

MARCH-APRIL 2024
ISSUE 10.0

LITERATE-LY MAGAZINE

FROM REVIEWS TO LITERARY NEWS
FROM HISTORY TO HER-STORY
BUILT TO EDUCATE AUTHORS

AUTHOR SPOTLIGHTS:
MICHAEL FORESTER

AUTHOR INTERVIEWS:
YVONNE DESOUSA
NICHOLE HEYDENBURG
GARY ORLECK

FEATURED SHORT STORIES
NO ONE COULD MAKE THIS UP, BY
GARY ORLECK

SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH
MAX BY WILLIAM BECKER

BOOK REVIEWS AND MORE:

AMY'S BOOKSHELF REVIEWS
CHILDREN'S BOOKS REVIEWS
TRUE CRIME BOOK REVIEWS
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TOP BANNED BOOKS
CENSORSHIP BY THE NUMBERS

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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.

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This issues contributors:

Uncaged Magazine Book Reviews uncagedbooks.com

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Amy's Bookshelf Reviews "Best Reads" Book Project

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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.

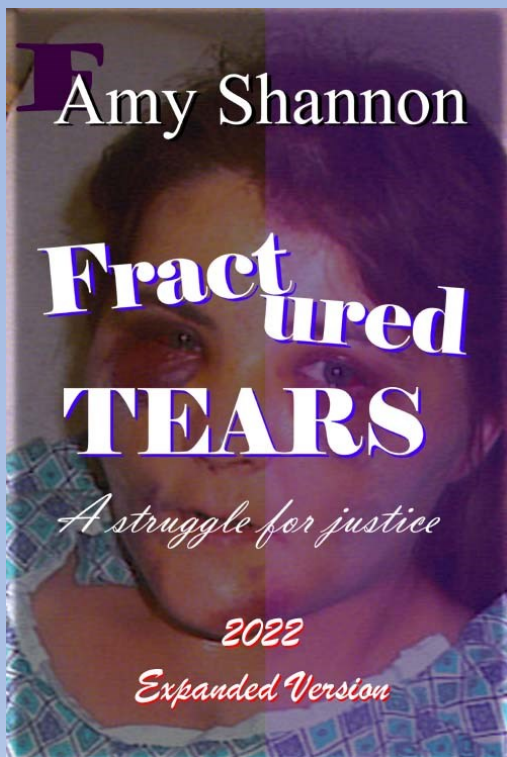
Read how Anna struggles to fight for justice, and deal with her personal issues from having been betrayed and abused by her husband of 13 years.

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.

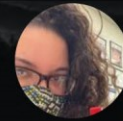
This is both a fiction book based on real-life events and a nonfiction book that tells my story.



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WHERE WOULD YOU GO TO DIE?

Sam Marshalls is dying. After discovering he has terminal lung cancer, Sam is faced with the reality that he has to let go of everything he cares about. *By The Ocean* is a man's journey on his own terms not into the unyielding tides of death, but the powerful waves of a life full of regrets.



Jada



"Truly depressing, taking us through a man's regrets throughout life as he comes to terms with the end of his."



Khan



"Tuck yourselves in folks, this is one hell of a ride, albeit one you'll never forget."



Tyrnie



"I found myself easily getting lost in the story, entranced by the plot, almost like being unable to tear your eyes away from a car crash (the car crash being Sam's worrisome, yet captivating downward spiral)."



Laramie



"By The Ocean' is dark, cold, and lonely, but it's the perfect addition to Becker's oeuvre and a beautiful telling of hope and loss."



John



"Ugly but beautifully written."



Isobel



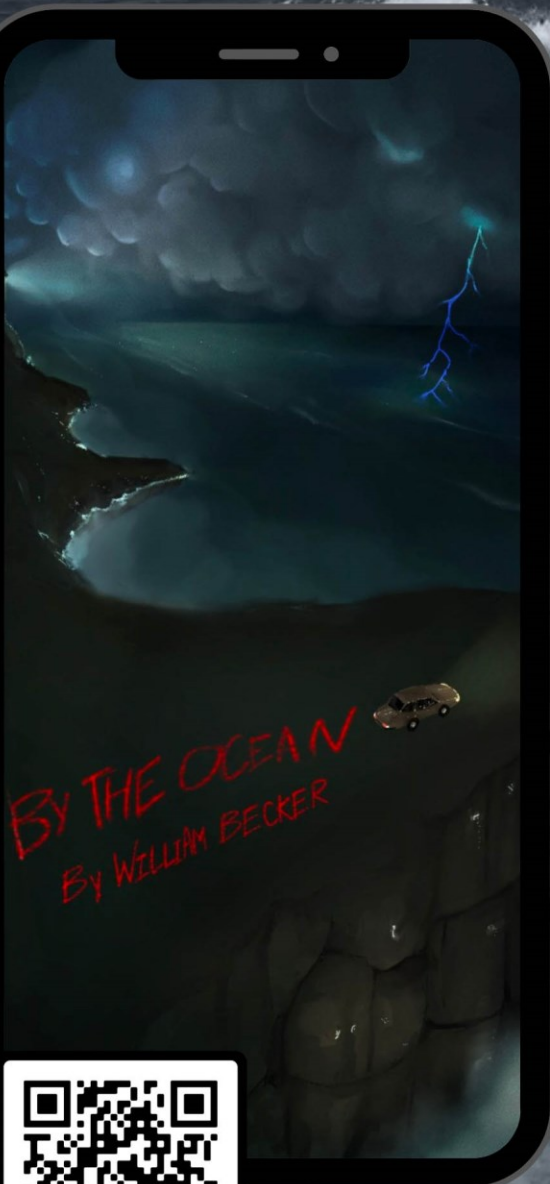
"As all of Becker's work, this is three things: honest, depressing as f***, and emotionally potent. Reading it feels simultaneously like drowning and getting a mega hit of dopamine"



E.J



"By the Ocean is a worthy endeavor that will ooze and drip its foggy New England sadness down your bookshelf for years to come."



BY THE OCEAN
By WILLIAM BECKER



SCAN ME

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WilliamBeckerAuthor.net



Author Spotlight

Author Spotlight

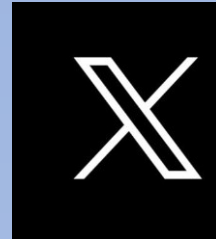
Michael Forester

Some are born with silver spoons in their mouths. Michael Forester was born with a pen in his hand. He writes at the fulcrum of perceived reality – that place where our certainties are challenged, where we encounter what we did not know that we knew.

His works range from the inspirational and provocative *Forest Rain* to the book-length metaphorical epic fantasy poem, *Dragonsong*; from his exploration of our endangered planet in the travelogue *One Journey*, to the ever-popular story of his first year with his hearing dog, *If It Wasn't For That Dog*.

Readers from all over the world follow Michael's books – from Australia to the USA, from the Philippines to Wales. A profoundly deaf full-time author and public speaker, Michael lives in the UK between the southern edge of the New Forest and the sea. From here he travels the UK and internationally for public speaking engagements and to sign his books for readers.

Michael's own life journey has taken him from formative years in charismatic Christianity, through a miraculously-survived suicide attempt and into a spiritual awakening; through the onset of profound deafness to the life-changing arrival of a hearing dog; from the Amazon rain forest to South Africa, from the Himalayas to the Philippines and beyond.



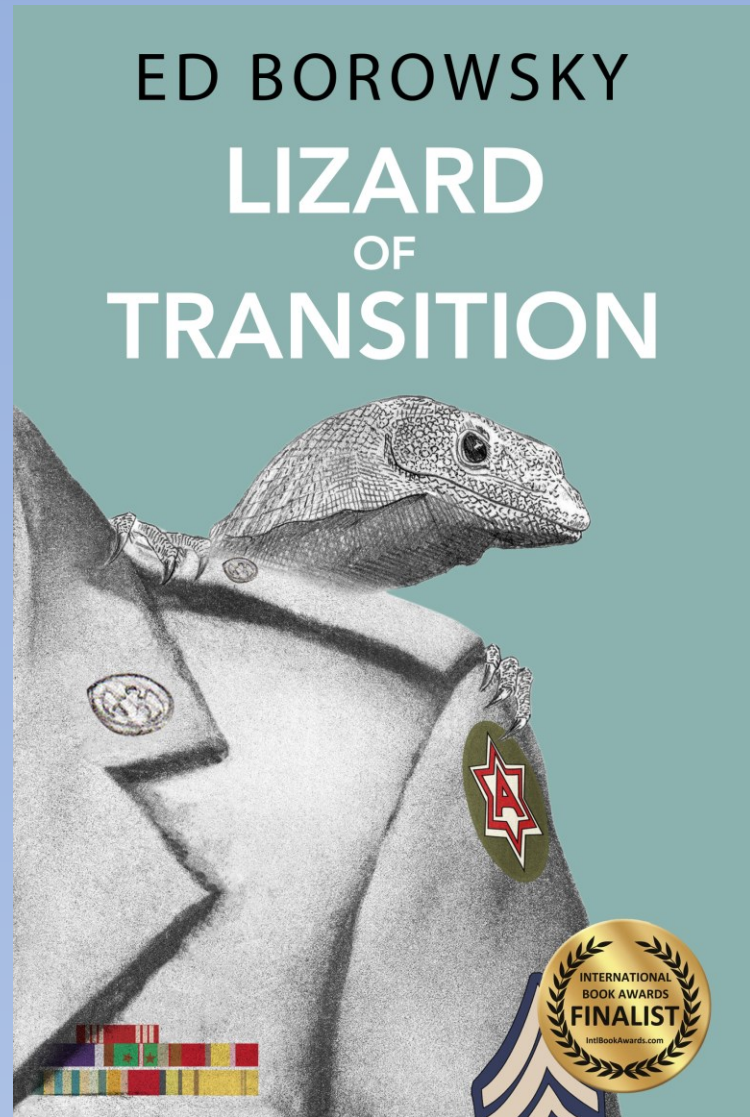
Ed Borowsky's Lizard of Transition

On his deathbed, a World War Two veteran, Joe Rubin, confesses to his son that he murdered a Japanese prisoner in the jungles of New Guinea seventy years ago. In his last hours, Joe enters the world between life and death, known as the world of transition. He tells of his journey, with an odd lizard leading the way, as he recants the tale of the murder prior to his imminent death.

He reveals to his son, Joshua, that he possesses a Good Luck flag - Hinomaru Yosegaki, that he had taken from the Japanese soldier he murdered on the island of New Guinea during the battle of the Druinimor River. The flag has handwritten messages from the prisoner's family and friends, which reveals his identity and the village in Japan he came from.

His son, Joshua, is under tremendous pressure. He's separated from his wife, who comes to visit her father-in-law, bringing the two together to face their problems under the gut-wrenching veil of his father's passing. By attempting to reunite the flag with the son of the soldier his father killed seventy years ago, will the family find their way forward?

From the wisdom of the ages, and from the Jewish perspective on death and redemption, "Lizard of Transition" shines a light on how understanding death and dying will lead us to live rich and fuller lives.



amazon

Advertisement



Author Interviews

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czy czegoś w tym rodzaju? -
- Istotnie, mógłby używa...
kojniejszym...

Yvonne DeSousa

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

Yvonne DeSousa: Memoirist Humorist
Sentimentalist

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

Yvonne DeSousa: I have two books, and both are published. The first, **MS Madness! A “Giggle More, Cry Less” Story of Multiple Sclerosis**, was self-published in 2014 and details the year following my diagnosis of multiple sclerosis and how I used humor to survive it. The second book, **Shelter of the Monument: A Provincetown Love Story**, was just published this past November by Black Rose Writing. It is a coming-of-age memoir about first love, loss, addiction and finding one’s inner voice, all set in a beautifully unique small town.

Literate-Ly Magazine: How much research did you do, and how long did it take before you even started writing?

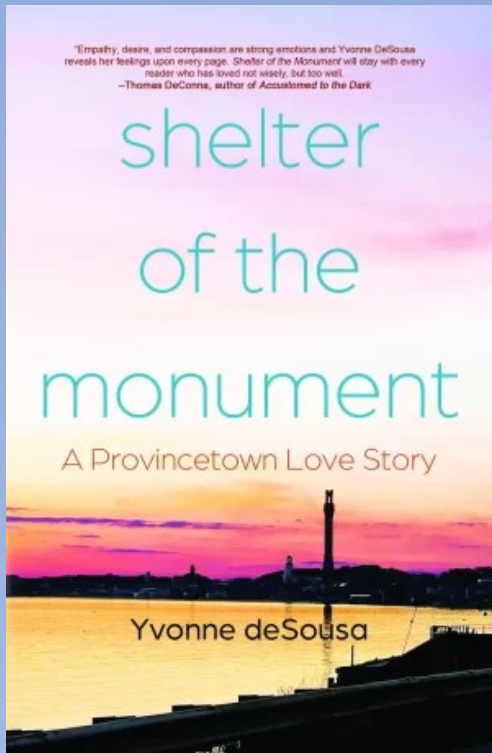
Yvonne DeSousa: Both books are from my actual life, so I didn’t really need to do any research at all- yay!! Readers might wonder if I researched multiple sclerosis before I wrote about it in my first book, but I purposely didn’t. There are many books available that can inform readers



about the science, facts, treatment, symptoms, and circumstances of MS. I wanted my book to be lighthearted and not designed to provide accurate information at all. It had the goal of taking actual experiences from my new MS life that year and then using my twisted sense of humor to make fun of the bully that was this chronic illness. When I felt I needed to explain something MS wise, I used my own raw knowledge and exaggeration skills to describe it.

For example, I did need to explain how MS was affecting my body and so I described the disease as a vicious game of Pacman where a horrid version of my immune system was zooming around my nerve endings taking random chomps of out of them. That description isn’t totally accurate, and it is definitely not scientific. But it isn’t outright wrong either and no research was needed!

Yvonne DeSousa cont'd



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

Yvonne DeSousa: **Shelter of the Monument: A Provincetown Love Story** was released on 11/16/24.

Literate-Ly Magazine: In regard to research, how did you do your research? Did you interview experts, online research, or in a library etc....?

Yvonne DeSousa: Since no research was needed, I was off the hook in that way. I did spend hours of quiet time in two different libraries editing and investigating publishers.

Both of those tasks were harder for me than writing the books themselves and I needed to be locked in somewhere without distraction to focus. One library had a quiet study room that worked perfectly and the other had tables on its third floor that overlooked Provincetown harbor, the setting of the book. That was the exact focus I needed.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What made you decide to write your past book, what inspired you?

Yvonne DeSousa: A random memory came to me that was related to something else I was trying to write. This memory was just hanging around in my head, not letting me complete the writing I actually needed to do. To try to get it out of my head, I scribbled it out. Then I took it to my writing group who were intrigued and encouraged me to pursue the story more. At first, I balked, not thinking it was a story important enough to share. But then other memories came flooding back to me regarding this relationship and I realized I desperately needed to share this with others. I wanted as many people as possible to know the great gift this unusual coupling provided.

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

Yvonne DeSousa: When I was 17, I was beyond insecure and shy. But I loved my life as it was and where I grew up. There was nothing and nowhere else I wanted to be. Yet I was being pushed into something more. Then the timid me met an older, handsome man and despite our relationship not

Yvonne DeSousa cont'd

making any sense, we clicked, fell in love, broke up, came together again, and built a lifelong connection. That connection helped me to learn to believe in myself. Despite how my first love helped me, I was unable to help him defeat the demons of addiction that consumed him. Yet we tried, amidst a small-town that harbored us as well as it harbored many diverse communities. My coming-of-age memoir details the highs and lows of our unusual relationship.

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

Yvonne DeSousa: I am a total classic rock girl. I was in high school during the 80's but my music leanings are way more Rolling Stones than Duran Duran. (*Rio* was a pretty cool song though.)

Literate-Ly Magazine: Who are your top THREE favorite authors?

Yvonne DeSousa: I love suspense books so I would have to say Lois Duncan- from my teen reading years, I still remember the plots of most of her books, Gillian Flynn, and Lisa Jewell

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

Yvonne DeSousa: All the Dangerous Things by Stacy Willingham.

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

Yvonne DeSousa: Yes, but it is a little TMI. I come up with a thought or idea and then take it into the shower with me. I do the best writing in my head in the shower. I once was struggling with an idea for a Christmas pageant for my Sunday school class, went to take shower, wrote a whole kids religious Christmas play in my head, got out and typed it up, still soaking wet and just in bathrobe. That little play has been performed around the world.

My brain works better in the afternoon so I usually have a big cup of tea and breakfast in the morning while I catch up on emails and social media, do a little cleaning or whatever other projects I can around the house, take an idea into the shower and then start writing after noon.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Why do you write?

Yvonne DeSousa: I write to keep my brain active- cognitive decline are real issues when you are living with MS. But I also write to revisit stories memorable to me. If they can entertain or inspire others, it is even better. I started writing as a means to support myself. Now I see that writing does not work that way. Luckily, these other reasons have become much more important.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Are you personally an expert on the subject of your recently published book?

Yvonne DeSousa cont'd

Yvonne DeSousa: Right now, I call myself a memoirist and the memory function of my brain is still intact. So yes, definitely!

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

Yvonne DeSousa: Not a lot, but sometimes. When I do it is to revisit a certain time in my life even more deeply. And depending on which time that is, it can make me smile, laugh or even shed a tear or two.

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?

Yvonne DeSousa: I don't. If I listen to music while I write I tend to get distracted by it. But I love music so when the writing is done, and especially when I am doing other things like cleaning or cooking, the music is on full blast! I like classic and folk rock the best.

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?

Yvonne DeSousa: I completely agree. I struggled with the blurb. You want it just perfect to describe the book, put enough in without giving away too much and make it engaging to potential readers. It is a lot of pressure.

Literate-Ly Magazine: If you could sit down and have a coffee (or your favorite beverage) with anyone, living or dead, from any era, any time, who would it be and why?

Yvonne DeSousa: Hmmm... That is tricky. The beverage part is easy, a large mug of tea made just right for a good conversation. I guess the person would have to be one of my deceased ancestors, especially those I haven't yet met. I love hearing history and am fascinated with how things came to be. So why not start with family? I did try to learn as much as my family's history with relatives I knew while they were still alive. But since they have been gone, I realize I missed some things, developed new questions, and would love to hear in more detail shared family stories they heard growing up.

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

Yvonne DeSousa: I thought about this a lot before typing a response. Does a "successful" writer mean just publishing one book? Receiving a contract from one of the big five publishers? Is it making the bestseller list? A certain amount of royalties? Inspiring one reader? !0? 100? There are so many ways to answer this question and

Yvonne DeSousa cont'd

different ways of thinking about the answer. So I guess I am going to answer with what I always thought would be cool. If I ever get my own Wikipedia page, I will know 100% that I have become a successful writer. But all of the above would also help me know that too!

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

Yvonne DeSousa: I honestly don't know going forward. When I was younger, I wanted to be an author. Then I didn't. And now I have published two books so I guess I can say I accomplished something. Moving forward I will have to think of something new. I do know I don't want to stop moving forward, however that takes shape in my world.

Literate-Ly Magazine: I am on a quest to read as many banned, burned or challenged books as possible? What is your feeling or opinion on banning books? It seems to be a new epidemic now.

Yvonne DeSousa: I don't understand it all. It is like the people who ban books want to put bubble wrap around young minds to protect them from certain ideas, yet they send them into the internet world unguarded where they can be victimized and exposed to all kinds of horrible things. It makes no sense! I can understand schools not recommending as curriculum books that are not age appropriate, but to ban them completely is just wrong.

Literate-Ly Magazine: What is the hardest part of the writing and publishing process?

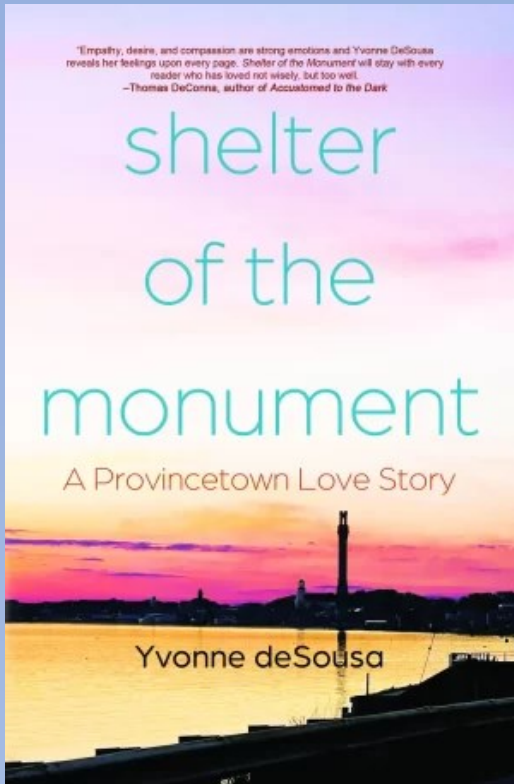
Yvonne DeSousa: Editing. I am very impatient with editing. I wrote my latest book within a year, maybe less, but then it took me about 5 years to edit it. Editing is necessary but the grammar rules change, there is the pressure to make it as clean as possible, and trying to figure out what works best for different readers, what to cut, what to add, it all makes me almost unhinged. In the end though, thorough editing has made both of my books better, so it is a necessary, though grueling, task.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Why do you write nonfiction books? What subgenres do you write in as well?

Yvonne DeSousa: I write nonfiction because my brain can barely keep track of what I am doing, never mind what my fictional characters should be doing! I love telling stories and making people giggle so I write a lot of history related to my life, my hometown and then I like to spoof on things, especially on things that don't make sense. Those are fun things to spoof on for sure.



