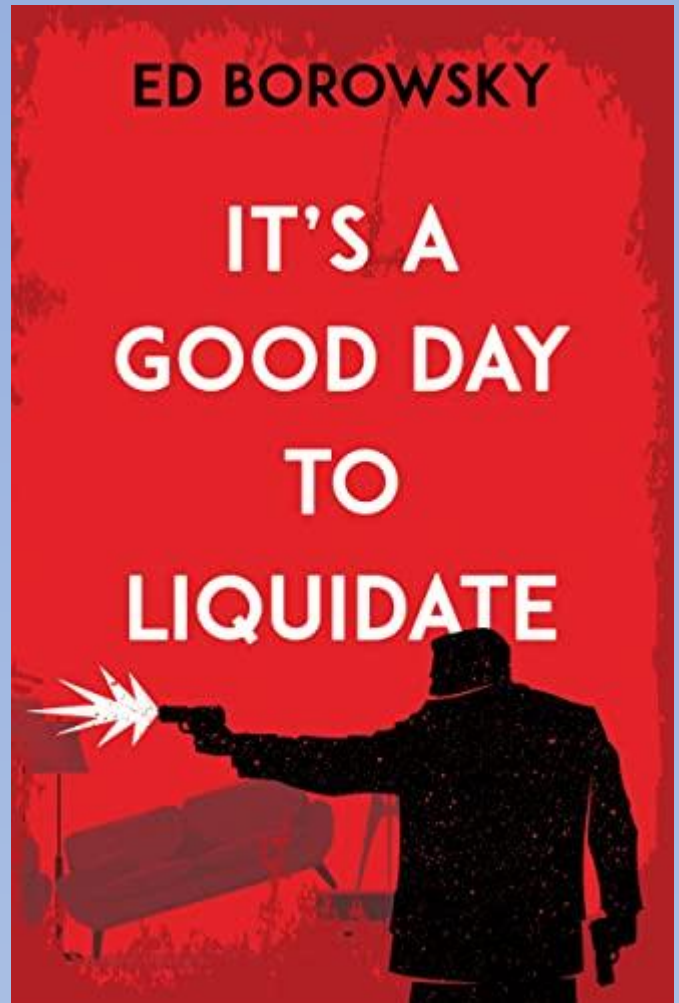
Can Eddy Ackerman, a thirty-five-year-old professed loser, liquidate his shortfalls while trying to find success helping failing business owners transition to a new life through liquidation sales?

Eddy inherits a retail furniture store from his deceased father. On the day his business goes belly up, his wife walks out on him and cleans out their bank account.

He goes to work for what appears to be a reputable liquidation company, but it's more than it appears to be. He gets caught up in the criminal world and finds himself in a life-or-death struggle to survive. Can his father's past connection to his new boss teach him the true meaning of success, or will it get him killed?

Eddy's journey illuminates failure and liquidation as integral parts of our lives. And like the Phoenix, we rise from the ashes, hopefully in one piece and better for it.

Find more about Ed Borowsky at <https://edborowsky.com/>



Melanie Nowak- Vampiress Reigning Trilogy

Genre: Vampires

Series: Vampiress reigning 3rd Trilogy

Volume: 3

About Vampiress Reigning Trilogy

Alyson is the vampiress reigning, born of legend and legacy with the supreme power to control all vampires, or so she's been told. So why is a newly formed coven of renegades who call themselves Red Fang so eager to destroy her? Uniting all vampires to live peacefully among humans is her destiny, damn it!

Containing the powerful united blood from misuse by Sindy and Red Fang has been problematic, to say the least. A perfect storm of shifting allegiances and shows of power is brewing, and Allie and her friends are discovering that fulfilling the prophecy as The United One to lead vampires into a new age of peace amongst all creatures isn't so easy when everyone is trying to kill you!