Yvonne DeSousa's Shelter of the Monument: A Provincetown Love Story



Sometimes the wrong person says the right thing, and it makes all the difference.

In this coming-of-age memoir we meet Richard, a handsome, charming, mischievous, great guy with a fondness for the 1980s party drug of choice, cocaine. Yvonne is 11 years younger, awkward, terrified of her own shadow and even more frightened by the idea of disappointing anyone in her life.

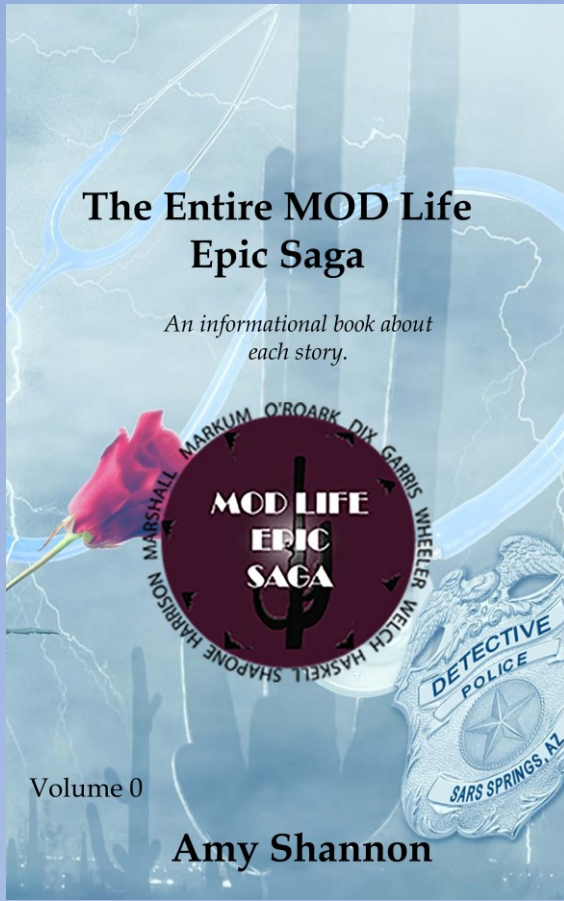
Their attraction makes no sense.

Despite obstacles beyond their control, they are exactly what each other is drawn to as they set about doing the best they can, in all four seasons of their beautiful, one season town, Provincetown, MA. Their connection remains the one thing that can save Yvonne from herself, even while Richard struggles under the weight of his own self-imposed demons.

What they develop is a relationship that unbeknownst to both of them, would last a lifetime and change Yvonne in ways she never thought possible.

They were not supposed to be together.
Yet, they refused to stay apart.

Amy Shannon's MOD Life Epic Saga



The MOD Life Epic Saga is a series of books (67 volumes in total, with 9 bonus books), that revolve around characters in a small, fictional Arizona town called Sars Springs. It follows the lives of the residents and their growing families and businesses. Evil also seems to flock there, either in a stalker form, corruption in law enforcement, murder, kidnapping, torture, and human experimentation, just to name a few. Alex Garrison starts the story when she moves to Sars Springs to build a new life, and it grows from there. The first Volume is Unwritten Life, and though the stories are standalone, the author recommends reading them from the beginning. After reading Rewritten Life (volume 2) the reader has a choice to read the prequel (volume 3) (which gives spoilers for the first two books, so read those first), or move on to volume 4.

The MOD Life Epic Saga books are digital only, being published on [Smashwords](#) and [Lulu.com](#).

The informational book about the series, and what order to read the books in can be downloaded for free [HERE](#).

Advertisement

Nichole Heydenburg

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

Nichole Heydenburg: Introvert, dedicated, tenacious

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

Nichole Heydenburg: I've written seven books. Six of them are published so far.

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?

Nichole Heydenburg: I always use a "working title" while I'm writing the book because I'm terrible at coming up with book titles. Usually, after two or three drafts, I come up with the official title. One example is "Creepy Roommate Book." The official title ended up being *Don't Look Inside*.

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

Nichole Heydenburg: My last published book came out on October 31, 2023. It's titled *Don't Look Inside*.

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?



Nichole Heydenburg: I love the complexity of Mara from my newest psychological thriller, *Don't Look Inside*. At first, Mara seems to be a socially awkward loner, but as the reader discovers more about her background, it becomes obvious why she is the way she is. She's a complicated person. I love writing about morally gray characters.

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

Nichole Heydenburg: The initial idea for *Don't Look Inside* was inspired by one of my roommates in college. She kept a deep freezer in her bedroom and I always wondered what she kept in it, so one day my sister and I snuck into her room and opened it.

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

Nichole Heydenburg: Psychological thrillers and supernatural thrillers for young adults.

Nichole Heydenburg cont'd



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

Nichole Heydenburg: *Don't Look Inside* is an upper YA thriller book. The main character, Elena, is a college student with a new roommate who she doesn't get along with. As Elena deals with her difficult roommate situation, she's also grappling with an abusive boyfriend. To add to the turmoil, multiple women go missing on campus. Elena wonders if someone close to her is responsible for the missing women.

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

Nichole Heydenburg: "Wasn't everyone just one bad decision away from committing murder?"

-Don't Look Inside

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

Nichole Heydenburg: I love traveling with my husband. Our goal is to visit at least one new country every year. So far, we've visited France, Germany, and Antigua. We're going to Japan in March.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Who are your top THREE favorite authors?

Nichole Heydenburg: Stephen King, Catriona Ward, and Kiersten Modglin

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

Nichole Heydenburg: *Deception* by Mariette Whitcomb

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

Nichole Heydenburg: After publishing six books, I have a system to my writing process. I create a rough outline based on the 15 beats from the *Save the Cat!* novel. Then I write at least 2,000 words per day, which means I can write a first draft in about 30 days.

After self-editing, I send the third draft to my beta readers. I sort through their feedback and edit. Then I send the manuscript to my developmental editor. With their feedback, I fix any of the

Nichole Heydenburg cont'd

Next, I send the fifth draft to my copyeditor. I finish the copyedits, then I do two rounds of proofreading before publishing. I publish a book every six months.

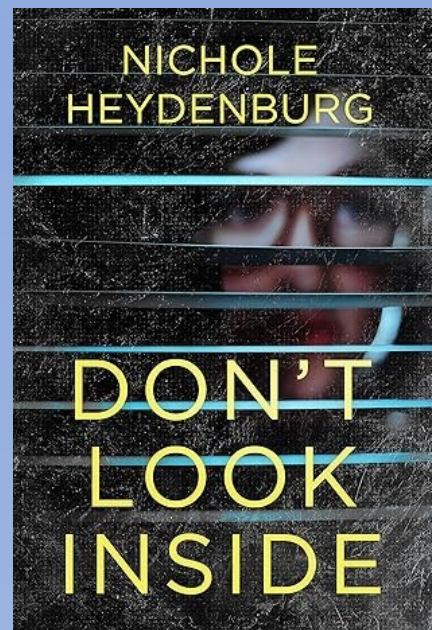
Literate-Ly Magazine: Why do you write?

Nichole Heydenburg: I write because it feeds my soul. I write because I've never been this passionate about anything else. I write about my worst fears, dark thoughts, and nightmares. I write so readers can enjoy my books, so they can escape their own world for a few hours, so they can relate to my characters. I write to make a connection with others and to be heard. I write to prove that women can write thrillers just as well as men. I write because nothing else gives me this much joy.

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

Nichole Heydenburg: I write seven drafts before publishing each book, so I definitely read my own books a lot! Each time I read one of my books, I spot something new I didn't notice before. After it's published, I don't read any of my books again, though.

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?



Nichole Heydenburg: I always listen to music while writing. While outlining or drafting, I like listening to alternative rock like Blue October or Metric. While copyediting and proofreading, I prefer to listen to instrumental music. I love Ryan Delahoussaye's instrumental songs.

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?

Nichole Heydenburg: The hardest part is always the middle of the book. When I first start writing a new book, I'm on a roll and the words flow easily. I usually have a rough idea of how I want the book to start and end, but I always get stuck somewhere in the middle.

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

Nichole Heydenburg cont'd

Nichole Heydenburg: Being a successful writer isn't necessarily defined by money or fame. It means having a loyal fanbase of readers who eagerly anticipate your next book. That's the best part about being a writer to me.

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

Nichole Heydenburg: My main goal is to publish at least twenty books. My seventh book comes out this summer, so I'm getting there!

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

Nichole Heydenburg: To my fans, thank you so much for your support. Whether you've purchased one of my books or all of them, I appreciate every book sale, page read, and new reader.

For future authors, writing isn't an easy career choice, but it's extremely rewarding if you focus on the fact that you're doing what you love.



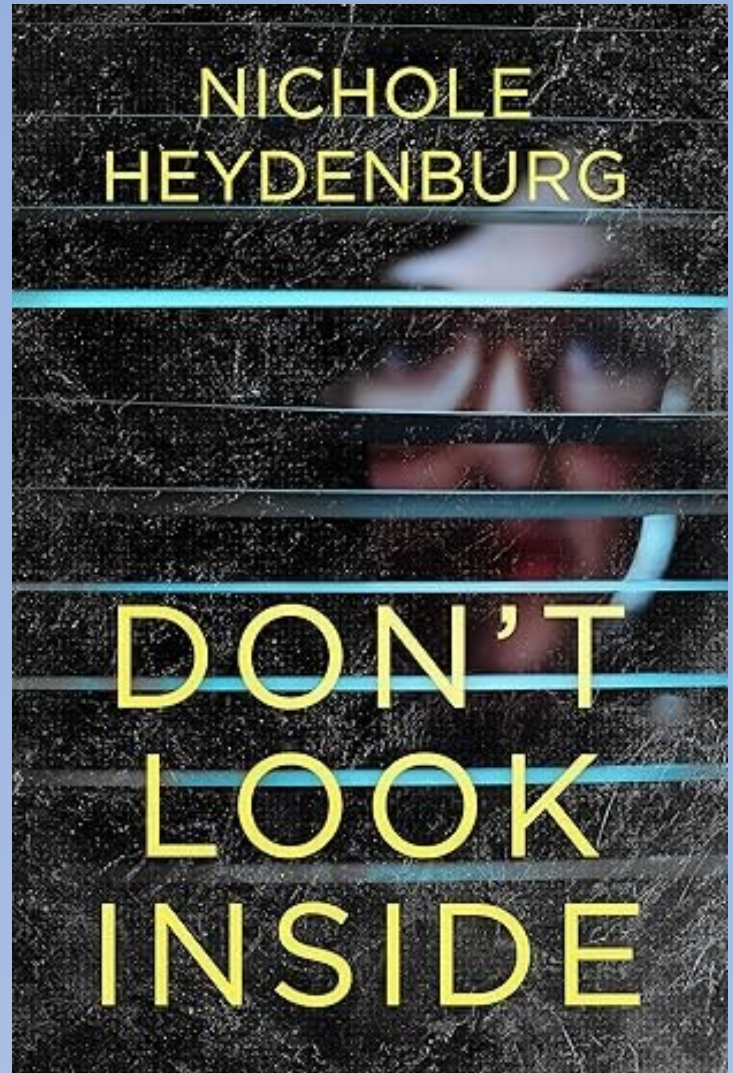
Nichole Heydenburg's Don't Look Inside

Don't question the lies. Don't investigate. And most importantly, *Don't Look Inside*...

Elena Pierce's junior year of college unfolds with a precarious situation—a mysterious new roommate named Mara. Despite her best efforts, Mara remains distant. Elena becomes increasingly wary as a string of unsettling disappearances rocks the campus.

Amid the chaos, Elena's boyfriend exhibits strange behavior. Elena teams up with her friends Joe and Logan to unveil the truth. As they dig deeper, a shocking revelation emerges. Elena is forced to consider the unimaginable: Is someone close to her responsible for the vanishing girls?

In this gripping psychological thriller, Elena must confront the unsettling reality—the true culprits may be hiding in plain sight, ready to shatter her world forever.



Advertisement

Gary Orleck

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

Gary Orleck: Committed to the truth.

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

Gary Orleck: One and one

Literate-Ly Magazine: How much research did you do, and how long did it take before you even started writing?

Gary Orleck: 5 years of research went into this book as I was determined that it must contain only the true story.

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

Gary Orleck: Travels with Maurice an Outrageous European Adventure in 1968: April of 2022

Literate-Ly Magazine: In regard to research, how did you do your research? Did you interview experts, online research, or in a library etc....?

Gary Orleck: I had an inside track to all the people he knew and his family and was able to email them for verification of my facts. A lot of online research also.



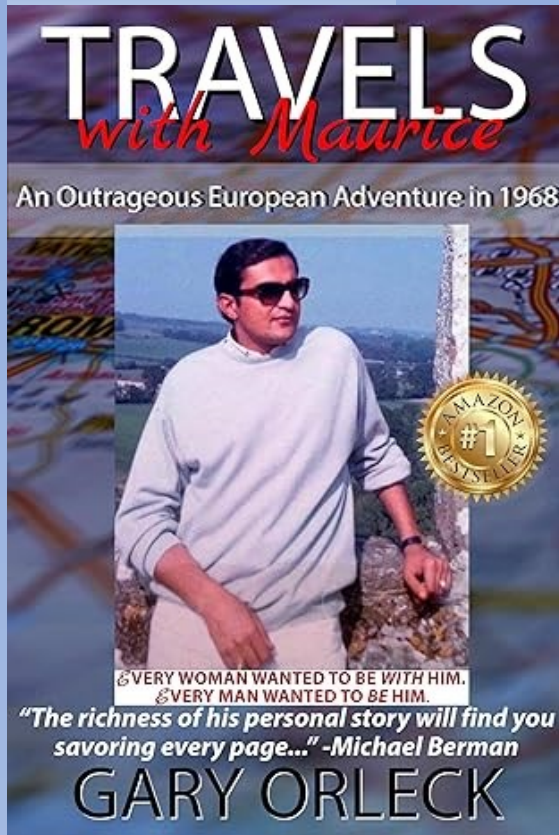
Literate-Ly Magazine: What made you decide to write your past book, what inspired you?

Gary Orleck: His death at 51 years old shocked me down to my core and I knew the world should know this phenomenal human being and how he changed my life for the better. Plus, to find out why he chose me a nobody from the state Rhode Island to educate and show how the rich are really different.

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

Gary Orleck: It is an unbelievable but true story about the life of the son of the richest man in the world in 1968 his attributes and shortcomings like how he could take over a room full of people and sell ice to Eskimo's and have women eating out of the palm of his hand.

Gary Orleck cont'd



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

Gary Orleck: Even though it is very difficult I always try to do the right thing.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Who are your top THREE favorite authors?

Gary Orleck: Terry Hayes author of *I Am Pilgrim* Jonas Jonasson author of *The 100-year-Old Man Who Climbed Out The Window and Disappeared*, And Mario Puzo the author of *The Godfather*.

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

Gary Orleck: Daniel Siva's: *Portrait of an Unknown Woman*.

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

Gary Orleck: I just wrote what my heart told me to write.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Are you personally an expert on the subject of your recently published book?

Gary Orleck: Yes I am as I was the only non-family person allowed into this extraordinary family and therefore had knowledge that nobody else in this world had.

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

Gary Orleck: I read it to verify every word was true. Then I read it again to make sure it was exactly what happened.

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?

Gary Orleck: No, I do not.

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?

Gary Orleck cont'd

Gary Orleck: The synopsis was difficult because it was hard to explain this unique story in a limited amount of years.

Literate-Ly Magazine: If you could sit down and have a coffee (or your favorite beverage) with anyone, living or dead, from any era, any time, who would it be and why?

Gary Orleck: Mohammed Ali as he gave up everything to stand up for the truth.

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

Gary Orleck: Have a lot of people read and enjoy my book for the story that it was good.

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

Gary Orleck: Always doing the right thing no matter how hard that is.

Literate-Ly Magazine: I am on a quest to read as many banned, burned or challenged books as possible? What is your feeling or opinion on banning books? It seems to be a new epidemic now.

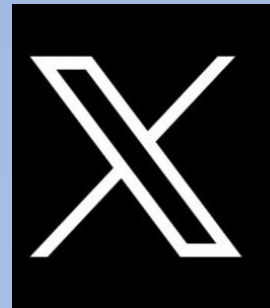
Gary Orleck: Nobody except parents should decide what their children can read. Why hide the truth ?

Literate-Ly Magazine: What is the hardest part of the writing and publishing process?

Gary Orleck: How to promote your book so that people will read it without getting taken advantage of by all the scammers out there who promise the world and deliver nothing.

Literate-Ly Magazine: Why do you write nonfiction books? What subgenres do you write in as well?

Gary Orleck: I need to write about a true story, not one that I could make up. The facts only.





UNCAAGED

BOOK REVIEWS

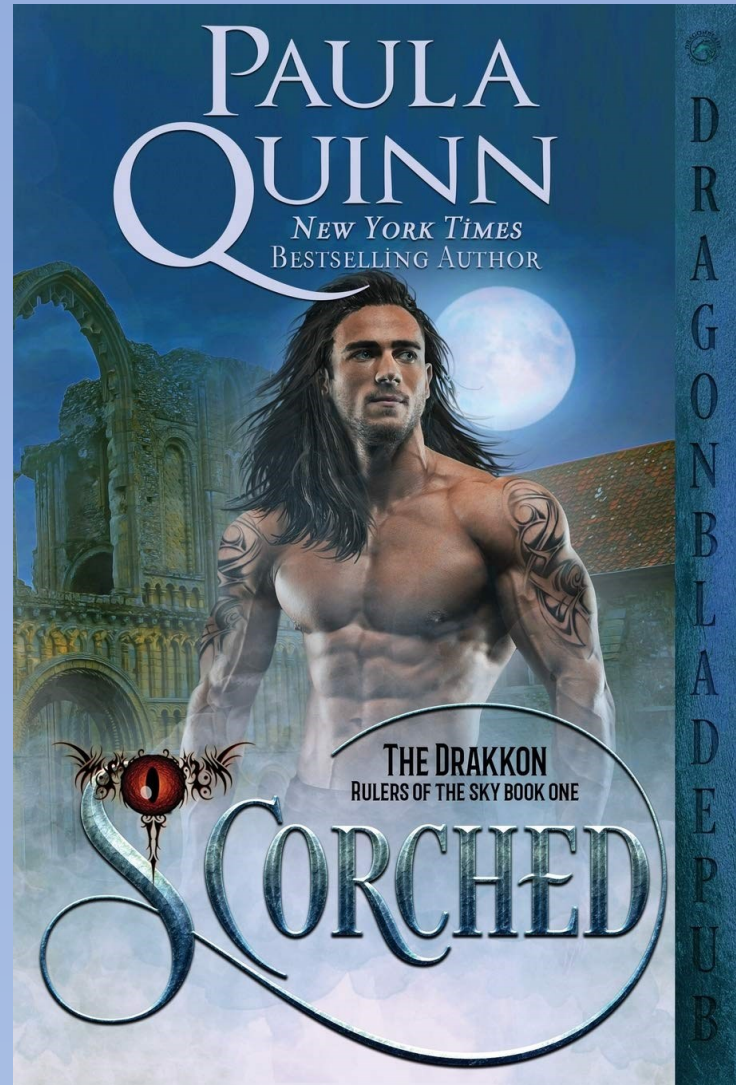
Scorched by Paula Quinn

5 Stars

There isn't much about this book that I didn't love. Humor, action, spice, romance – this one has a bit of everything. Sam is a historical romance writer who buys a run down castle in England to start fresh after a disastrous relationship. When a “man” falls from the sky and through the roof of her stables, her life will never be the same. Enter Marcus, a Drakkon that has been transformed back to a man from his true dragon form by a man with a stone that is capable of doing two transformations on a body. But learning about how humans live is going to be quite a daunting task for Marcus, and hilarity ensues.

I love how arrogant Marcus is without even knowing he is. After centuries of being a dragon, Marcus is learning the ways of being a human, and he's not really liking it. Until he meets Sam. When he realizes that she is his life mate, then his reluctance to return to the Drakkon he was is not as appealing.

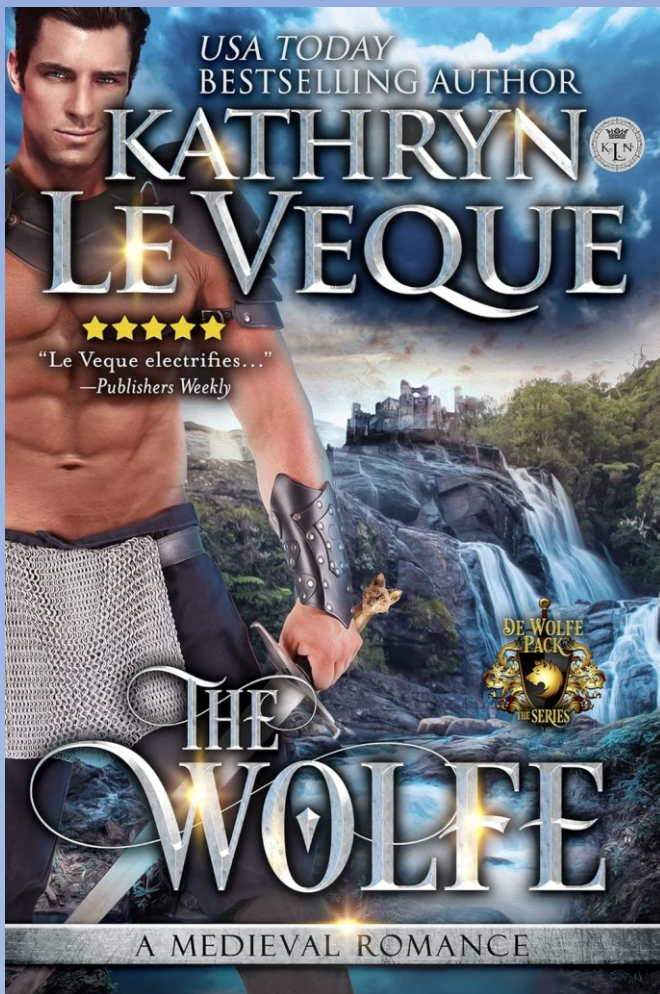
If you love romantic fantasy, this is a good choice. This reads a lot like a historical when revisiting Marcus' past memories, and Sam is a woman who stands up to him well. I'm looking forward to moving on with the series.



Romantic Fantasy

The Wolfe by Kathryn Le Veque

5 Stars



Medieval Romance

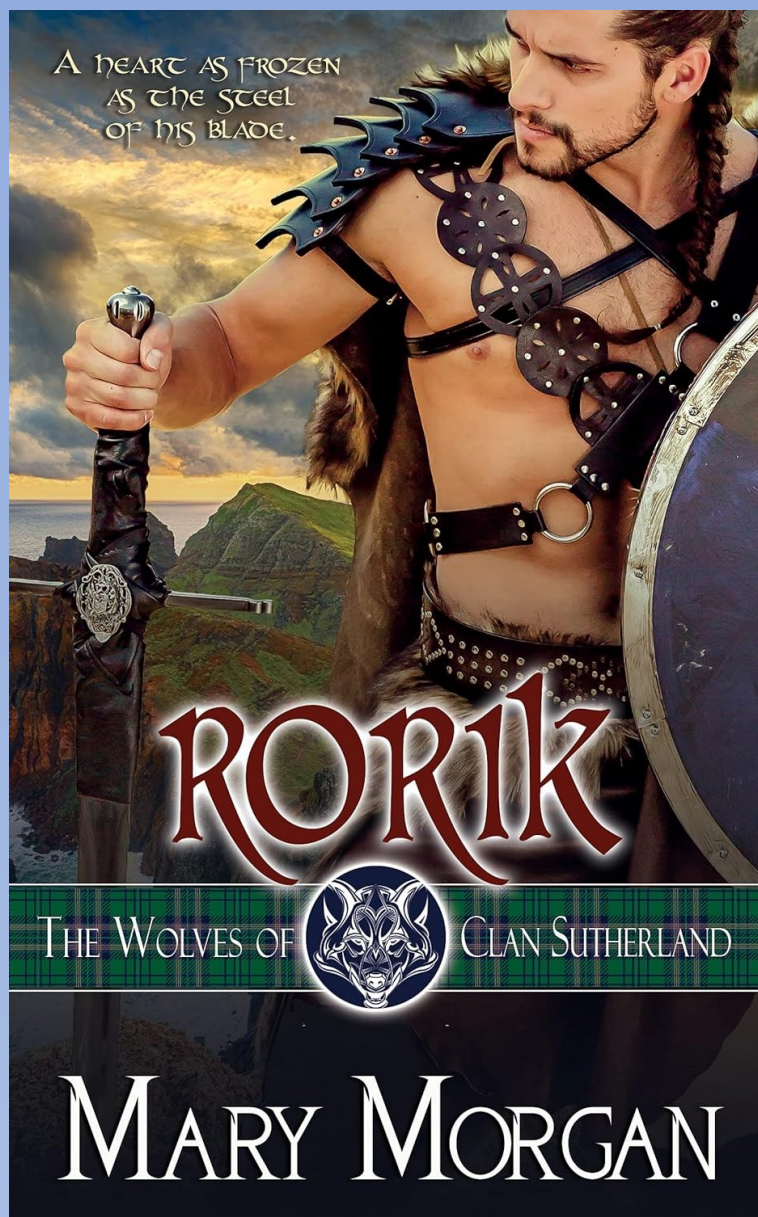
This is an epic tale of William de Wolfe, aka The Wolfe, well known for being one of the best and most feared knights during his time. This story is long, and as a fast reader – it still took me three days to finish. Before I go much further, this is a five star book, although I did have some issues, but it wasn't enough to pull a star from the rating. The main story is about Jordan and William, even though there are multiple smaller stories running throughout the background. Jordan is traded off from her father to Earl de Longley, an older English border lord in order for peace. William and his knights are to retrieve Jordan and take her back to Northwood Castle. Jordan swears to do her duty, but in the process of returning to Northwood, she charms the knights and Willam. The romance is not a long drawn out affair, it is realized early enough on, but there are many dangers, battles and traitors along the way. Two of my small grievances within the book are first of Jordan, who is supposed to be a smart, educated woman, and is constantly getting into trouble of her own doing. The other thing was that there is not one romance here, there are several, but I felt cheated that I never got to witness the romances in the background except for a bit for Kieran. I fell in love with these Knights, and wanted more. This book is long, about 800 pages and one of the authors first medieval romances she wrote, although it was years before it was published. Kathryn Le Veque builds these worlds like no other I've read, and transports you back into medieval times along with the characters.

Rorik by Mary Morgan

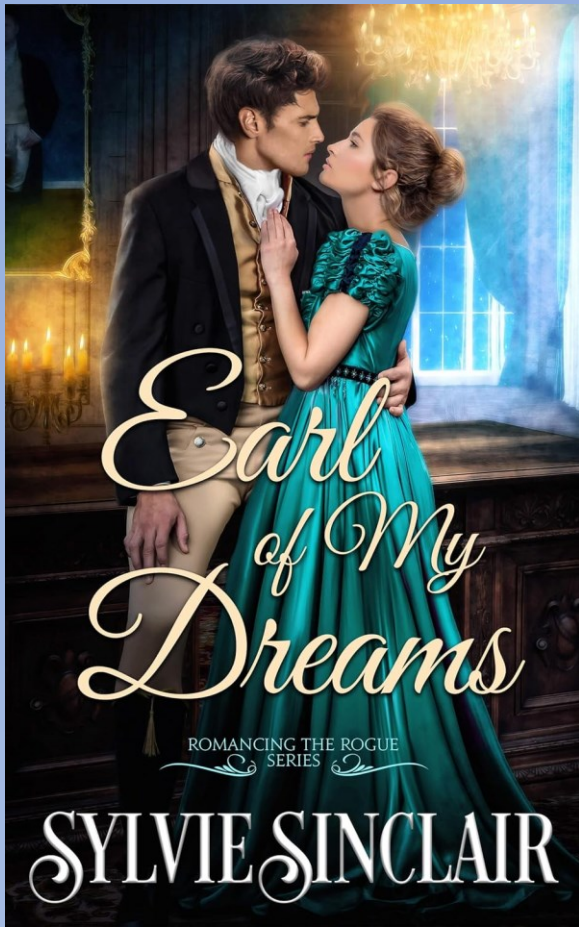
5 Stars

We first met Rorik in Magmar's story, the first book of the series, he was intriguing to me. Now Rorik, who is known as The Dark Seducer, since he seduces women to get information for the king, will find the love of a woman means more to him than life itself. Ragna is a Seer and has visions of Rorik dying and travels across the seas to Scotland to deliver her warning. Rorik and Ragna have a past, where Rorik seemed to have hurt a younger Ragna. But when Rorik almost dies, and Ragna is chosen by Rorik's wolf, he begins to understand.

What I love about this series, is that the wolf is always there – and never forgotten as part of the man. The wolves of Clan Sutherland are loyal and fierce, and they love as fully as they are feared. Magmar and Elspeth are back, and this book has danger, love and humor. If you love medieval times and a bit of magic tied into it, this is a good choice. Looking forward to Steinar's book next.



Historical Fantasy



Historical Regency

Earl of My Dreams by

Sylvie Sinclair

4.5 Stars

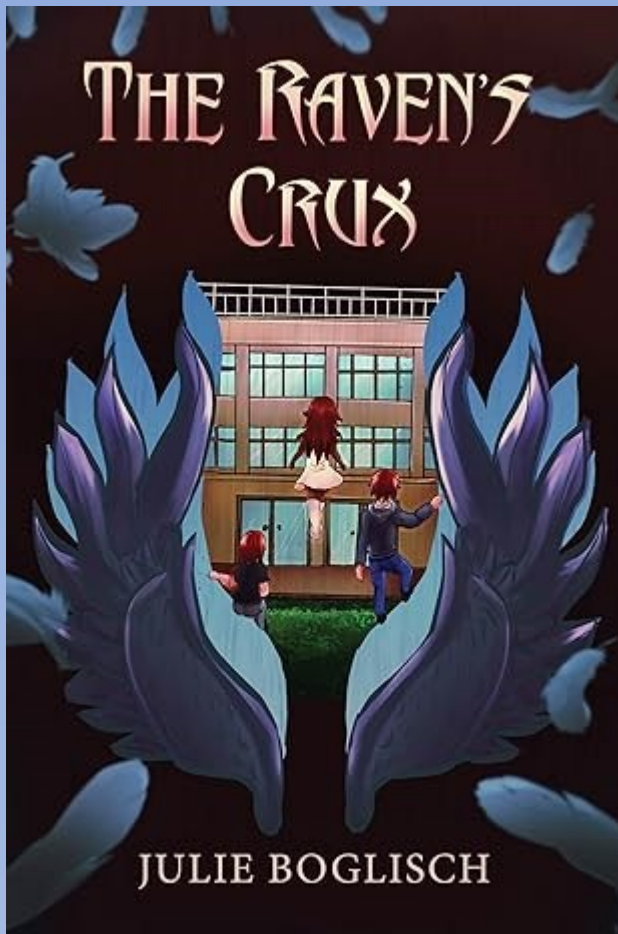
This is a strong debut novel from this author, with great characters that had not only a great romance, but also a friendship with three women that is heartwarming, and it will be fun to read their stories in the future. Sophie and James have known each other since children. With Sophie having had a crush on James when they were young. But Sophie is all about helping her cousin Olivia find her match, and is not much interested in marriage herself. But both James and Sophie have secrets, and James' past threatens his future. They will need to find a way past it all to find their HEA.

Great pacing, funny and witty at times, this is a very strong first novel. The sharp wit of Sophie will keep James on his toes, and when they agree to a decision to help James find a wife, to keep him from courting Olivia, Sophie will have to keep her heart on a short leash. Some spicy romance sprinkled in, and this is a great way to spend a cold winter day.



**AMY'S
BOOKSHELF
REVIEWS[®]**

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Julie Boglich- The Raven's Crux

4 Stars

Julie Boglich writes a young adult paranormal tale with The Raven's Crux

In The Raven's Crux, the reader is introduced to the Raven Family. Aiden and Noah are twins, and since they lost their mother, their father, Roger, moves them from place to place. Roger is a detective, and only knows that his wife disappeared. Each place they stay, isn't for long, until they hit what seems to be an abandoned, ghost town, where it always rains. 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. I applaud authors who write for children and young adult, without writing down to them, as if they had to dummy down the story to meet the reading level. I've seen authors do that, and call it children's or young adult. Julie Boglich writes very well, and I think this story can be enjoyed by young adults and not-so-young adults. She sets the tone for the mysteries of the Town, and shows how Aiden and Noah are more like their father than they want to be, especially when they are intrigued and set out to solve the primary mystery, where are all the residents. The story is both creepy and intriguing.

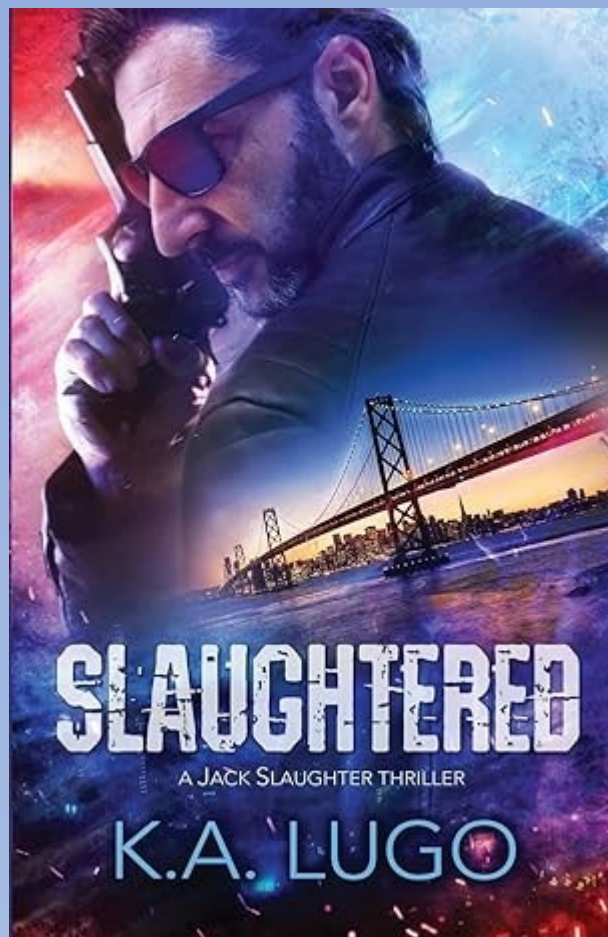
*F/YA/Paranormal/
Mystery*

K.A. Lugo- Slaughtered

4 Stars

K.A. Lugo writes a thrilling tale with Slaughtered

In Slaughtered the reader is introduced to Jack Slaughter, a former police officer turned PI so he could make a living, and search for his family. His little girl and his wife. They were taken and never found, but presumed dead. Jack is hanging by a thread, and then the texts starting coming in. Telling him where his wife's body is, and when he arrives there, it's not his wife. It's happening like clockwork, and then he takes on an eerily familiar missing person's case from Carl Boyd, whose wife Bonnie is missing, and the circumstances, are just like Leah's. 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. Slaughtered is part of the Jack Slaughter Thrillers series, and this is volume one, and I will definitely read the next ones that follow. Jack is living on the edge, determined to find the answers he so desperately seeks. KA Lugo is an amazing writer, and tells a grandly suspenseful story. Just when the reader thinks they know what is going to happen, something unexpected crosses Jack's path. A very unpredictable story, my favorite kind!



F/Thriller



Virginia Barlow- Gamble of Hearts

4 Stars

Virginia Barlow writes a historical romantic tale with Gamble of Hearts

In Gamble of Hearts, the reader is introduced to London, 1812. It's a dark place, especially for Lady Amora. 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. Amora's brother, Nathan, is as dark as they come, and what is interesting, he never tries to hide his true intentions and his true colors. What you see by his actions, is what you get. With Dukes and Ladies, and the aristocratic world, there is not a pleasant view into any of which people may admire or follow in a succession of what is true and what isn't. Nathan is an avid gambler, and not always a winner. When Duke comes in to collect Nathan's debt, Nathan offers something in return, his sister. There is this tension because Lady Amora is now the property of the Duke, but it may not be all bad, but it is definitely not all good. Would there be a connection without Nathan's gambling between Amora and Alexander? This book has a lot of suspense, and the meeting between Amora and Alexander was not an ideal meeting, and she discovers a lot of disturbing things about her brother, such as him using her multiple times as collateral. The story is endearing and heartbreaking. The author weaves a tangled web of story and captures the reader. I found Nathan one of those antagonists that you just can't like, but Amora does her best to deal with what he has done and her own situation. This author is a great storyteller. The reader just embarks on a superb journey. Amora is a formidable character, stronger than she realizes, even after her brother's betrayal, and her new connection to Alexander.

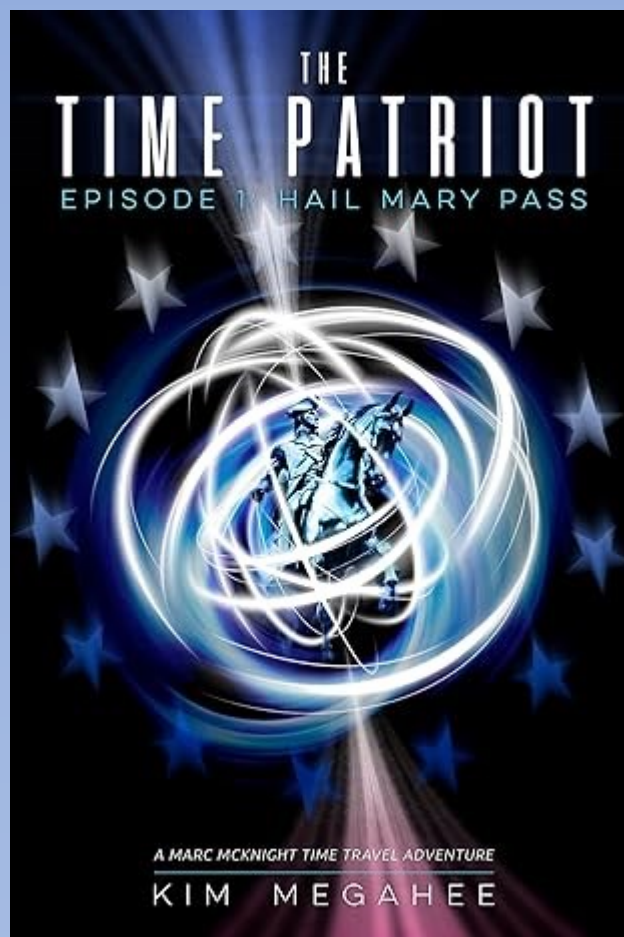
F/Historical/Romance

Kim Megahee -The Time Patriot: Hail Mary Pass

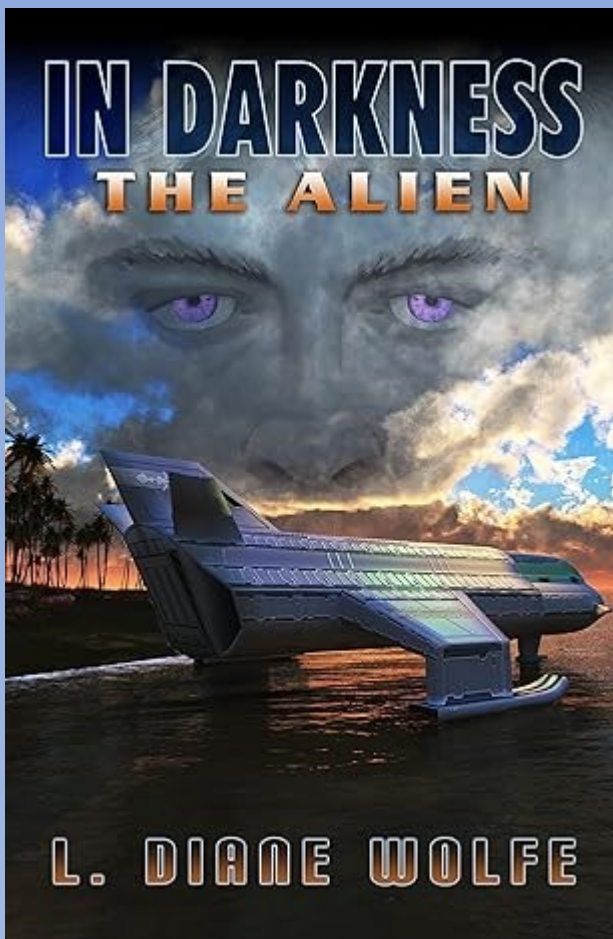
5 Stars

Kim Megahee writes a unique time traveling tale with The Time Patriot: Hail Mary Pass

In The Time Patriot: Hail Mary Pass, the reader is introduced to Marc McKnight, and his time traveling team. The current year is 2037, and though it seems so far away, it's not really. But in this iteration, the reader also meets, George Washington. A President, the first one, but even though it was not in his plans to be President, he was a remarkable General, especially in the Revolutionary war, and led his men to victory after several battles that were won and lost. 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 Time Patriot: Hail Mary Pass is part of The Time Patriot series, and this is episode one. I am now a fan of Kim Megahee and want to read whatever this author writes. This author has a grand imagination, and talent for showing the story. I like how the books are listed as episodes rather than volumes. A reader can get lost in the story. This story is a timeless tale. A very unpredictable story, my favorite kind! Imagine meeting George Washington.



F/SciFi/Time Travel



L. Diane Wolfe- In Darkness: The Alien

5 Stars

L. Diane Wolfe writes an out of this world, paranormal tale with In Darkness: The Alien

In In Darkness: The Alien, the reader is introduced to Liz, whose life just had a major (and I do mean major) change. Liz is kidnapped, and then sold into slavery because of her expertise in planet mining.

In Darkness: The Alien is part of

the In Darkness series, and this is volume four. I am a big fan of L. Diane Wolfe and this series. Each story is of its own story, and very interesting, as well as very well written and the story is described so well, that you can see it in your mind, even if your images are a bit different from the author's imagination. Liz seems like a very strong character, and she is doing whatever she can to not just survive, but her capture is determined to get rid of her emotions, so he can marry her without chaos. Krist is Liz's capture and future spouse, and does not see a need for emotions, as they get in the way, and are useless. Liz is caught in this web of alien race, called the Stren, and wants to do whatever she can to show them that emotions are not useless, and very powerful. As always, the author's use of paranormal and humanity are sensational and I found that so far, this is my favorite story of the series. I hope there are more to come, even if there aren't in this series, I want to read more by L. Diane Wolfe. The story is a wondrous trail of words, that brings the worlds that the author creates to life. The reader can almost understand the Stren's point of view on emotions, as if you never had something, you may not know what you are missing. This story is literally out of this world, and brings a string of emotions and their purpose, on the story and the reader.