Find more about Melanie Nowak at www.MelanieNowak.com

Michael Eging and Steve Arnold - Ash and Ruin, Paladin of Shadow Chronicles

Series: Paladin of Shadow Chronicles

Volume: 2

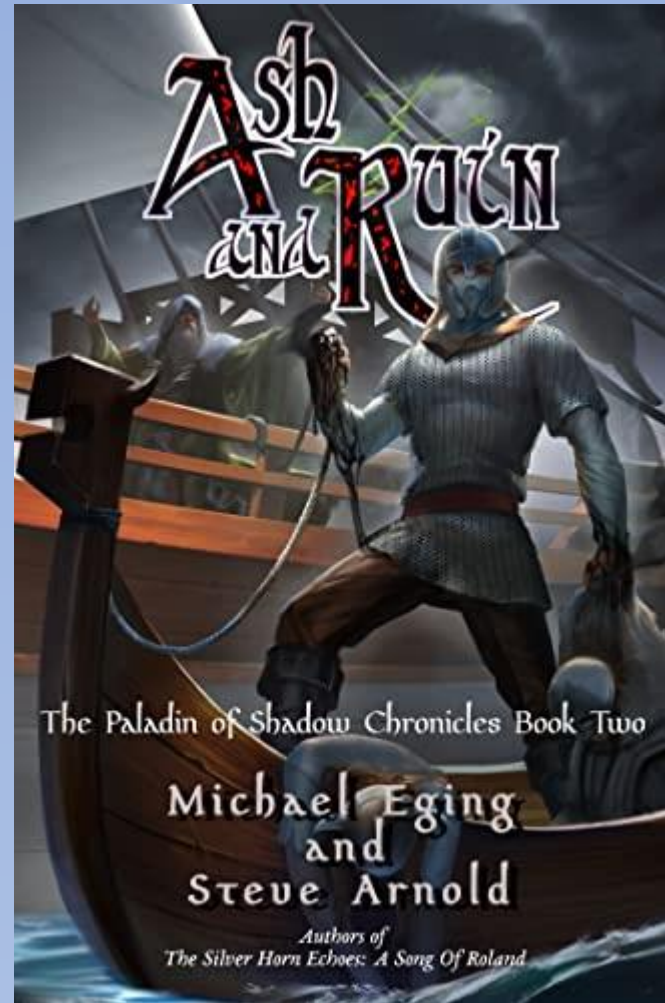
About Ash and Ruin, Paladin of Shadow Chronicles

BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, LIGHT AND SHADOW

Rome has collapsed. Dark Forces eye the imperial remnants like birds of prey, ready to devour its carcass and any secrets hidden therein.

Among these, Arawn, ancient Celtic god of the afterlife, holds Erik of Birkenhire in his ruthless, etheric grip. As Erik dangles on the edge of undeath, facing an eternity as Arawn's bloody enforcer, his only hope of salvations is an ancient weapon—a blade of such darkness as to pierce the Gray God's shadowed hand and drive back his minions before they can swarm the living world.

To find this artifact, Erik must cross the dregs of once-great civilizations, a wasteland of wondrous enigma, rife with legend, where he must face terrifying new enemies that will test both his courage and his faith . . . and uncover staunch new allies in unexpected places.

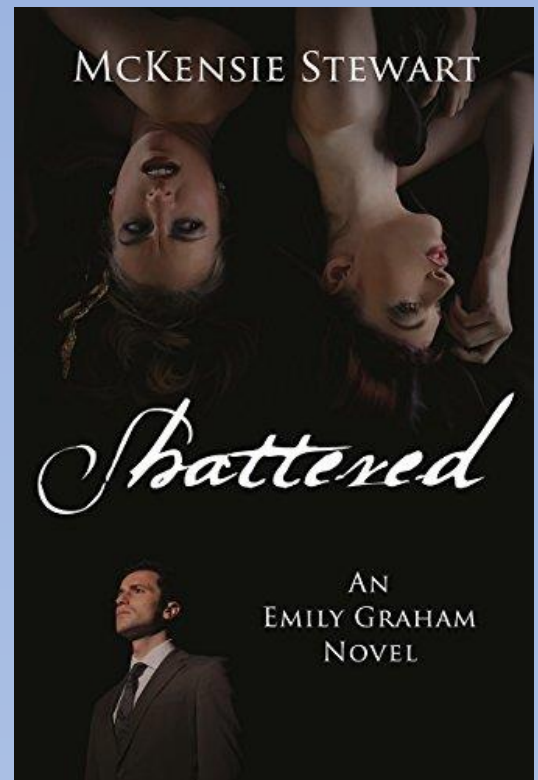


Find more about Michael Eging and Steve Arnold at <https://www.silverhornechoes.com/>