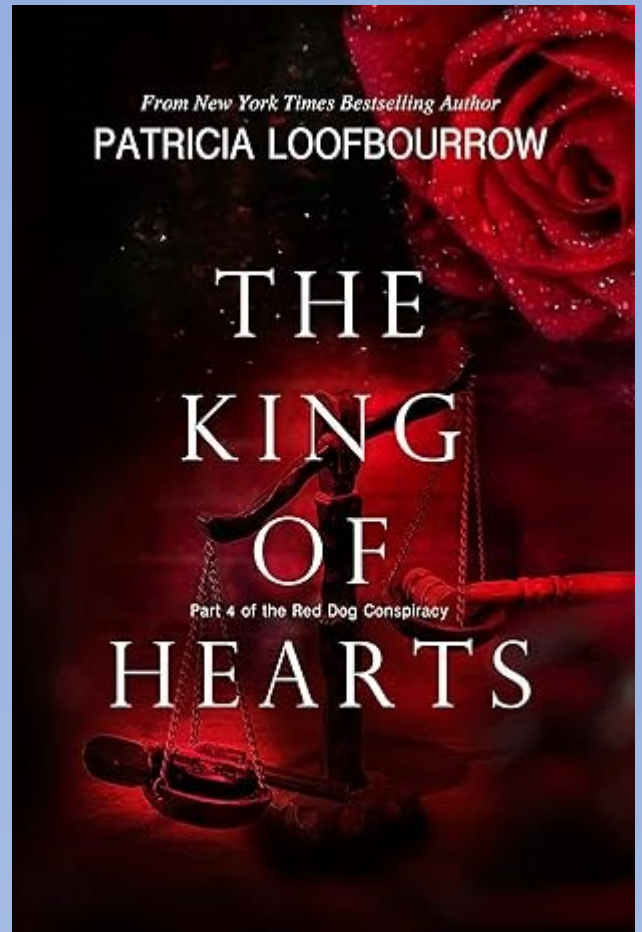
F/Paranormal

Patricia Loofbourrow- The King of Hearts

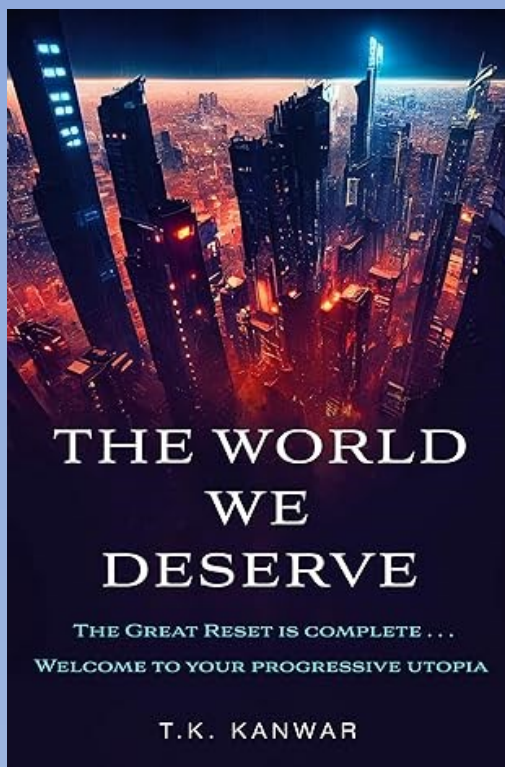
5 Stars

Patricia LoofBourrow writes a thrilling conspiracy tale with The King of Hearts

In The King of Hearts, the reader is introduced to Jacqueline Spadros. She's a private detective, but is flat broke, and she just hit her life's all-time low. The King of Hearts is part of the Red Dog Conspiracy Series, and this is volume four. I read the ones that came before it, and plan on reading the books that come after this one. It's been a while since I've read one of Patricia Loofbourrow's book, and I see that she's been very busy with this series. It is recommended that the series be read in volume order. Jacqui faces a lot of turmoil and crisis in her life. And now, she's being framed by the Red Dog Gang, but she doesn't know how to prove it. Financial issues and conspiracies behind a recent zeppelin incident that were murdered. Jacqui is determined and tenacious, and determined to clear her name, and convince the jury that she is not guilty, and being set up. There is a lot of action, and details behind the characters and their backstories, as well as what made these people who they are today. Organized Crime. Financial ruin and murder, and that's just the beginning of this remarkable story. This is a grand suspenseful story.



F/Crime/Mystery



T.K. Kanwar- The World We Deserve

4 Stars

T.K. Kanwar writes a futuristic tale with The World We Deserve

In The World We Deserve the reader is introduced to a whole new world, and it makes the title seem right on the money. The old world is no longer visible, except to those who remember it before The Great Reset. 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 World We Deserve is part of the Endgame Collection series

, and this is volume two. TK Kanwar built a dystopian, unrecognizable world, with a grand imagination. Money is digital, and the life people live isn't extravagant, as they live in small apartments, and AIs are more than just a search engine. Life is dictated based on a rating, and this rating determines what a person can and can't buy, such as food or home products. The world looks the same and is run the same, and everyone is watching. It's not even a dictatorship, it's worse, everyone must fall in line, and believe. However, there is always that underground rebellion who believe in the world as it was. TK Kanwar introduces Jack Nolan to the reader, and since his lineage, especially his grandfather, was labeled a dissident, it affects his place in this new world. Sins of the generations before affect the current generations. Both thrilling and intriguing, all the way to the end. It's a great story to follow and try to figure out what will happen next. Dystopian meets dictatorship meets mind-control!

F/Political/Dystopian

Milana Marsenich- Shed Girl

4 Stars

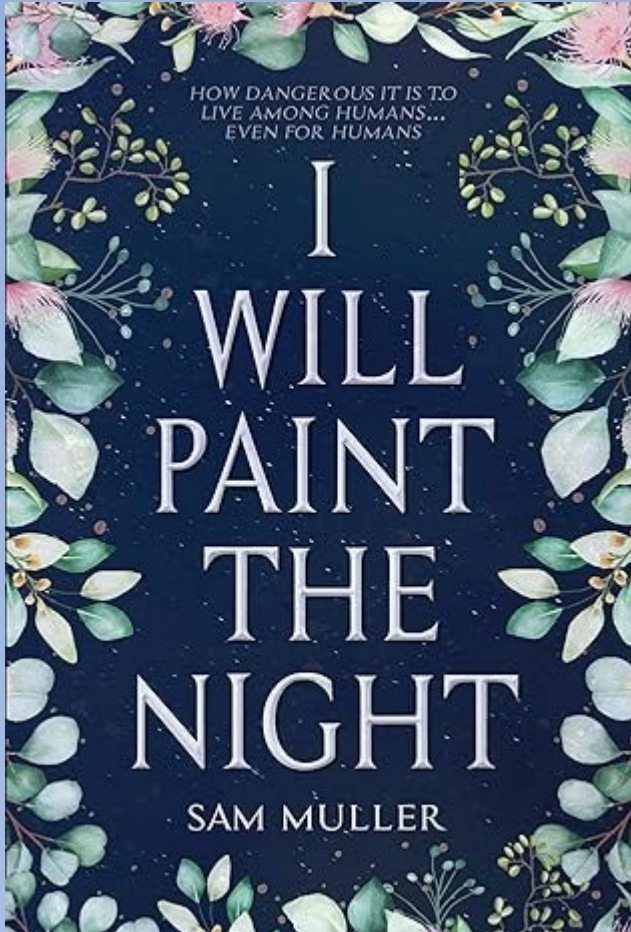
Milana Marsenich writes a good mystery tale with Shed Girl

In Shed Girl, the reader is introduced to Juliet, as she witnesses and tries to stop a kidnapping. She failed. Juliet is just 18 years old, and making her living doing tarot card reading. As the title implies, Juliet lives in an old shed with her cat. Her back story shows how and why she is where she is, and yet, because of what she witnessed, she's approached to help with the investigation of missing runaways. She has been one herself, many times, so she's familiar with the life. I haven't read anything by this author before, and what a hidden gem. Juliet puts herself in harms way when she tries to get an in with a creepy man, the toymaker, and she hopes to get information for the police, so she can get paid, and maybe get something more to eat, and she needs the money from the toymaker. Information. That's what she needs to share, but she gets in over her head, along with another boy, Kyle, as they try to save more street kids from being taken, or once they are, to rescue them. Milana Marsenich has a great imagination. It's a great story to follow and try to figure out what will happen next.



F/Crime/Mystery

F/YA/Fantasy



Sam Muller- I will Paint the Night

4 Stars

Sam Muller writes a young adult fantasy with I will Paint the Night

In I will Paint the Night, the reader is introduced to Princess Allii, a young girl just on the verge of womanhood (she's 18), and she now has to deal with the outside, especially after her step mother Bellizza, has been killed. Allii has always been close to her stepmother, and always protected her, now Allii is looked at as a suspect in the poisoning. Sam Muller built a wonderfully complex and inventive world, Sallonia, within and beyond the Castle walls. 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. Everything is spread out for the readers, the details of the world, the persons in such a story making it feel so real. This story is a grand suspenseful story. A very unpredictable story, my favorite kind! It's an embraceable and emotional story, and not just about the genre of the fantasy, but in bringing the characters to life, and being able to relate to them. Waking up every morning, hoping you're not going to die today, is a big thing that many of us think of when our feet hit the floor in the morning.

About Amy's Bookshelf Reviews

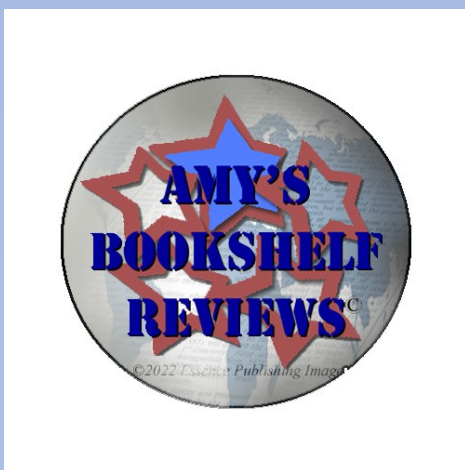
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The mission of Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is to help promote authors and allow them to share their stories using my reviews. #ReviewsMatter and they are very important for authors. Reviews can be the baseline for promoting and selling an author's work.

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews reviews examine the characters, story and plotlines, and the author's writing and storytelling abilities.

Amy Shannon owns and operates Amy's Bookshelf Reviews has experience with being an writer with over 30 years experience. Since 2014, while reading and writing reviews, Amy has created a new Podcast, with the Amy's Bookshelf Reviews brand. She discusses books, authors, does interviews, reviews and literary news.

Need Help with any literary process? Amy Shannon is also literary Consultant. Over the years, she has received lot of questions presented by authors, wondering what to do next, or sometimes, they have so much going on at once, they don't know what to do or who to trust. Well, Amy is that person you can trust, even if you don't know it. Amy wants to help authors, do research for authors, and see where they may need to build their brand.



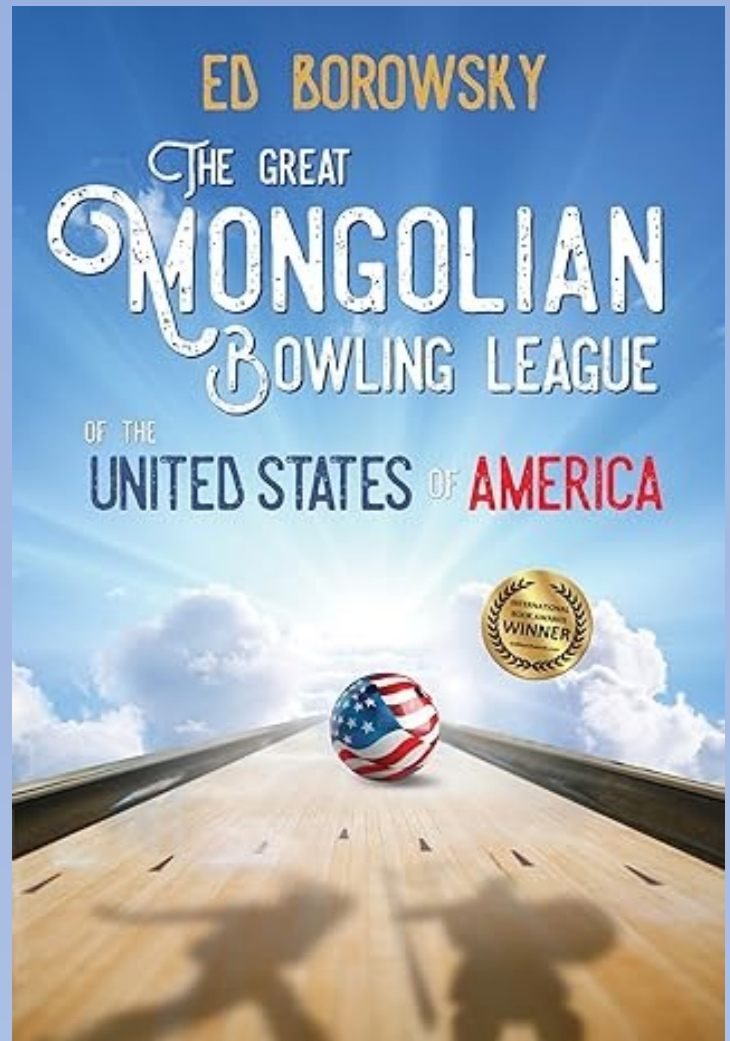
For details on how to request a review, go to <https://amysbookshelfreviews.com/requests-and-rules>

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Ed Borowsky's The Great Mongolian Bowling League of the United States of America

Harold Kushner and his roommate of thirty years, Murray Schwartz, are average senior citizens facing down their mortality in a trailer park in Land O' Lakes, Florida. Two self-professed "best Jewish bowlers ever" wind up contestants in the first-ever Great Mongolian Bowling League Tournament in the U.S.A. The rivalry becomes a high-stakes roll-off as Harold approaches "perfection" (defined in the bowling world as three 300-score games in a row) despite a fix set by the alley's mobster-owners. As the reporters and camera crews swarm to cover his amazing feat, Harold finds himself in a life review spanning back to his Bar Mitzvah and a past incarnation as a Mongolian warrior in the era of Genghis Khan, as he ponders profound questions we all ask as we near the end of our lives: Did my life have meaning? Did I fulfill my potential? Was I a good person?

Can Harold roll perfection to help his new Mongolian friends and live to tell the tale? The uncanny action unfolds in this beautiful comedy illuminating that although we come from worlds far apart, we share a common humanity. The outcome will impact millions... and strike you right in the heart.



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Literary Articles

Towards a More Equitable Audiobook Industry

by Becky Parker Geist

The Stories We Share

We humans live in and as narrative. Each day we make sense of our reality in the stories we tell ourselves and others. From the earliest times, oral storytelling has been an integral part of daily life. So the double-digit growth of audiobooks over this last decade, as well as the growth of podcasting, should not be surprising.

What may be surprising is how the industry's boom has been largely built on an inequitable model, where greed and control strip authors of what should be rightfully theirs. While Amazon and other platforms have been important in the growth of the industry, the distribution and sales model is abusive to rights holders.

Audiobook Development Milestones

It wasn't until the 1990's that digital delivery opened the doors to the ongoing explosive growth in the audiobook industry, further spurred on by the ubiquitousness of mobile devices for listening.

Meanwhile, independent publishing has continued to rise. According to an article in *Writers Digest* by Victoria Champagne



AMPLify

Audiobooks

Sutherland (Founder and Publisher of Foreword Reviews): “The audiobook market has grown significantly since 1998, with many readers preferring to listen to books rather than read them. This has made it easier for independent authors to reach a wider audience by producing their books in audio format.” This lines up with statistics provided by Audio Publishers Association in their annual reports.

Another milestone development that started rising to the surface in 2022 (having AI replace human narrators) threw into the spotlight a challenge the audiobook industry has mostly kept in the shadows: the cost of producing audiobooks tends to be high while the likelihood that authors will generate a profit from their audiobooks has been generally low.

Towards a More Equitable Audiobook Industry

(Cont'd)

What's Wrong with the Audiobook Industry?

At the crux of the problem for authors is an imbalance in the retail distribution model of the audiobook industry. We've seen similar issues in 2023 in the SAG-AFTRA strike. The imbalance of earnings in the audiobook world means millions in profits drop into the pockets of retailers like Amazon, while the creators are left with pennies. Without the creators, Amazon and others would have nothing to sell and profit from. Additionally, Authors in regular retail distribution are deprived of control that would allow them to effectively market their audiobooks.

Control Matters

Since the inception of the retail audiobook industry, rights holders have been denied control over their own audiobook properties as soon as they engage in distribution. Authors and publishers who shoulder the expense of producing the audiobooks then turn over the finished product for others to sell—on terms completely controlled by the retailers. They do so with high hopes of earning some royalties and being out there for their audiences to discover.

Until recently, traditional distribution was the only option for indie authors and small

publishers. To sell an audiobook directly from your website does not produce a happy user experience. While a print or ebook is a single object, either physical or digital, an audiobook is a playlist of several audio files packaged together with its cover image and metadata. Thus authors and publishers need a partner and/or platform for distribution.

Misleading & Abusive Practices

What most audiobook listeners don't realize is just how little of their payment for their next listen actually gets to the author. In fact, most authors don't realize it either until they review their royalty statements. That's when they realize that the royalty percentages they were lured in with were of the NET profit, not the gross revenue received by the retailer or paid by the customer. Net vs Gross makes for a huge difference.

As an example, Audible uses free audiobooks as a teaser to entice new subscribers. Those freebies to listeners when they pay their subscription price, earns \$0 for the authors. ACX, the production side of Audible and part of the Amazon monopoly, also tries to ensnare authors in a seven-year exclusive contract (which is not in the author's best interest). In this case the creator might earn as much as

Towards a More Equitable Audiobook Industry

(Cont'd)

40% of the NET of whatever Audible chooses to sell it for, and calculated using an elusive proprietary “factor.” Other audiobook retailers and outlets including libraries and music channels generally work out to slightly higher royalties of about 35% of the sales price. That’s better, but still not a great deal considering what rights-holders spend for production. Keep in mind that authors also have no control over that sales price—that’s up to each retailer.

Magnifying the problem is the fact that the retailer that pays the lowest royalty rate (and has the most rights-holder-UNfriendly policies) controls the U.S. majority market share. The ongoing double-digit rise in audiobook sales, up 25% in 2021 according to Audio Publishers Association, also ups the stakes for the rights-holders. They have more to lose by the status quo staying as it is.

Greed, But Not Just Greed

The issue is not, however, just about royalties. Authors are denied control over their pricing and customer information in the sales process. Retailers keep for themselves all the customer details that are so valuable. Authors are left with no way to connect to

their followers, no way to build community and utilize email marketing to further engagement. Indie authors are kept in the dark and expected to keep churning out content—at their own expense—for retailers to exploit.

This is the greatest challenge in front of authors trying to decide whether or not to produce their book in audio. Many excellent books never make it into audio due to the very reasonable concern that they may never earn as much as it costs to produce. The problem is not actually the cost of production, but rather the inability and lack of access that in combination prevent them from getting a return.

Direct Sales - Community, Team & Support

While there are a couple options for direct sale from an author’s website, including Book Funnel and Shopify, each of these options incur significant monthly fees. Selling from your own website has an additional challenge: discoverability. Having your audiobook in a platform with other audiobooks can provide the advantage of listeners discovering your audiobook while shopping for another. On the flip side, in a catalog with over 200K titles, your book can quickly get lost in the overcrowded store. Ongoing marketing will always be a key to success.

Towards a More Equitable Audiobook Industry

(Cont'd)

Yet most retail platforms are focused on their *own* success in selling subscriptions, not the author's success or bottom line. There are no tools to help authors succeed. While Amazon offers some tools for use with print and ebook formats, there are currently no options for audio. Even if there were, the royalty crumbs left for the authors would largely offset the value of time spent.

Most audiobook retailers are also far out of reach for any communication or cooperation on promotions. On Chirp you can apply for a promotion, but most authors won't get past that hurdle. Indie authors and small publishers need to be able to run their own promotions, but without a platform where they can control pricing on their audiobooks, it's not an option.

Until now.

Robin Hood is Here!

With the release of the **AMPLify Audiobooks™** app and platform that provides direct dashboard control, Pro Audio Voices (PAV) is disrupting the audiobook industry and leading the way to a more just system for independently published authors and small publishers.

The **AMPLify Audiobooks™** platform puts authors in control of their own work, provides

tools and a team, and connects authors with their followers to build community—all while delivering much higher royalties from every sale. For example, an audiobook that sells for \$14.95 (the typical price of one subscription credit), earns an author less than \$2.62. The same sale on **AMPLify Audiobooks™**, where the author decides the price, earns \$9.72. Per sale! That adds up fast.

AMPLify Audiobooks™ authors are able to set up their own promotions through coupons and scheduled pricing discounts. They can employ a wide range of related marketing tools that PAV provides, including monthly mentoring calls with marketing experts. They can stop struggling to win at the Amazon game, where the rules aren't clear and keep changing, and where the payoff is tiny. Finally, authors have a platform of their own, where they can creatively market and promote their audiobooks!

Listener Impact & the Etsy of Audiobooks

“I believe that fundamentally, most people care about the impact they have in the world. If they understood how little of their spending dollars for an audiobook actually get to the author when they buy from Audible and the like, I think they'd think twice. **AMPLify Audiobooks™** gives power back to the consumers as well.

Towards a More Equitable Audiobook Industry (Cont'd)

From the listener side of things, there's a growing awareness of the value and importance of buying local and buying direct from the creators. Etsy, for example, rose out of the need for artists to stop starving and start thriving. The only way to do that in our current economy is for creators to reclaim the revenue taken by retailers and sell direct. Through **AMPLify Audiobooks™**, audiobook listeners can now join that movement to support the authors they love and to help them thrive.



The **AMPLify Audiobooks™** app, available in both app stores, delivers a great listening experience, which is a top priority for customers. PAV also encourages listeners to alert their favorite authors and suggests participating authors invite their colleagues to join **AMPLify Audiobooks™**.

AMPLify Audiobooks is a movement, not just a platform. We're fighting for a more equitable and just audiobook world, where creators thrive and listeners know they're having a positive impact. Together, we can make a difference!

Becky Parker Geist is CEO of Pro Audio Voices Inc, President of Bay Area Independent Publishers Association, and host of Audiobook Connection—Behind the Scenes with the Creative Teams. Her debut novel, *The Left Turn*, the first in the Split Universe series, which explores self discovery and discoveries in new science through contemporary metaphysical fiction in the context of parallel universes, is available for purchase on [AMPLify Audiobooks™](#) and at your favorite retailers in all formats

AMPlify Audiobooks™



AUTHORS: AMPlify Audiobooks™ is for authors who are eager to sell their audiobooks but face challenges with not knowing how to get started with marketing, or perhaps have already experienced the barriers that prevent them from having any control. AMPlify Audiobooks™ provides an online store with a suite of **marketing tools** and a **platform** that enables authors to have **way more control**, **earn much higher royalties**, and **engage with a motivated author community** as well as their own customers.

LISTENERS: AMPlify Audiobooks™ is an app developed for listeners who are **tired of their purchases lining the pockets of billionaire** and mega-corporations. With AMPlify Audiobooks™, listeners have a **direct impact**, because the **money you spend actually reaches the authors** who have **dedicated their lives** to creating those audiobooks. It's a human-centric way of buying your audiobooks, prioritizing the power of human connection, and changing the world one audiobook at a time.



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Poems and prose use imagery, rhyme, metaphors, and structures within the body of work. The details that are added to the poems without being literal are carried in through techniques used by the poets. Every poet has his or her own technique and life that is brought into each poem that is written. The diction provided by the poet may differ, some use the language of the time the poem is being written, and some poets use past language, such as the use of old English. However, if a poet was writing the poem several centuries ago, the language of old English, may as well be current. Three poets that stand out with the different writing techniques are William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Robert Burns (1759–1796), and Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906).

Red Red Rose

Robert Burns, born in Scotland, wrote the poem Red Red Rose, which was published in 1794. The poem is written in ballad stanzas, since the poem



was inspired by an old Scottish folk song. The poem falls into the category of love and romance.

Imagery

Burns imagery is direct as he compares his love (spelled Luvie by Burns) to a “red red Rose,” (Burns, 1794), and he goes on to compare her to a “melody that’s sweetly played in tune,” (Burns 1794).

Rhythm

The ballad’s use of rhythm and structure are what makes it fall into the ballad format of poetry. The most standout part of the poem is not just the theme of the poem, which is romance

Figuratively by Amy Shannon

and his love for his “luve,” but how the poem flows when reading.

Structure

Burns uses the rhythmic structure of ABCB. Burns uses words such as “O” which is repeated throughout the poem, as well as other repetitive phrases, such as “O my Luve.” Burns also used the diction of his native Scotland, when he refers to his Luve as “my bonnie lass.”

Metaphor

Burns uses metaphor elements throughout his ballad. The rose in the title and within the ballad itself is the metaphor that refers to his luve. He uses hyperbole when he refers to loving her as “So deep in luve am I; And I will luve thee still, my dear, Till a’ the seas gang dry.” (Burns, 1794) and then he repeats for more effect by stating “Till a’ the seas gang dry, my dear, And the rocks melt wi’ the sun; I will love thee still, my dear, While the sands o’ life shall run.” (Burns, 1794).



When, in Disgrace with Fortune and Men’s Eyes

William Shakespeare, born in England, wrote “When, in Disgrace with Fortune and Men’s Eyes,” also known as Sonnet 29. Sonnet 29 is one of 154 sonnets that were published in 1609.

Imagery

Shakespeare used the imagery throughout the sonnet. The first few lines use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic imagery. In line one, the use of visual imagery as he writes “in disgrace with fortune and men’s eyes,” (Shakespeare, 1609). This imagery sends a negative message as if many were looking at him with disgrace. The

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sonnet is written with a deep depression that adds to the imagery of the sonnet. The use of the words “beweep” and “bootless cries” gives the reader the sense of a man who is uncontrollably crying. The imagery flows throughout the sonnet.

Rhythm

Shakespeare followed a pattern of rhyme throughout the sonnet by having every other line rhyme as well as the final two lines rhyme. The flow of the sonnet provided a beat that gave the reader the sense of despair of the writer. Shakespeare’s word placement was carefully executed to create not only the rhyme but evoke the emotions to the reader. “With what I enjoy contented least, Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising.” (Shakespeare, 1609).

Structure

The rhythm structure of the sonnet was a typical English structure of ABAB CDCD EBEB FF. The sonnet followed the correct 14 lines in order to



be considered a sonnet. Shakespeare also wrote the sonnet with the iambic pentameter format. Shakespeare finishes the play with a rhymed couplet, “For they sweet love rememb’red such wealth brings that then I scorn to change my state with kings.” (Shakespeare, 1609).

Metaphors

Shakespeare’s Sonnet 29 follows the theme of sadness and depression. The use of metaphors flow throughout

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the sonnet. “Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,” (Shakespeare, 1609) describes his sadness and lack of hope, as well as his desire to be happy when all he can be is sad and depressed. “Haply I think on thee, then my state, like to the lark at break of day arising.” (Shakespeare, 1609).

We Wear the Mask

Paul Laurence Dunbar, born in the United States, wrote, “We Wear the Mask” in 1896. His poem “We Wear the Mask” was about living on the plantation. Dunbar’s parents were emancipated slaves that lived in Ohio.

Imagery

Dunbar uses the references of personification of the “mask” as imagery. In the first line of the poem, he writes, “We wear the mask that grins and lies,” (Dunbar, 1896) which gives human qualities to the mask. However, the mask is a figurative and not a literal mask, the personification and then describing it as a disguise, adds more imagery. “It hides our cheeks and

shades our eyes,” (Dunbar, 1896), informs the readers that in order to survive, they must hide who they really are and how they really feel.

Rhythm

The use of the words “We Wear the Mask” throughout the poem reiterates the point of the mask as well as provides needed repetition in the poem. The subtleties of the phrase “we wear the mask” bring in the punctuation and placement of the phrase. The poem ends abruptly with the exclamation point. Throughout the poem, Dunbar uses words such as “tears,” “cries,” and “sighs” which present the rhythm as well as the declaration of hidden sadness.

Structure

The rhyme structure of the poem “We Wear the Mask” is AABBC AABD AABBAC. By reiterating rhymes back to previous lines, it adds a rhythm and structure that lends to the emotions of the poem. “This debt we pay to human guile; With torn and bleeding hearts we smile.” (Dunbar, 1896), lends to the

Figuratively by Amy Shannon

emotions of the poem as it connects with a few lines below “Nay, let them only us while.” (Dunbar, 1896).

Metaphor

Dunbar’s “mask” is the metaphor that is maintained throughout the poem. His mask is what hides the true emotions by pasting a fake smile on their faces as they muffle their own inner cries. “Why should the world be over-wise, In counting all our tears and sighs?” (Dunbar, 1896) declares that the mask is there for one reason, so no one will ever know the sadness that is within them.

All three poems are different in the format, such as ballad, sonnet, and poem, but the connection of the way the work was written and the techniques used by each poet is clearly relatable. The imagery, rhyme, structure, and metaphors fall into place into each work by the poets. The structure and technique used by the poets allow the

reader to get a sense of the feelings and emotions within the work as well as the feelings and emotions that were behind the work. Burns wrote about love, an everlasting love. Shakespeare wrote about depression and sadness. Dunbar wrote about hiding ones sadness with a smile. Each poet wrote about a strong emotion without stating it, just painting the emotion with words.



Gary Orleck's Travels With Maurice: An Outrageous European Adventure in 1968

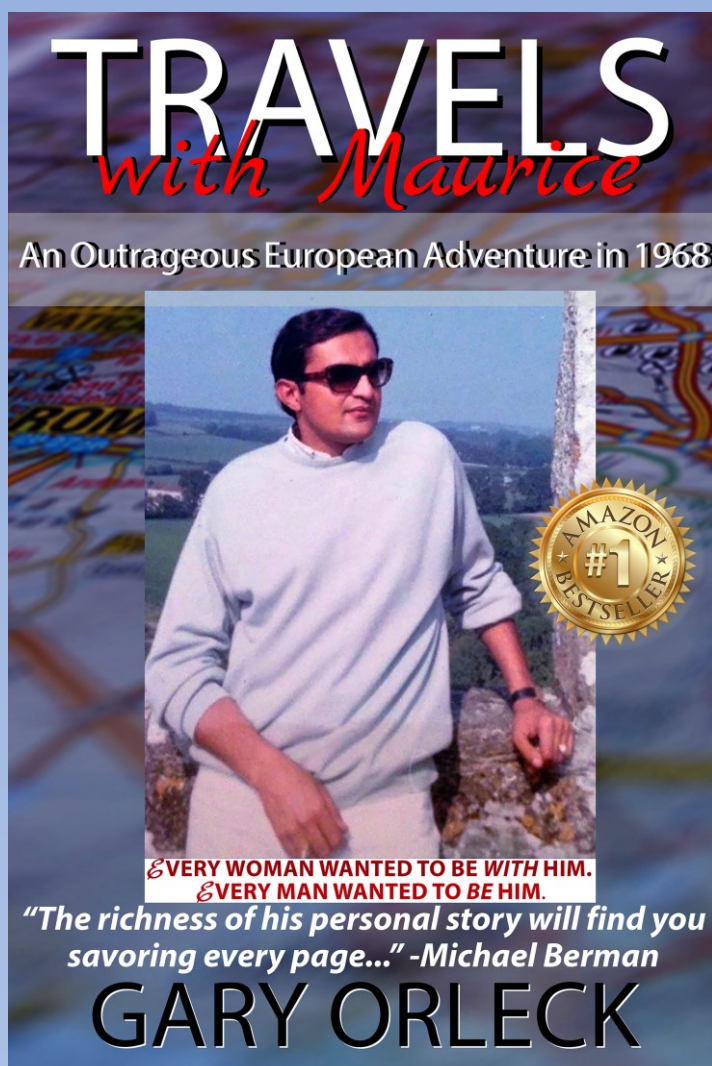
EVERY WOMEN WANTED TO BE WITH HIM. EVERY MEN WANTED TO BE HIM!

An unbelievable story, yet it's true because nobody could make this story up- NOBODY.

The 19,985 miles, 12 country adventure in 1968, Gary and Maurice, formed a formidable friendship, while perusing the London music scene, which included The Who, Elton John, The Rolling Stones and even the Beatles. Maurice, son of the richest Iranian man, shares his life and culture with Gary, as they dined with Kings and Queens, gambled with Shah of Iran and his wife-Her Royal Highness Empress Farah, while also learning the ins and outs of The Iranian government, its corruption, and the reasons the Shah was doomed to fail.

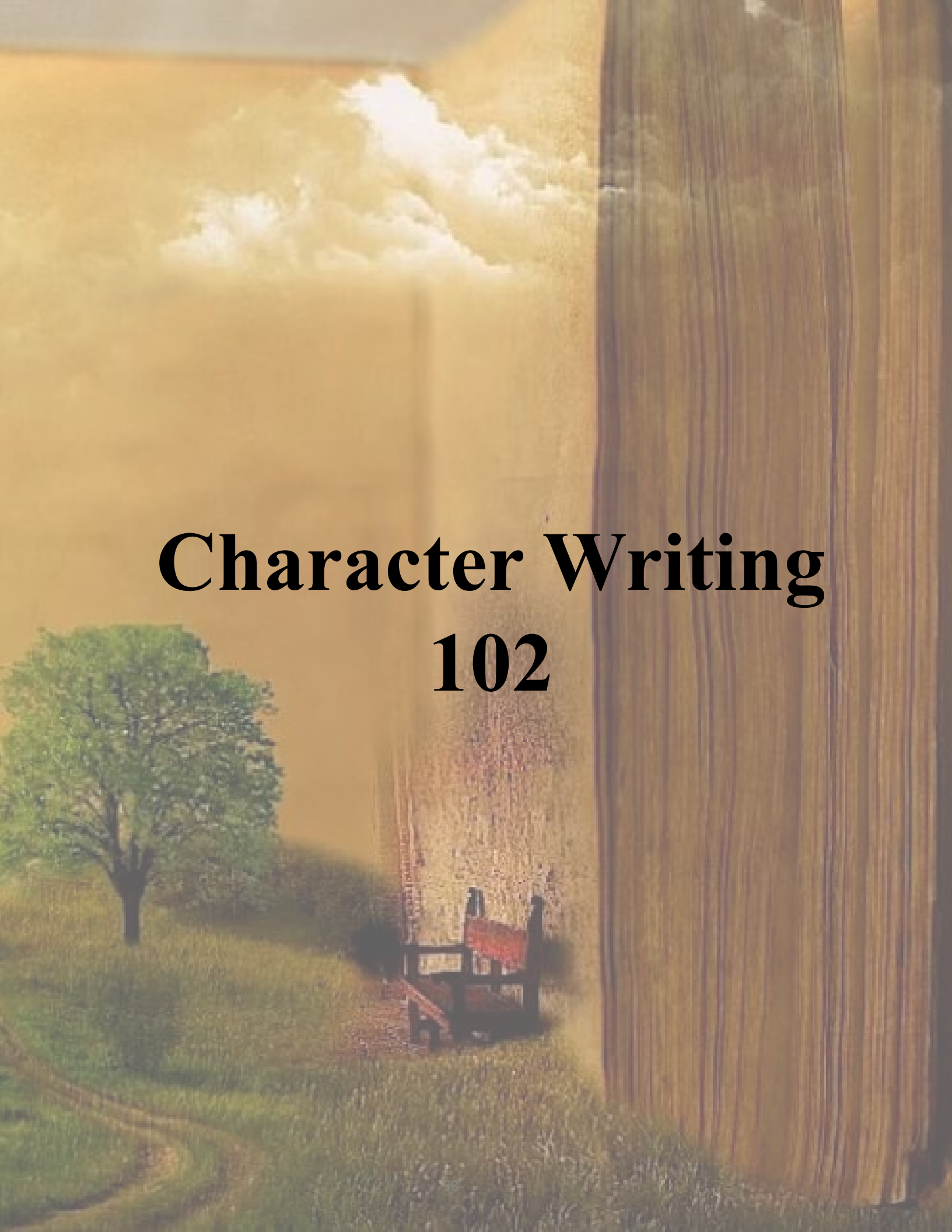
See them come of age while rubbing elbows with other famous persons, asked to dance by Brigitte Bardot, was even rescued out of handcuffs by Shirley Temple Black during the Russian Invasion of Czechoslovakia during the summer of 1968.

A simple "thank you" led to the trip of a lifetime!



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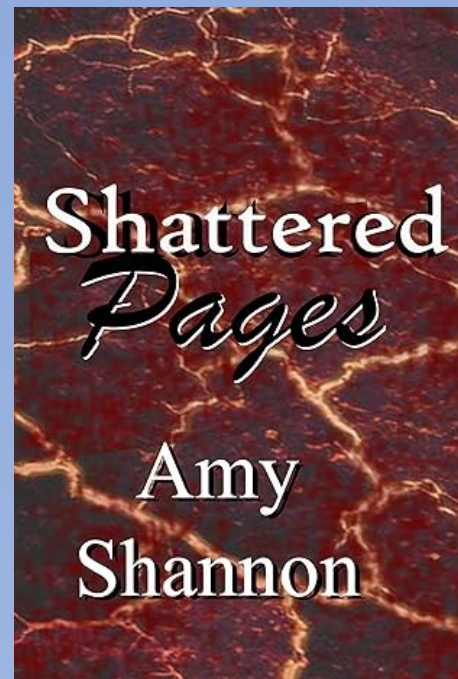
Character Writing

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Accessorizing

Not every character needs the writer to describe in complete detail about the clothing or dress of a character, but sometimes it is needed to show the audience something about the character. Sometimes the clothes make the character, or at least give some insight into their personality, stature, career or wealth.

If the character is very wealthy, yet eccentric (or just plain strange), dress can show just how eccentric a character is, without telling the reader. In the instance of my story, “Shattered Pages”, main character Lincoln “Link” McLaren is a best-selling mystery writer, but also eccentric. Link’s back story comes in to play to show why he is the way that he is, but also his dress (or nudity, as he prefers to write his stories while naked) shows the reader how he can be both exposed and guarded at the same time. When he wears socks, they are mismatched. His housekeeper is constantly reminding him to wear clothes, at least shorts or a robe.



For the character “Savvy Macavoy” in my books “Smashed: A Savvy Macavoy Story” and “The Relic: A Savvy Macavoy Story”, the character of Savvy dresses very casually, always wearing the same types of clothes, such as corduroy or denim jeans, linen shirts, and always brown sandals.

Tools of the Trade

When giving the character a career, the writer should have knowledge of what supplies, equipment, weaponry, or other accessories (including proper dress) is used to perform the job. The

Accessorizing

list of career categories and their “accessories” below is just a small example of basic careers (where many more specific job titles would fall under) and what is needed to perform the duty in the job. (For a list of “careers” go to the [Resources](#) page).

Law Enforcement. This refers to, but is not limited to, police, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), or Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). For a character that is in some form of law enforcement, the equipment or supplies, and even procedures are important to give more credibility of the character. If the character serves a specific agency, and the agency is a real agency, the writer should do research on ranks, policies, procedures, departments, and how the particular character would fit in.

If the character is a police officer, the writer should know what color uniform the officer wears, what color is the badge (and what they call a badge).



For example: NYPD officers all refer to their badge, no matter the rank, as a “shield”), as well as required department, and equipment necessary to full fill their jobs, such as weaponry (know the type of weapons any character may carry), duty belts, batons or night-sticks, tasers, etc.). I found a good reference book for me in order to better understand law enforcement agencies is called *Howdunit Book of Police Procedure and Investigation: A Guide for Writers 1st Edition*, by Lee Lofland (details are on the [Resources](#) page).

The characters will have to know how to address superiors as well as subordinates. The writer should also

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know the differences of the ranks, rank grades, and titles within the law enforcement, as in the FBI some are SSA (Supervisory Special Agents) and some who work for the FBI are not agents, or they are supervisors, directors, or leads. Accessing the FBI website can provide a lot of details on the bureau, its responsibilities, as well as qualification requirements.

Military. If one or more of the characters are veterans, or active duty members of one of the five branches of the armed services, the writer should research that specific branch/branches of the service, along with the rank, and dress. There are different uniforms for different occasions, and on dress uniforms there are ribbons and service awards that are mandatory. It is also important to know the order in which the ribbons and medals are placed. If someone is active duty, or “retired,” the character may talk or act like he/she is in the service. Saluting commanding officers is an imperative act, and the



commanding officer returns the salute. The characters will have to know how to address superiors as well as subordinates.

There is specific jargon to the armed forces, and some that is specific to the branch of service. Some even use their battle cry in certain situations, commonly used in a verbal greeting or expression of enthusiasm. The marines battle cry is *oorah*, where the army's battle cry is *hooah* and both the navy's and coast guard's battle cry is *hooya*. The air force doesn't have a specific one, but they often use *hooah*, the same as the army's.

Health Care. Health care professionals are doctors, nurses, technicians or anyone who works in the healthcare field. Whether the setting for the health

Accessorizing

a specialty, the writer needs to learn about the specialty. When I make up something in the healthcare field, I use medical terminology to fit the disease or medication. I've used Merckmanual.com (see [Resources](#) page) for help with medical terminology.

I recently wrote a storyline that had to do with a kidney transplant, so I researched what would happen to both the donor and recipient, as well as how it would be done, and what side effects could happen, so I could write it accurately.

Also, not all doctors are medical doctors; some doctors have their doctorate, which also makes them a doctor by title. The writer should know the background or education of the characters, even where they would have graduated from school, and the process they had to take to become where they are. Medical doctors that have specialties may not just have an M.D (Medical Doctor) behind their name.



Doctors of Obstetrics have DO after their name. Some may also have a Ph.D *and* a medical doctor degree. The writer should also know the amount of time in college and what other type of training the doctors had to do to become doctors, such as internships, rotations, and residencies. There are also different types of eye doctors or dentists.

I have many doctors in my MOD Life Epic Saga, and some in a few other stories, and I have done research on the character's specialties. I've read some books on medical technology (and the website that I've mentioned earlier) and have used references such as *The American Medical Association (AMA)* website, which also has some other great links and references. And for drugs

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and medications, use *The Physicians' Desk Reference Book* or the same information can be accessed on PDR.Net (*Prescribers Digital Reference*) for the drug types and names.

There is also a great article written by a doctor as a guest columnist on Writer's Digest.com; the link is on the resources pages.

Firefighters. Firefighters have a lot of equipment, including their different types of trucks, as well as their turn-out gear. They also have dress uniforms. The truck color is usually red, but there are fire stations that have white or even yellow trucks. The writer should be familiar with the procedures and ranks of the firefighter, and what tasks they are to perform. For more information on firefighters, check out the Firefighter Nation website; the link is on the resources page. Some firefighters may refer to the fire station as either "the house" or "the station."

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics. The biggest differences between paramedics and EMTs are the training and exactly what they can and cannot do. EMTs have less training hours and can do less than paramedics. Paramedics usually have a 2-year degree. Some firefighters may be paramedics or EMTs, but not all EMTs or Paramedics are firefighters. Paramedics and EMTs may have an emergency truck or use an ambulance. For more information on education and training for a EMT or Paramedic, check out the website; the link is on the resources pages.