Shattered: An Emily Graham Novel

By McKensie Stewart

Emily finds herself metaphorically waking up to face a life she no longer recognizes. She loves her husband Brendon Graham, the Senator for the State of Pennsylvania along with their twins Madison and Connor but that isn't enough any longer. The ripple effect of her college professor, Dave Banks, taking a piece of her innocence destroys her marriage every day. Even though Emily only shared part of the secret with Brendon; he is on a destructive spiral choosing escorts, booze and heroine to cope with the pain he feels from their loss. Kyndall, the matriarch of the family, and Emily's mother-in-law will do everything in her power to ensure that her dream of Brendon becoming the President of the United States will come to fruition no matter who she has to kill to make it happen. Emily's true love, Julia, her college roommate has a huge secret of her own that will shatter any reconciliation between the two of them.



amazon

Coming March 21 2024 Amy Shannon's Ball's Town

In celebration of the Village of Ballston Spa's anniversary of 217 years, Amy Shannon is releasing her first historical nonfiction book, Ball's Town: A community of history, friends, neighbors, and lingering spirits.

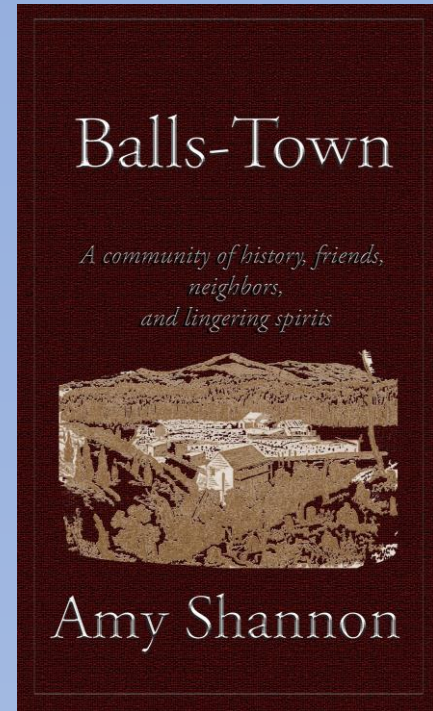
The book covers past and present, and also brings back to life those forgotten books by forgotten authors who dedicated their writing to Saratoga County, and its healing mineral springs. These springs bubbling up with their medicinal value, were the start of getting settlers to Ballston Spa, not just businesses like Taverns, Boarding houses, and hotels, but farmers and industrial business men as well.

A lot of reading and research went into writing this book.

Books as resources and those that have been found on digital copy, are available for viewing on the website at

<https://essencecenterpriseus.com/the-history-of-balls-town>

Some things that were not included in the book, but have been researched, will also be available for viewing. I offer some of the digital files for downloading, if you want a resource, but only those books that were available free for download.



Synopsis of Balls-Town

With such lush and savage history, the Towns of Milton and Ballston were one, Balls-Town. The settlers, pioneers may still be recognized for the start of the towns, but there is more to the story. People, not just prominent, and the writings of people, long past, where their work may be long forgotten. It is a shame that some are forgotten, so with this being a history of Balls-Town, the incorporation of the Village of Ballston Spa, it is also an homage to those who wrote about these precious lands of the towns. Some stories, poems, historical writings about these hometowns, may have been once lost, but in this book, some of them are being revived.

I'm Amy Shannon, and this is my hometown, and its community of history, lingering spirits, and neighbors