Lawyer. Lawyers, in some states, such as California, Virginia, Vermont, and Washington are not required to have a law degree, if they just pass the bar and do an internship. However, the majority of lawyers have law degrees. Lawyers do have to pass the bar in all the states they wish to practice in. The type of lawyer the character is, can be determined by where they went to school, and what type of place they

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work in. There are major differences between public defenders, prosecutors, single lawyer-firms, or major firms with partnerships and associates. Lawyers may specialize in a specific type of law, such as criminal, family, or malpractice cases (those are just a few examples, there are many types of law). One place to get a list of law types is on *The Lawyer Portal* website, the link is on the resources pages.

If part of the story takes place in a courtroom, the writer researches on procedures in court, how to address staff in a courtroom, how to ask the pertinent questions, and give opening and closing statements. A courtroom would have some specific décor. In a recent story I wrote that had scenes that were courtroom-based, I made sure that the opening statement of the bailiff was accurate, as well as the décor, showing the county crest, along with the American Flag, the scales of justice held by the blind statue, and other courtroom settings, such as the jury box, the tables where the prosecutor and defendant sit, and the galley where the observers sit.

Court procedures and laws should be researched to make the story as accurate as possible, and even if something is made up, it should sound logical to the story.

Author/Writer. (old school or latest tech): If the writer is writing about a writer or author, they should explore different writing styles or quirks about how someone writes. To see others writing styles, read several books with different genres and different authors. The writer may not want to write about a writer with their own writing style, or they may want to mimic themselves in some way. Some writers write everything in long hand and then have someone transcribe it (or they do it themselves). Some writers only use manual typewriters or electric typewriters, while others use notebooks and a computer (the last one is me). The writer should decide what the writer writes about. Is it a book? Is the writer a journalist?

Is this a writer who writes mystery novels and now someone is using the book as a murder map? (That last one is

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a basic synopsis of my book *Shattered Pages* by Amy Shannon). I thought it would be an interesting story to write about a writer. I recently wrote a short story, also about a writer, but he wrote about serial killers, and he thought he needed to perform the exact action, in order to write about it. (This story has not yet been published, and it is still a work in progress).

Business Owner. The character that owns a business would manage their business in ways that affect its customers or clientele. A restaurant or bar owner would run their business differently than a person who owns a retail store, an accounting firm, or even a grocery store. (Those are just examples). A restaurant owner may also be a chef, or they just hire a chef, while they handle the business and administration work. Some doctors may have their own private practice, so that is also considered a business, as they

have patients. A doctor would run the office differently than if he or she just worked in a hospital or a clinic. Any business owner may have managers, or assistants, and they would have some staff. Maybe the business is the main setting of the story, or just part of the story. It could be where all the action is, or where the character feels the safest.

I couldn't list every career that there is in the world, but research on whatever career is chosen so it can be accurate and be reflected in the character of the characteristics.



Bob Freeman's H2LiftShip series

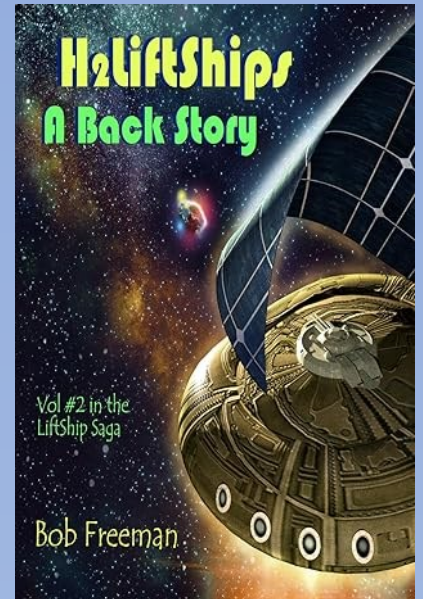
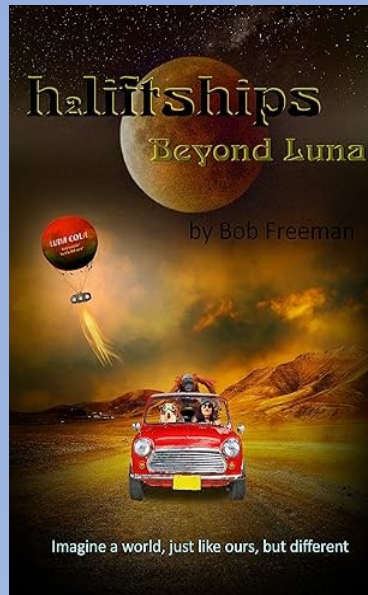
The H2LiftShip series is a unique and refreshing take on the space exploration genre, blending hard science, humor, and creativity.

Beyond Luna is a world that's part Road-Trip, part solar sailing, always with food, gambling, jail, and pirates.

A Back Story where the LunaCola's crew sits down to play cards, celebrate a job well done, and recollect the past but there's still plenty that still has to come to light, as everyone has a back story.

BosonsWave get's prepared for the ultimate showdown between H2LiftShip LunaCola and its enemies.

BosonWaves² pits the symbiotic combination of semi-sentient AI tablets and algal rocket ships against the Heliospheric Navy.



amazon

Advertisement

A vibrant sunset or sunrise over a body of water. The sky is filled with horizontal bands of color, ranging from deep purple at the top to bright yellow and orange near the horizon. The sun is partially visible as a bright yellow-orange glow just above the water's surface. The word "Poetry" is written in a black, serif font, centered in the upper half of the image.

Poetry

Kris Falcon - Some blue, a little spur

5 Stars

Kris Falcon writes a majestic painting with her words

This collection of poetry by Kris Falcon is a remarkable work of words. The words almost float across the pages, engrossing the reader. You can almost feel you're entering her imagination and the world that she creates with her glorious poetic prose. I enjoyed reading this collection, and entering the mind of this prolific poet. Such a wonderful read. My favorite was Five in Tranquility which starts with I did open. I daydreamed. I liked this so much, I read many of the poems twice. Kris Falcon has a way with expression and her words. She is one amazing poet, a modern day classic, if you ask me. Another one of my favorites was Turn to Nature. This collection has a grandly written selection of poetry by Kris Falcon, and if you like poetry as much as I do, you'll enjoy reading this book, repeatedly, even marking some pages to read again and again. I look forward to reading more by this poet.



A misty autumn forest scene. A path covered in fallen orange and red leaves leads into the distance. A large tree trunk with green moss is on the right. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The text "Short Stories" is centered in the middle of the image.

Short Stories

“No one could make this up” by Gary Orleck

Gary Orleck is the author of *Travels with Maurice: An Outrageous European Adventure in 1968*, where he tells the incredible story of a vacation he spent with a larger-than-life friend of his, Maurice. Gary is sharing this story, and even though it is a short story, it is true, because all of Gary's stories are based on facts.

In 1963, I decided to choose Babson College in Wellesley, Mass, an all-boys' school of only 650 male students. But my decision to go to college had nothing to do with knowledge, as you will see.

My room was a tri-corner room, with three of us newbies in it. Ronnie and Frankie were both from Connecticut, while I was from Rhode Island. The second night, Ronnie, who was also a basketball fanatic, was dribbling his ball, when our door flew open and a 6-foot tall, stocky guy yelled out as he entered our room, “Whomever is dribbling that basketball above my head is in the for the beating of his life,”

I quickly decided that Ronnie, a skinny and meek guy, would not be able to defend himself. So, I got up from my bed and looked the aggressor in the eye, while calmly saying, “You'll have to go through me first.”

He looked back at me, shocked and said, as he retreated quickly with his tail between his legs, “This better not happen again.”

Now, I am not the biggest guy or the bravest, but I decided that I couldn't stand by and watch him wipe the floor with my newfound roommate, who at the time didn't even realize he was doing something wrong. I knew I could handle myself in a fight, and even if I didn't win, at the very least, he would've known he was in a fight. That is just my nature. Well, as you will see, I paid a very steep price for my gallantry.

The next week, Frankie and I decided to pledge the best fraternity on campus, and we went through hazing for two weeks. I was blackballed as Frankie got in, and while I never disparaged him, if I got in and he didn't, I wouldn't have accepted the fraternity that took me and not my roommate.

About a year later, I found out that it was my not so friendly roommates' attacker, and instead of wanting a guy who stood up to his brothers, he wanted to punish me, and one black ball did just that.

Yes, it hurt for a while, but actually Frankie's decision to go on without me hurt me more. But as it turned out, it was one of the best things that could have happened to me. I turned my energy into finding a motel in the area where I could host parties with only the people I wanted to party with. After 12 phone calls, I was a little discouraged, but the manager of The Battle Green Inn, in Lexington, Don Anderson said, “I have a conference room that will hold 30-40 people, if I remove the table, and take 10 rooms at \$25 per

“No one could make this up” by Gary Orleck

room, and the party room would be free for the night, but someone has to be over 21. Are you?”

“No, but my buddy, Mike B is.”

“Well, then being Mike in to see me this Wednesday, as there is an agreement you must sign which either of us can break with a week’s notice.” This was music to my ears, and a dream come true, I thought to myself.

It started out with 10 couples, and I had a Tom Jones Party. Then a costume party, where the best costume won \$100. Then I had a party where the winning couple went to Bermuda, all expenses paid (that cost \$50 per couple). I even had a Roman Toga party, where everyone had to wear togas, and even a Bar Mitzvah. Ed, my Italian roommate, was at the one of the best and funniest parties I ever threw, and I threw a lot. On parent’s weekend, we took 50 rooms, and a great relationship was cemented between me and the manager.

Soon students from Babson that heard about my parties, begged me to allow them to join my parties. Some even called the hold directly, but the manager told them that I had to give permission, and they couldn’t get a room on party nights without it. Every student paid a few of \$20 per person, and I supplied the liquor, my own concoction of Hawaiian punch and vodka served out of a brand-new metal garbage can. This way I could control the drunkenness, and



since we all had rooms, no one drove after the party. I made sure of that by collecting car keys at the beginning of the party.

It was so successful that the VIP of the fraternity that blackballed me, joined my parties, and a lot of his brothers unsuccessfully tried to follow suit.

I was told my parties were better than theirs and they had problems getting members to stay involved. But the best thing was at the beginning of my senior year, the President of the fraternity called up to meet with me and said what I knew he would say. “We want you to join us as we were wrong for not taking you as a brother the first time. Please, join us.” And I laughed and said to them, “you only want me because of my ability to throw one heck of a party.”

So, I told them as politely as I could, “So sad, too bad, you guys missed your chance. “Who said revenge was not sweet? Honesty, I didn’t do it for revenge, it just happened that way.

Something's Wrong With Max by William Becker

(Part I)

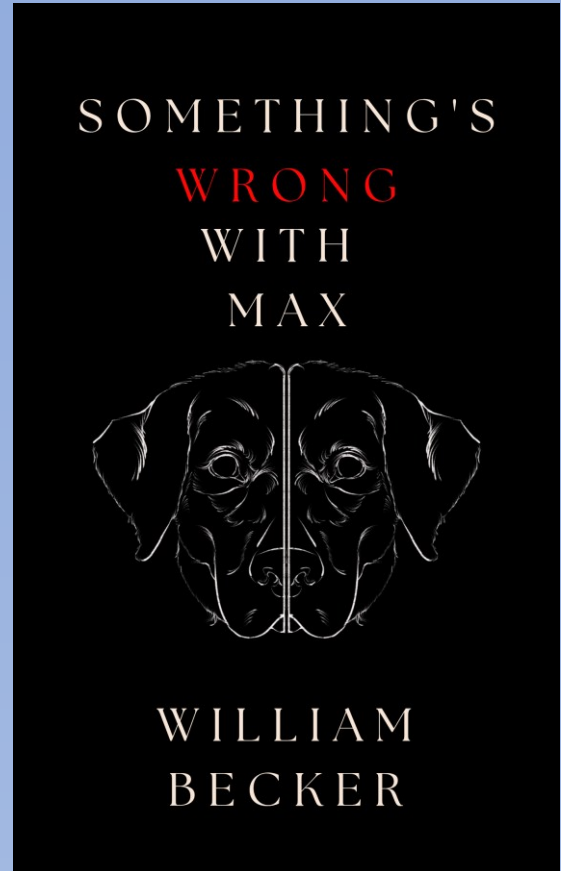
Max

I noticed something was wrong with Max one rainy day just before winter set in. It was cold enough to snow but I guess God had decided that he wanted it to piss down freezing rain instead. It was that time of year when the sun's hot but the wind was cold and when nothing good seemed to happen.

"Has anyone seen Max?" my dad had said that evening as we ate dinner over candlelight. My mom shook her head, sipping her red wine. The pot roast in front of us tasted soggy like the rain. It made my stomach flip just looking at it. I don't think any of us noticed he had slipped through the doggy-door earlier in the day. Usually on days like this, he came back on his own volition; Max hated the rain.

Max had been around as long as I had been alive; he was that stereotypical, suburban labrador retriever that had gotten so old he couldn't see and was basically a crusty decrepit mess. It was a wonder to my friends and family that he was still alive. He had a bad habit of urinating on the floor that he had developed in his twilight years, which would send my dad into an inconsolable rage. "Damn Dog," my dad would grumble across the house.

In the last year, it had become clear to most people that Max was slowing down, in fact when I asked my mom what was wrong



with him one day when I noticed he had been asleep for longer than usual, she just said, "Max is just getting old." Still, a lot of people would hear Max's snorting as he

slowly trotted around the house and look at him with this sense of disgust and pity, like he had some kind of illness or sickness that was beyond words, the same way that the privileged look at the poor or the same way people react when they hear someone coughing in public.

One of my uncles was visiting for Thanksgiving that year, took one look at him, and asked my dad, "are you gonna put him down soon?" My dad just shook his head. In truth, I think the reason we didn't was because

Something's Wrong With Max by William Becker

(Part I)

Max was always Max: a slightly overweight Labrador that stayed a little harsh in temperament, yet always seemed just happy enough to still be here. Living on a farm, you usually can get a better sense than the average folk when an animal's time has come. Max's time just hadn't come yet, my dad knew that I thought.

My dad and Max always had an interesting relationship. When Max got stinky, which given how often he rolled in poop outside, was once a week, my dad would take Max in the shower with him. At night, Max would always lay at my dad's feet and watch TV with him on our color display. I wonder if Max knew we were the only ones in the neighborhood with a color TV. That "damn dog," as my dad would call him, would thank my dad by peeing at the front door in the morning. One time, one of my dad's friends came over for dinner and talked about his daughter's hamster getting into the oven, then asked my dad, "you think Max is gonna die soon?" My dad just responded half-jokingly, "God willing."

This all goes to say that even though Max was ancient, decrepit, and grumpy, he was predictable, so when he didn't come back one rainy day, I think my whole family feared the worst.

"I'll go look for him," I announced, tired of the meal by then anyway.

"Wear a raincoat," my mom shot back, still into her wine and not actually really caring about the rain or Max.

The Shed

Max had this way of grunting sometimes when he was asleep that sounded like he was struggling to push out a bowel movement. It sounded more like a wild, guttural boar than a dog. It was nasally and unpleasant sounding but unmistakable, as no other domesticated animal on God's green earth makes a sound comparable to his grunts.

Max didn't often whine, in fact, he would usually snort or let out a deep bark to communicate with us. As I walked through the rain that sobbed down from the grey skies and past the woodshed at the back end of our property, I heard a grunt just beneath the steady rumble of the rain.

"Max?" I called out.

↑↑↑

The woodshed was a tiny little building that had come with the property when my dad first bought it. Its walls were constructed from ancient, nearly rotting wood and it was capped with a tin roof. My dad rarely used our fireplace because he said the heat bill wasn't too bad, only when the power went out in the dead of winter, but when he did, he'd walk through the snow with a wheelbarrow and fill it up with wood. He'd maybe cut down three trees a year to stock the shed, but otherwise, we rarely ventured over there. Plus, there usually were a lot of spiders and beehives that made it an even more unattractive place.

Something's Wrong With Max by William Becker

(Part I)

Max; however, when he was roaming around in the heat of summer, would use it as a place to rest, so we put a couple of old towels down for him to lay on so he didn't have to lie on the gravel floor.

As I stood in the rain at the entrance to the dark and cold shed, I immediately knew something was wrong with Max. He was lying on his side on top of the towels, his wet fur letting off a pungent odor even in the rain. I could see his beady black eyes look over at me. His tail slowly wagged in response to me.

"Max, buddy, you okay?" I whispered out. Max grunted back.

From what I could see, nothing appeared to be wrong on the outside. There was no blood matting his fur, nothing to suggest he'd gotten into it with a Coyote or racoon. In the dim sunlight piercing through the clouds, I could vaguely make out liquid slowly running in the fur around his belly near one of his fatty tumors. It was thicker than the rain water that he'd collected and ran down his side, pooling in a not-very-deep puddle over the towel.

Max grunted, this one shallower than the one before. He kept wagging his tail.

I reached down to pet him and feel his belly, hoping I could feel what was wrong

with him, only for my hand to meet a sticky, slimy substance that was warm to the touch, like a pus from an infection that was oozing out from him.

"Dad!" I called out to the house.

↑↑↑

"It's an infection, alright," my dad said after the two of us had wrapped him in the towels and carried him back inside to the living room. Max so far hadn't moved a muscle outside

of his tail. He would grunt every now and then, but otherwise, it was like he was unable to walk, like he was now just a warm body.

"We oughta clean him up and take him to the vet tomorrow morning. I'm gonna need your help."

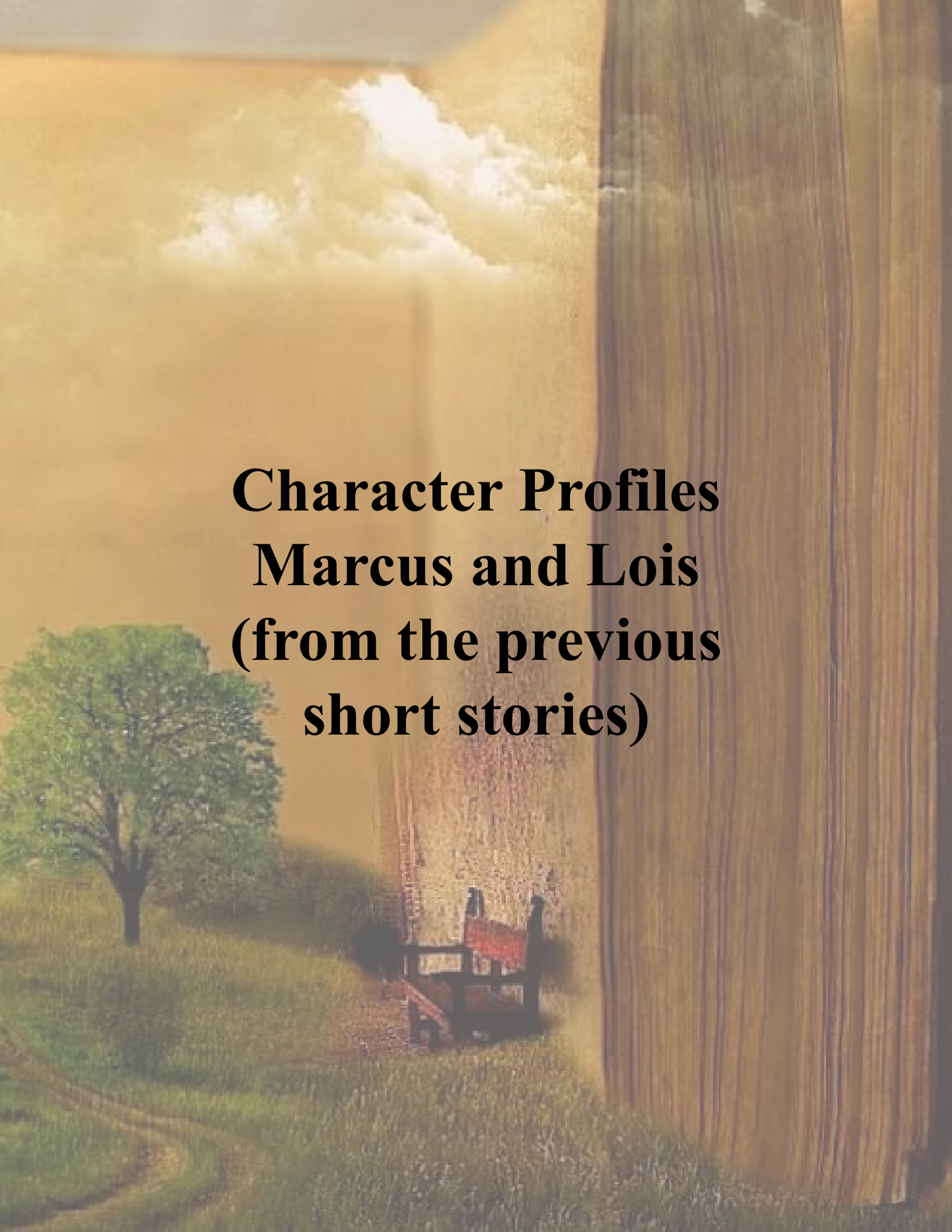
I cringed at the thought.

"Sometimes, this is part of the responsibility of having a pet. You gotta take care of them."

"Is he gonna be okay?"

My dad didn't reply. I don't think he knew what to say.

Part II in the next issue.



**Character Profiles
Marcus and Lois
(from the previous
short stories)**

Character Profiles: Marcus and Lois

Marcus “Sonny” Civitello

Basic Information

Marcus “Sonny” Civitello is a 35-year-old Italian Male, living in the United States. Civitello was born in Bronx, New York, but currently lives in Houston, Texas, where he works for Armitage Concepts, as a top-level computer programmer. Civitello is a single, straight male, who finds little time for committed relationships. He is an only child and was born to Eloise and Marcus Civitello. Both parents died in a plane crash when he was four years old. Civitello was raised by his paternal grandparents, Anna and Arturo Civitello. Anna passed away six years ago, and Arturo still lives in the Bronx, but is in constant contact with his grandson.

Physical Characteristics

Marcus Civitello is about 6’ 3” tall and weighs about 180 pounds. His dark eyes are almost black, and they match his black hair, which he wears short and slicked back. His face is oval and thin, but he has a distinguishing dimple in his right cheek, but not his left. He also has a slight cleft in his chin. He does not have a mustache, nor a beard, but he also has a long, thin faint scar that runs from his left ear to his chin.

Civitello dresses up for work, in a business suit, white or blue shirts and usually gray or black ties. Occasionally, he will wear a red tie.

When he reports to work, he always removes his suit jacket and rolls up his sleeves to just below the elbow. When Marcus dresses casual, he wears only single colored Polo shirts with either black denim jeans or black docker-style pants.

Mannerisms

Marcus speaks English but can also speak English and Spanish, and is familiar with American Sign Language, as his grandmother Anna was deaf. He doesn’t smoke cigarettes, but he will smoke the occasional cigar. He drinks top shelf scotch, as well as Cabernet Red wine. Marcus keeps in shape and works out at the local boxing ring. Marcus has other hobbies, aside from boxing. He loves to read, and collects First Edition books, and he also likes to cook.

Marcus used to stutter as a child and underwent intense speech therapy. He only stutters when he is excited, however, he doesn’t stutter when he speaks Italian. Many times, when he is angry or excited, he will speak Italian rather than English. Marcus has an extremely high IQ but sometimes, he likes to intimidate those who are not as intelligent as he is. Marcus is very self-confident, almost to a fault. He can be perceived as rude and antisocial, but he is very blunt, often too blunt. Marcus is never embarrassed by his actions or the actions of others and he never apologizes for himself.

Marcus is very close to his grandfather and visits him whenever possible. He tries to convince

Character Profiles: Marcus and Lois

his grandfather to move to Texas. Marcus likes his level at his company, but he has desires to have his own company. He likes to prove his skills as a programmer and often is called in to consult on law enforcement matters that pertain to computer crimes. He does not have the ability to train or teach others because he likes knowing more than others.

Lois Reeves

Basic Information

Lois Reeves is a 42-year-old white female, living in the United States. Reeves was born in Plattsburg, New York, but currently lives in Boston, Massachusetts, where she works for the Carlisle Construction Company as a structural engineer. Reeves is a widowed, straight female, who is wary of being involved with anyone since her husband, Jack, passed away two years ago. He was a Boston Police Officer killed in the line of duty. She is an only child and was born to Henry and Elena Maxwell. Both parents are still living in upstate New York yet are divorced.

Physical Characteristics

Lois is about 5' 3" tall and weighs about 120 pounds. She is a brunette, with wisps of gray and she had deep, dark, blue eyes. She always wears her hair pulled back into a ponytail. Her face is slightly round and her thin nose, slightly crooked from having been broken several times.

When she is on a job site, Lois wears denim blue jeans, blue or black tee shirts, as well as flannel shirts. If she needs to work in the main office, she wears short black skirts and white silk blouses, with her long gold locket. At home, she just relaxes in sweats or jeans.

Traits

Lois works long hours to help her forget that she is alone at home. She is still close with her mother but not so much her father. Lois has a small stature, so she makes up for it with being very vocal. She can speak softly, but also can be very commanding. Lois speaks only English and has a slight Boston-accent from her living in Boston for ten years. Lois constantly wears a pencil behind her ear, and carries a large black bag, that she carries everything she thinks she needs.

Though she runs a team of seven men, she can be very shy in social situations. She doesn't always know the difference between someone being nice and someone making a pass at her. The men on her team used to give her a hard time but have learned to accept her being their supervisor. She dreams to eventually own and run her own firm and is trying to save.

CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS



Frank C. Girardot Jr. - BECOMING CLARK ROCKEFELLER: Murder, Love, Deception, and the Con Man Behind It All

BECOMING CLARK ROCKEFELLER: Murder, Love, Deception, and the Conman Behind It All delves into the life of a young immigrant entangled in a multi-generational murder investigation ensnaring some of the wealthiest Americans. Posing as bogus aristocrat Clark Rockefeller, he duped the affluent, leaving a trail of deception and national headlines in his wake.

Yet the story would grow even more sinister. In 1985, Linda Sohus, a talented, outgoing artist, and her husband John, a computer geek with dreams of space, mysteriously vanished from their quiet San Marino, California life. But why? Were they on a secret government mission, chasing elusive dreams, or had something terrible happened to them? The police investigated while the public and media speculated. But all leads came to a dead end, and eventually, the mystery faded into the shadows.

Then, in 1994, a shocking backyard discovery reignited the case. Bones were unearthed, revealing a convoluted tale of murder, lust, and trickery. At its center, the same audacious grifter, whose real name was Christian Gerhartsreiter, who had conned his way into high society as Clark Rockefeller.

5 Stars

Frank C. Girardot Jr writes a detailed and intriguing, yet disturbing account of Clark Rockefeller.

Frank C. Girardot Jr. writes about the more-than-just an imposter, Clark Rockefeller. I am a fan of true crime stories. This is the first book written by this author that I've read. The story of Christian Gerhartsreiter, aka Christopher Kenneth Gerhart, aka Christopher Chichester, aka Christopher C. Crowe, aka Christopher Mountbatten and aka Charles Chip Smith. Christian Gerhartsreiter wasn't just a con-man who married a wealthy woman, and pretended he was one of the aristocratic Rockefellers, but lived off her money to maintain his high society profile. They had a child together, and when they divorced, he kidnapped their child, and the trail to finding background information on Clark Rockefeller led to dead ends. A couple disappeared. All trails that led to Rockefeller also faded as the mystery remained a mystery. This book was written very well. It was detailed and terrifying, and makes you wonder how this man could be so many different people, and yet, also keep his real persona a secret, but this was also the era of the 1980s and 1990s, a time much different from where we are now. People wrote handwritten letters, talked on telephones (yes, the ones with a cord), and no one was walking around tracking where others were. The technology and lifestyles were different then. The story starts in 1994, in San Marino California, where the Parada family just wanted to have a new pool put in, but they and their contractor, Joe Perez were shocked with what was unearthed. At first the box appeared, and then once lifted, there was a garbage bag, which at first was assumed to be dog bones, but it was much more. A human skull. That was just the beginning of the end for Christian Gerhartsreiter. It's an amazing story that proves once again that reality is much worse and stranger than fiction.

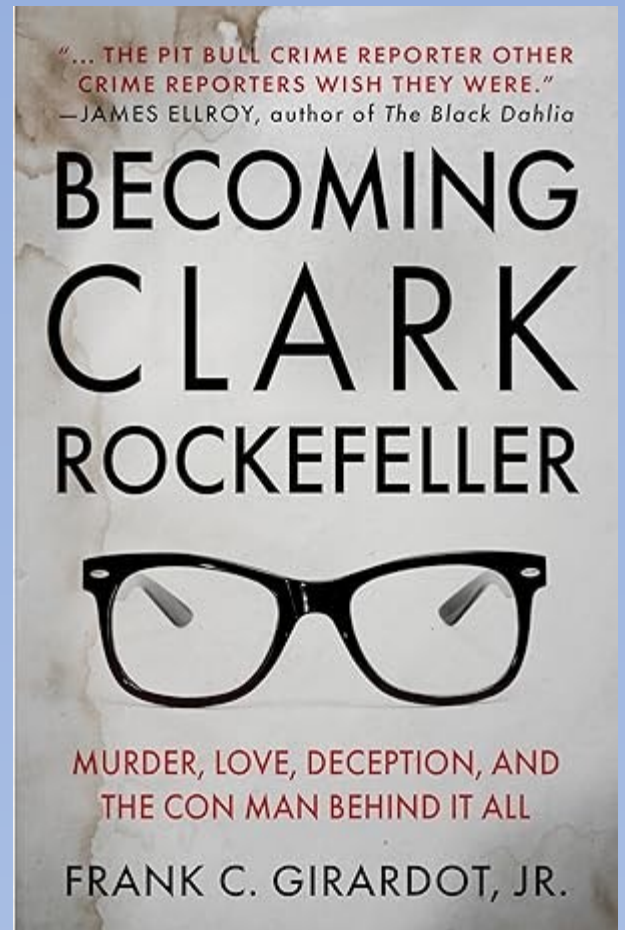
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In this thrilling true crime masterpiece, tenacious investigative journalist and bestselling author Frank C. Girardot unveils this transcontinental, decades-long mystery with interviews from witnesses, court documents, and exclusive insights from the con man himself.



Frank C. Girardot Jr. (continued)

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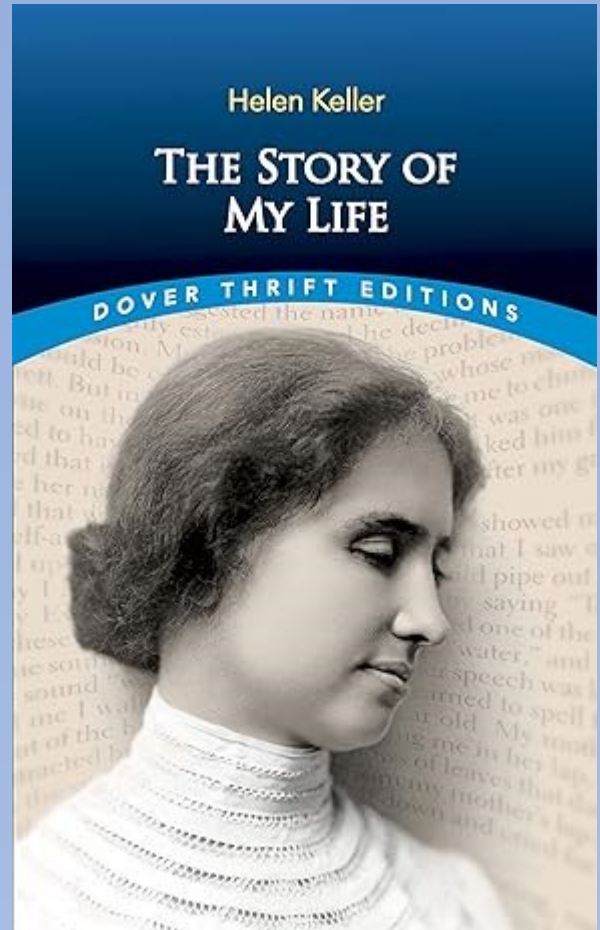
Amy's Personal Reads



Amy's Personal Read:

The Story of My Life By Helen Keller

When she was 19 months old, Helen Keller (1880–1968) suffered a severe illness that left her blind and deaf. Not long after, she also became mute. Her tenacious struggle to overcome these handicaps — with the help of her inspired teacher, Anne Sullivan — is one of the great stories of human courage and dedication. In this classic autobiography, first published in 1903, Miss Keller recounts the first 22 years of her life, including the magical moment at the water pump when, recognizing the connection between the word "water" and the cold liquid flowing over her hand, she realized that objects had names. Subsequent experiences were equally noteworthy: her joy at eventually learning to speak, her friendships with Oliver Wendell Holmes, Edward Everett Hale and other notables, her education at Radcliffe (from which she graduated cum laude), and—underlying all—her extraordinary relationship with Miss Sullivan, who showed a remarkable genius for communicating with her eager and quick-to-learn pupil. These and many other aspects of Helen Keller's life are presented here in clear, straightforward prose full of wonderful descriptions and imagery that would do credit to a sighted writer. Completely devoid of self-pity, yet full of love and compassion for others, this deeply moving memoir offers an unforgettable portrait of one of the outstanding women of the twentieth century.



The Story of My Life By Helen Keller cont'd

5 Stars

Helen Keller writes an intriguing memoir about her life in *The Story of My Life*

If you aren't familiar with Helen Keller, she was an author and advocate for disability rights. She was born in 1880, and at the age of 19 months, she got ill, and this illness (the actual illness has never been diagnosed), it left her being blind and deaf. I learned of Helen Keller when I was in grade school, and I read a book about her life, her first years of her life, and how hard it was for her and her family. People thought a deaf and blind child was dumb and could not learn, but she proved them all wrong. Helen wrote this story that takes place about her early years, but more importantly, the years after when she accepted Ann Sullivan as her teacher, and later, her companion and support. If you have read or seen the movie variations of *The Miracle Worker*, you have witnessed the first years of her life, her tantrums, her learning to spell and converse with her hands, and learn about life. In this book, the readers gets an understanding of why Helen was having tantrums, and how her family just let her do what she wanted, when all she wanted is to communicate with the world, and understand it. Helen Keller has written books and essays, and some fiction stories, and she was an advocate for the Blind, and she and Ann Sullivan started the American Foundation for the Blind. It had been a while since I had read anything she wrote, and this just renewed my interest in her other writings.





Recommended Children's Books

Julie Boglisch- The Raven's Crux

Genre: F/YA/Paranormal, Mystery

Ever since their mother's disappearance, Aiden and Noah, 13-year-old twins, have been moving from place to place with their detective father, Roger Raven. While Aiden is not too happy about it, Noah sees it as an opportunity to meet new friends.

That is, until they arrive in the town of Herisdell for their father's work, a seeming ghost town where it almost always rains.

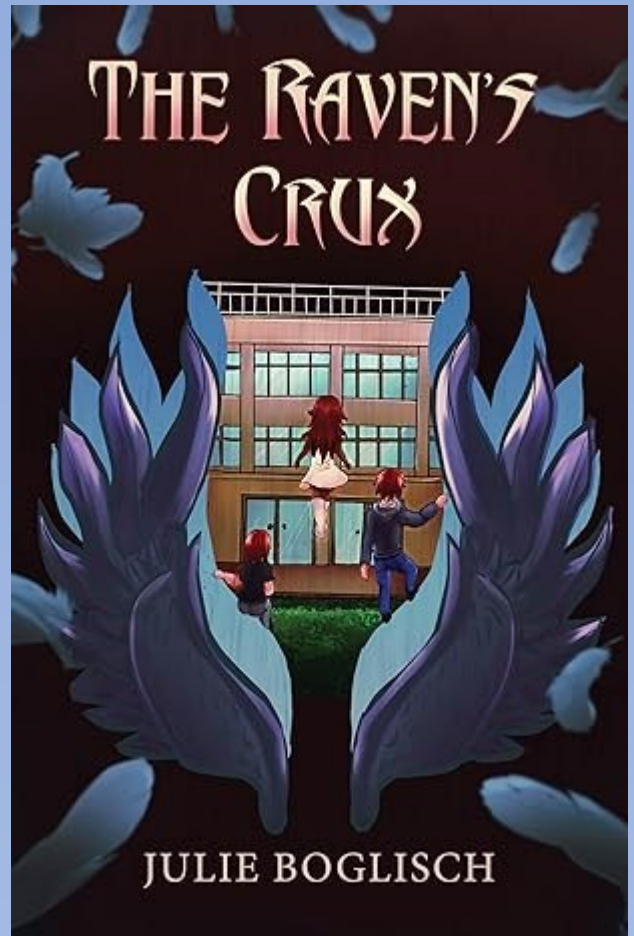
The boys soon find themselves wrapped up in the mysteries of the town including the disappearances of the residents, a boy at school who seems to have a connection to one of the missing people and the strange girl who appeared outside their window within hours of them settling in when no one should have known they had arrived yet.

Aiden and Noah are going to have to learn quickly what is going on. For it seems there is more to the town than meets the eye and it's even more dangerous for them than they could have ever imagined.

4 Stars

Julie Boglisch writes a young adult paranormal tale with *The Raven's Crux*

In *The Raven's Crux*, the reader is introduced to the Raven Family. Aiden and Noah are twins, and since they lost their mother, their father, Roger, moves them from place to place. Roger is a detective, and only knows that his wife disappeared. Each place they stay, isn't for long, until they hit what seems to be an abandoned, ghost town, where it always rains. 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. I applaud authors who write for children and young adult, without writing down to them, as if they had to dummy down the story to meet the reading level. I've seen authors do that, and call it children's or young adult. Julie Boglisch writes very well, and I think this story can be enjoyed by young adults and not-so-young adults. She sets the tone for the mysteries of the Town, and shows how Aiden and Noah are more like their father than they want to be, especially when they are intrigued and set out to solve the primary mystery, where are all the residents. The story is both creepy and intriguing.



Sam Muller- I will Paint the Night

Genre: F/YA/Fantasy

Allii has a busy schedule.

Stay alive.

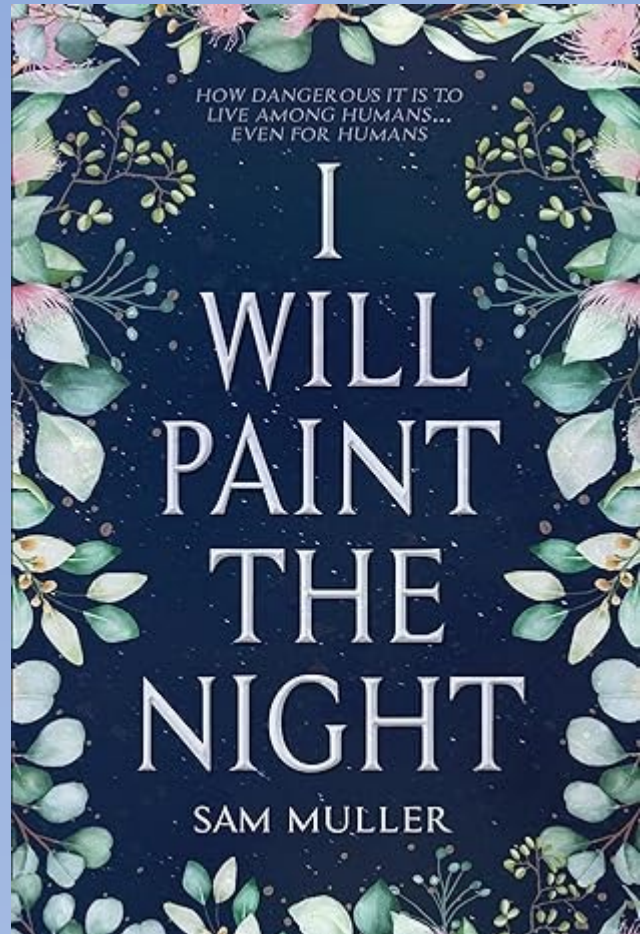
Find the killer of her beloved stepmother.

Stop her father's people from decimating her mother's people.

Allii is 17.

She has no family to back her, no army to protect her, no manifest destiny awaiting her.

Just Spooky, a daemon-dog who thinks humankind is beyond redemption.



4 Stars

Sam Muller writes a young adult fantasy with I will Paint the Night

In I will Paint the Night, the reader is introduced to Princess Allii, a young girl just on the verge of womanhood (she's 18), and she now has to deal with the outside, especially after her step mother Bellizza, has been killed. Allii has always been close to her stepmother, and always protected her, now Allii is looked at as a suspect in the poisoning. Sam Muller built a wonderfully complex and inventive world, Sallonia, within and beyond the Castle walls. 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. Everything is spread out for the readers, the details of the world, the persons in such a story making it feel so real. This story is a grand suspenseful story. A very unpredictable story, my favorite kind! It's an embraceable and emotional story, and not just about the genre of the fantasy, but in bringing the characters to life, and being able to relate to them. Waking up every morning, hoping you're not going to die today, is a big thing that many of us think of when our feet hit the floor in the morning.

AMY'S BOOKSHELF REVIEWS

**AMY'S
PICKS OF THE
MONTH**

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Yurie Kiri- Tokyo Games

Genre: F/Sci-fi/Japanese

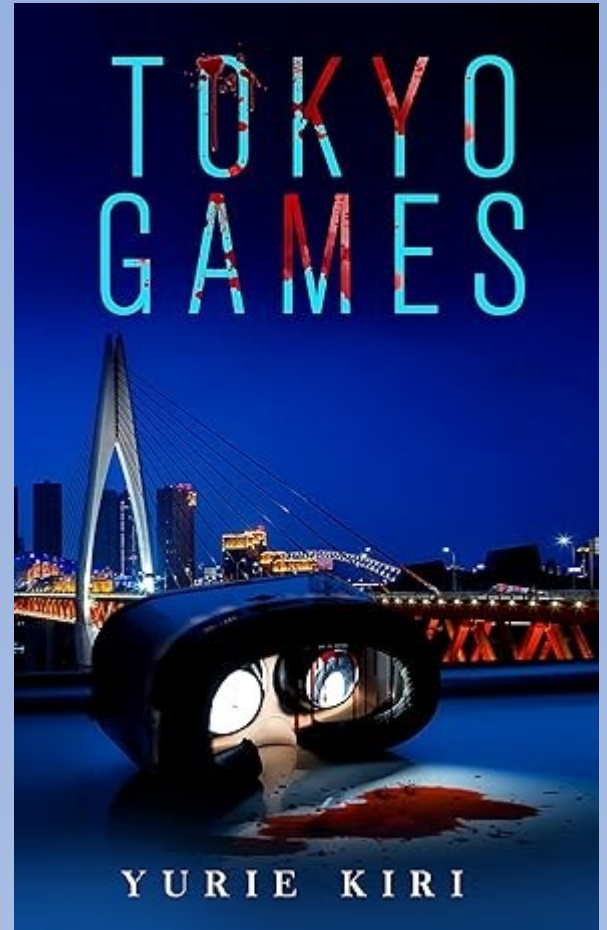
About Yurie Kiri- Tokyo Games

Virtual Reality Has Become All Too Real

Keith, wearing VR game glasses, stared through a secret window, horrified as Takafuji, a leading member of the Japanese government, raped and strangled their friend Melinda. "Stop!"

"Stop you fiend!" Hanako shouted as she began to pound loudly upon the window. "Stop! Stop!" She wanted to smash through the window and save her friend. But she could see that Melinda was already dead. She pounded harder in angry frustration.

Find more about Yurie Kiri at <https://www.yuriekiri.com>



Kathryn Knight- Ghost Moon

Genre: F/Paranormal/Romantic/Suspense

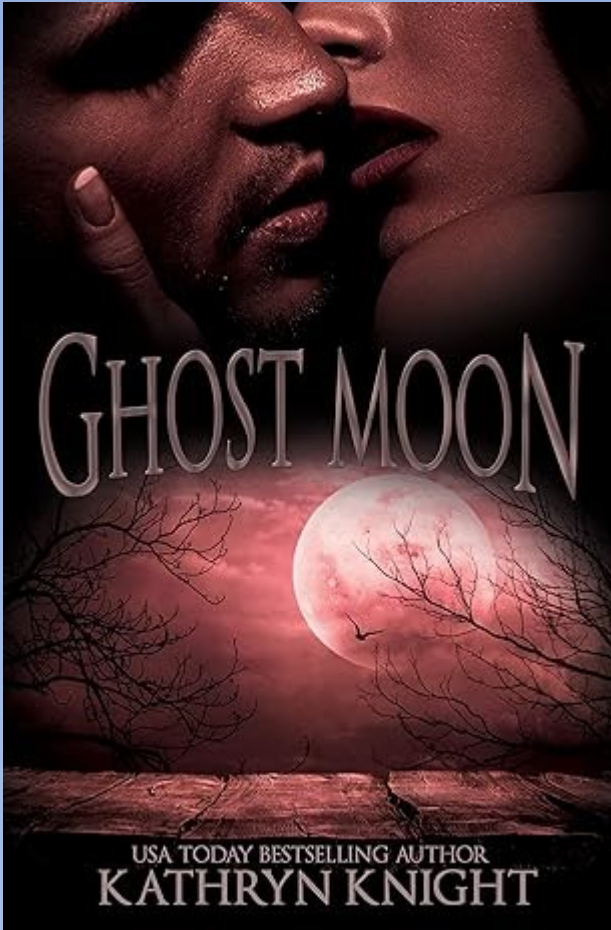
About Ghost Moon

When Lark Cavanaugh's life in New York City falls apart, she's left reeling from a staggering betrayal. She escapes to Cape Cod, where a distant relative has left her an old house with a tragic past. Rumors of a haunting presence plague the abandoned home, but Lark doesn't believe in ghosts...until she has no choice.

After completing his military duty, veterinarian Jesse Holt returns to his small hometown to take over his father's practice. He soon finds himself drawn to the alluring redhead now living next door, but she has made her intentions clear—she's moving back to the city as soon as possible. When frightening events threaten her safety, though, he can't deny his protective instincts.

Unable to fight their feelings, they give in to desire...but another battle looms. Lark's arrival has awakened a decades-old mystery, and the truth of what happened at Holloway House will only be revealed when it claims yet another life.

Find more about Kathryn Knight at <http://kathrynknightbooks.blogspot.com/>



J. Wynn Rousuck- Please Write: A Novel in Letters

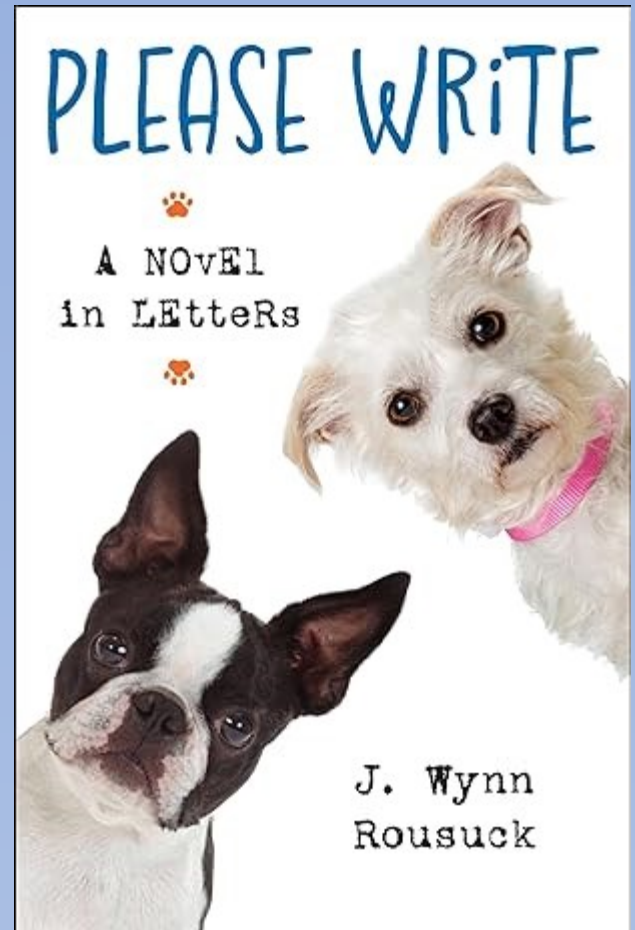
Genre: F/Humor/Pets/Self-Help

About Please Write: A Novel in Letters

An epistolary novel with a twist, Please Write chronicles the correspondence between Vivienne, the alter ego of a recently widowed Cleveland artist, and Zippy, a mixed-breed terrier rescued off the streets of Baltimore. Their letters change and enrich their lives as well as that of Zippy's owner, Pamela, a harried journalist whose life is unraveling.

Combining the canine viewpoint of A Dog's Purpose with the poignant style of The Guernsey Literary Potato Peel Pie Society, Please Write, with Disney-like charm, delivers a distinctive account of coping with heartbreak and loss through the power of imagination and love.

Find more about J. Wynn Rousuck at <https://jwynnrousuck.com>



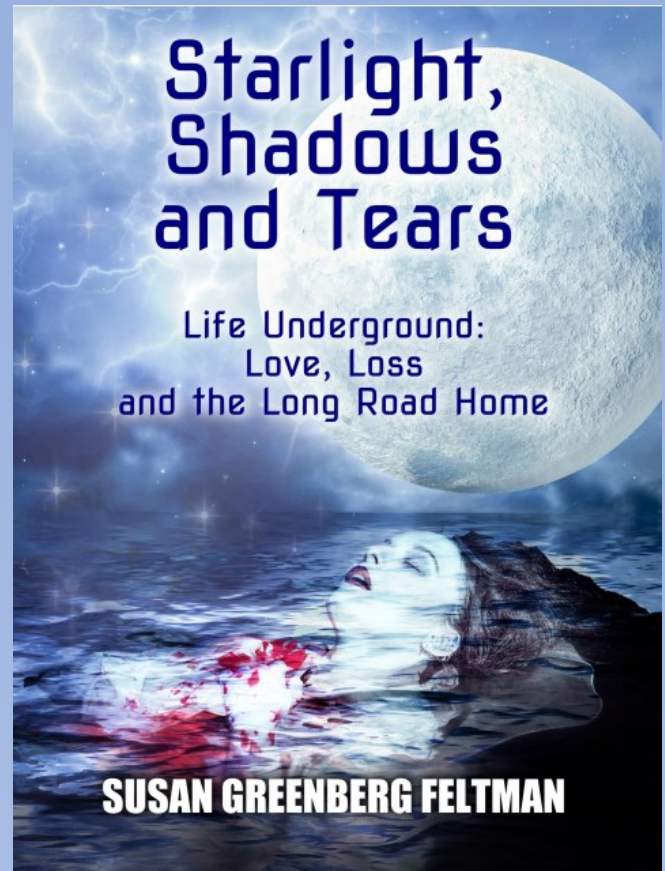
Susan Greenberg Feltman- Starlight, Shadows and Tears

Genre: F/Speculative/Drama

About Starlight, Shadows and Tears

Manny Stewart is a happy man in this year 2366. He has survived a childhood with his cruel and abusive father, and has matured into a street-smart, ambitious NYPD detective with a talent for his work, and a background as a thief. Married to his childhood sweetheart, Manny has a young son, with another child coming soon.

Find more about Susan Greenberg Feltman at <https://www.susanfeltman.com>



Laury A. Egan- The Black Leopard's Kiss & The Writer Remembers



Genre: F/Literary/magical realism

About The Black Leopard's Kiss & The Writer Remembers

The two linked novellas, with their swirling Orlando-esque structures and interwoven narratives, deal with the treacherous nature of memory and how unhealed childhood wounds re-surface in adult consciousness.

Find more about Laury A. Egan at <https://www.lauryaegan.com/>

L. Diane Wolfe- In Darkness: The Alien

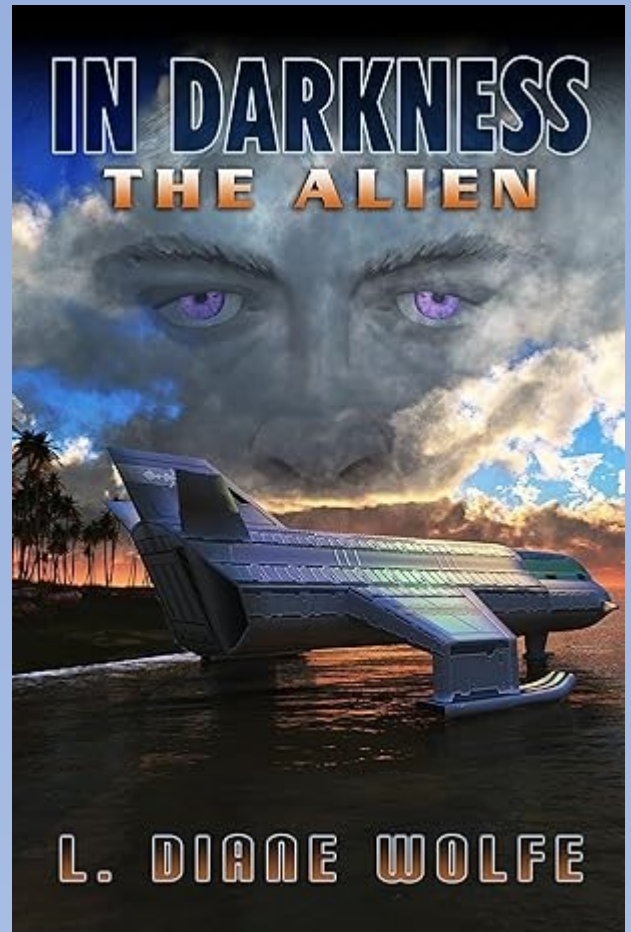
Genre: F/Paranormal

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

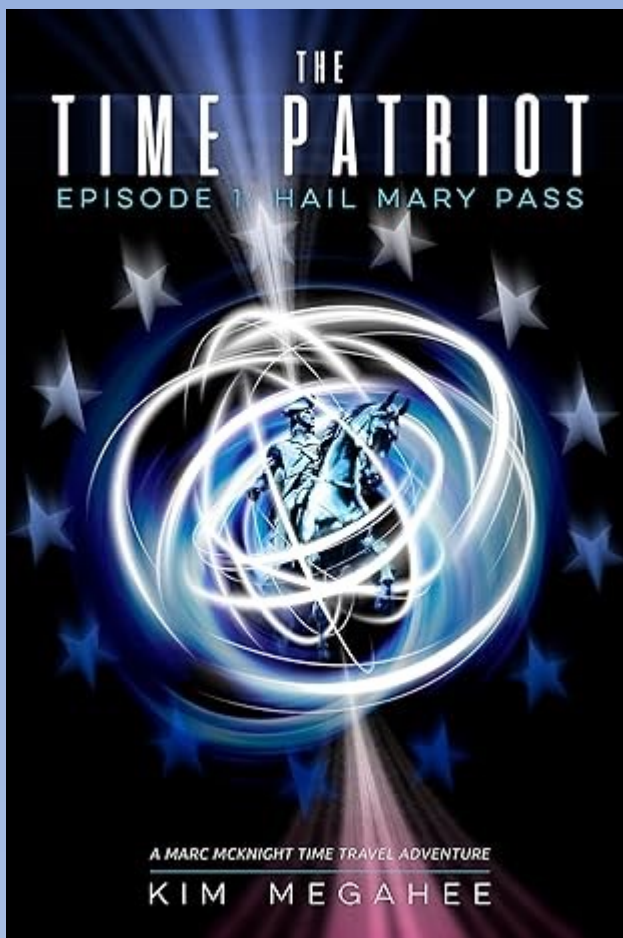
Abducted from her research station, Liz's life is flung into chaos. Sold into servanthood for her knowledge of planetary mining to a race called the Stren, she discovers her problems go far deeper. She is to marry her alien master, Krist, after enduring a procedure designed to eradicate her emotions.

Desperate, Liz persuades the Stren to grant her the duration of a short voyage to change his perception of emotions. But how can she convince someone lacking feelings of their value? Is there a means of accessing the emotional side of Krist?

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



Kim Megahee -The Time Patriot: Hail Mary Pass



Genre: F/SciFi/Time Travel

About The Time Patriot: Hail Mary Pass

A Hail Mary Pass - that's what the President of the United States called it.

What are the chances Marc McKnight's time travel team can convince George Washington to leave his home and travel with them to the year 2037?

Another bloody civil war is imminent in the United States. Political parties are hopelessly divided and fanning the embers of war. Can the war be prevented if George Washington tells modern America what the Founding Fathers were trying to achieve?

A Hail Mary Pass. A long shot. But it's worth a try.

Find more about Kim Megahee at <https://www.authorkimmegahee.com/>

Melina Druga- Rock Star Romance

Genre: F/Chick Lit/Coming of Age/

About Rock Star Romance

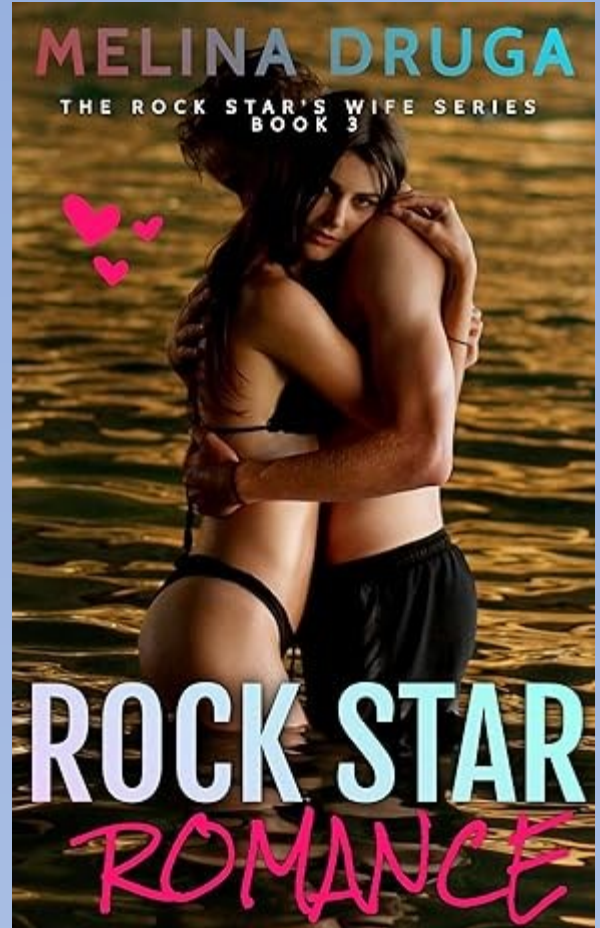
A college grad still reeling from an amicable breakup falls for a rock star who's given up on love in this contemporary, second-chance romance.

A year after she and her now-ex-boyfriend were forced into a devastating decision when life took them — literally — in different directions, Cassandra Economos is done with men. Or so she thinks. Just as Cassie's getting bored and starting to think she needs to get back out there, she meets Nat, and everything changes.

Dramatic Sneezer frontman Nathaniel Hardwick hasn't dated anyone for months, ever since he caught his girlfriend cheating. Weeks away from the launch of the band's next tour, however, he finds himself falling for his sister's friend.

Nat isn't Cassie's type, but something about him — something more than mere rock star charisma — draws her in. Soon, she's breaking all her long-standing relationship rules for him.

Find more about Melina Druga at <http://www.melinadruga.com/>



Michael C. Bland- The Price of Safety

Genre: /F/science fiction/thriller

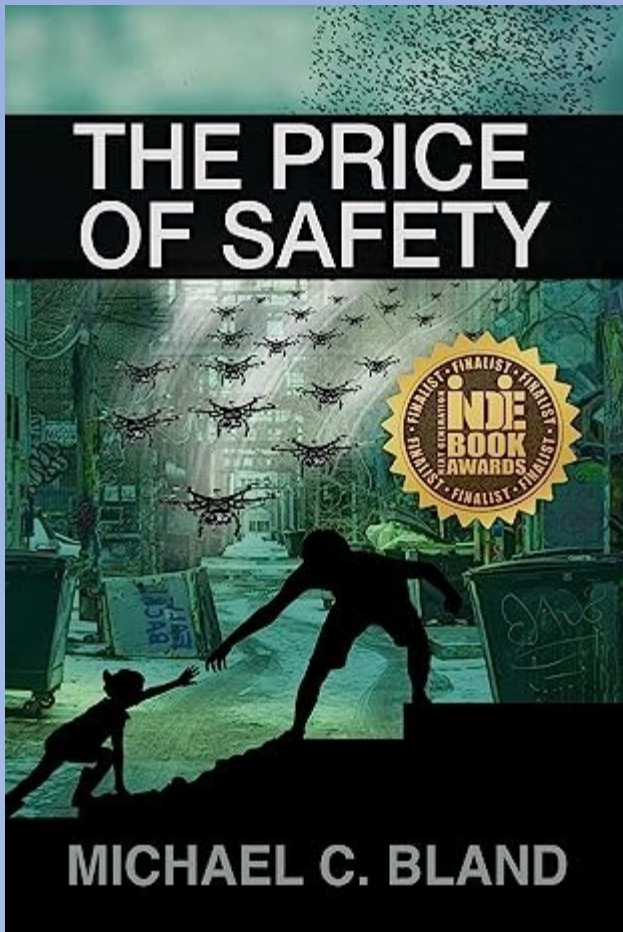
About The Price of Safety

By 2047, no crime in America goes unsolved. No wrongdoing goes unseen.

When Dray Quintero learns his nineteen-year-old daughter Raven committed a heinous act, he covers it up to save her life. This pits him against the police he's respected since he was a child and places him in the crosshairs of Kieran, a ruthless federal Agent. To survive, Dray must overcome the surveillance system he helped build and the technology implanted in people's heads, for everyone has a microcomputer in their brain and computer-screen lenses in their eyes.

Forced to turn to a domestic terrorist group to protect his family--as they're the only ones willing to fight the government--Dray tries to resist joining their cause but can't avoid it, for his adversaries have a level of control he's unable to escape. That no one can. Hunted and betrayed, with time running out, Dray must choose between saving Raven and dismantling the near-perfect society he helped create.

Find more about Michael C. Bland at <http://www.mcbland.com>

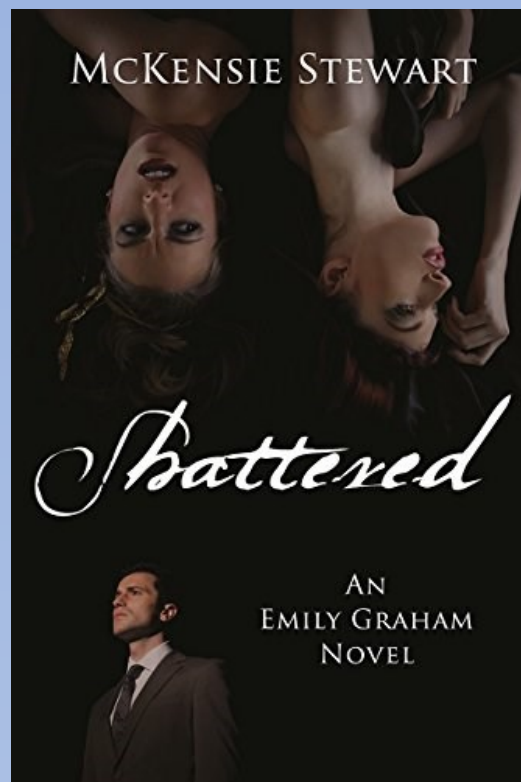


Shattered: An Emily Graham Novel

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

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Coming March 21 2024

Amy Shannon's Balls-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.

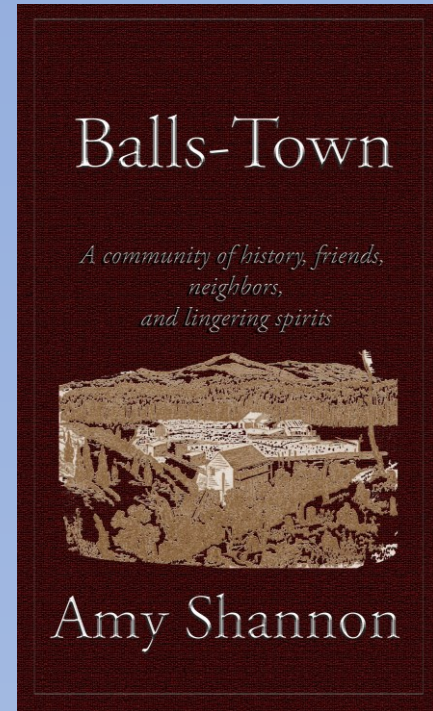
A lot of reading and research went into writing this book.

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.

Advertisement



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