



NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2023  
ISSUE 8.0

# LITERATE-LY MAGAZINE

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

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MELINA DRUGA

## AUTHOR INTERVIEWS:

AMY SHANNON

## FEATURED SHORT STORY

MEET MARCUS AND LOIS IN  
BY DESIGN

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CHILDREN'S BOOKS RECOMMENDATIONS  
TRUE CRIME BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS  
POETRY REVIEWS  
AUDIOBOOK REVIEWS

AMY'S BANNED BOOK BUZZ  
THE RIGHT TO READ & THE  
RIGHT TO WRITE.

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Literate-Ly Magazine

CEO and Chief Editor: Amy Shannon

Email address: [writeramyshannon@gmail.com](mailto:writeramyshannon@gmail.com)

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

### Essence Publishing:

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

Email: [writeramyshannon@gmail.com](mailto:writeramyshannon@gmail.com)

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

### About Essence Publishing:

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

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

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### **This issues contributors:**

Uncaged Magazine Book Reviews [uncagedbooks.com](http://uncagedbooks.com)

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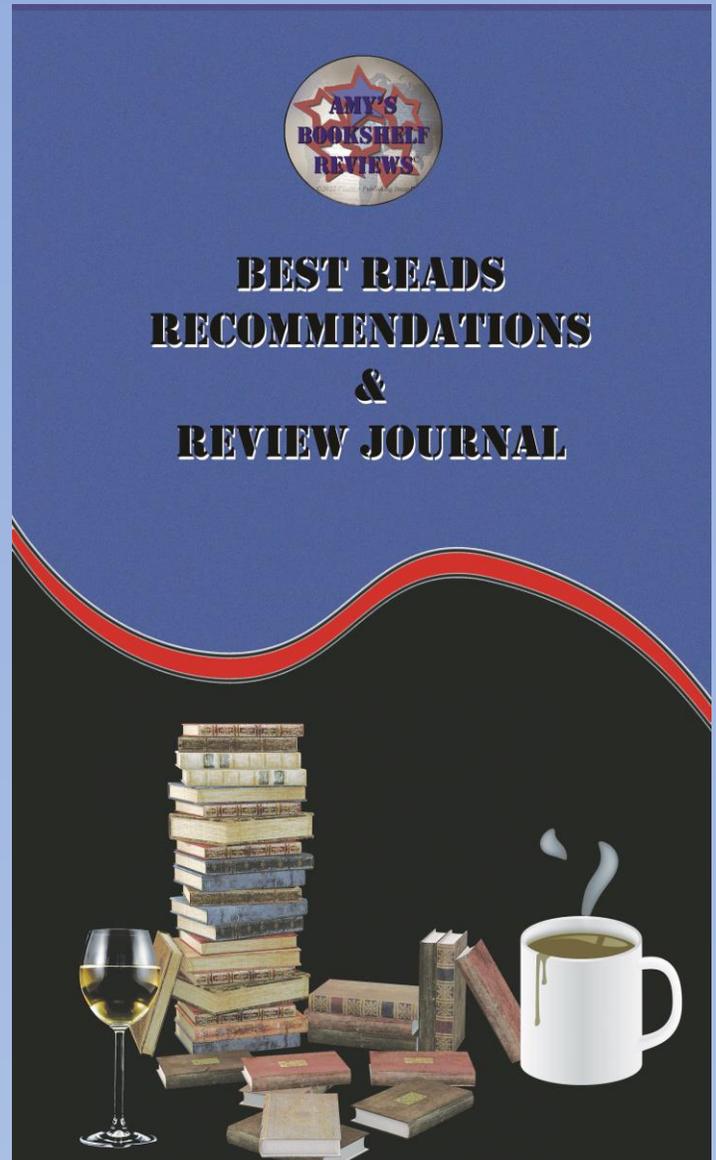
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# Amy's Bookshelf Reviews "Best Reads" Book Project

A new book from Amy's Bookshelf Reviews called Amy's Bookshelf Reviews Best Reads Recommendations & Review Journal. The book will be a free download on a few sites, and anyone who contributes to the book, is not only getting a promotion about your book title, but this book will also teach the reader on how to write a review. There will be a book description and a link to where the reader can buy the book. In addition to this information, there will be a template of questions for the reader, to show them how to write a proper review. The book also describes the importance of reviews.

To contribute, \$10 per book title. \$20 per book series up to 10 books per series. \$30 for book series with 11 books or more. The book series and the list of books will appear in the same "chapter."

Deadline for contributions is December 15, 2023.



It's a book that will recommend books, and teach or inspire a review from the reader. If you are interested in having your book title in the book, send an email to [amysbookshelfreviews@gmail.com](mailto:amysbookshelfreviews@gmail.com) and write "best reads" in the subject line.

# Essence Enterprises



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

Email: [essenceenterprises1972@gmail.com](mailto:essenceenterprises1972@gmail.com)

Twitter: [twitter.com/essenceENT72](https://twitter.com/essenceENT72)

Amy's Portfolio:

<https://essenceenterpriseus.com/portfolio>

Essence Enterprises YouTube Channel:

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

## Fractured Tears: A Struggle for Justice Expanded Version

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

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

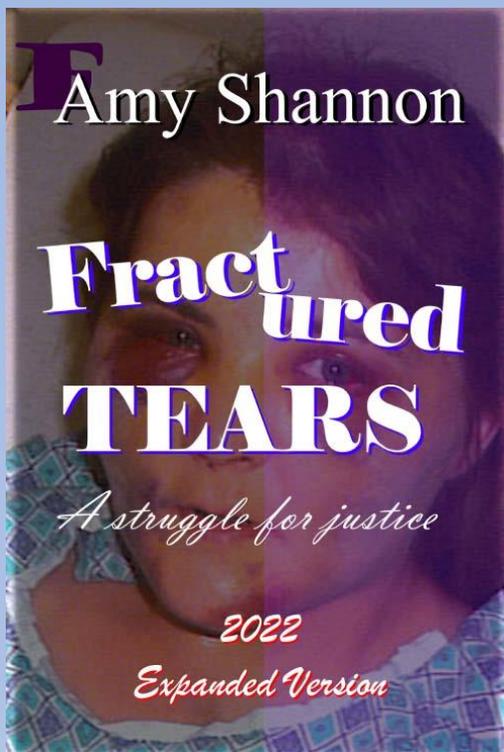
This is a fictionalized version of the real-life events of the Author.

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

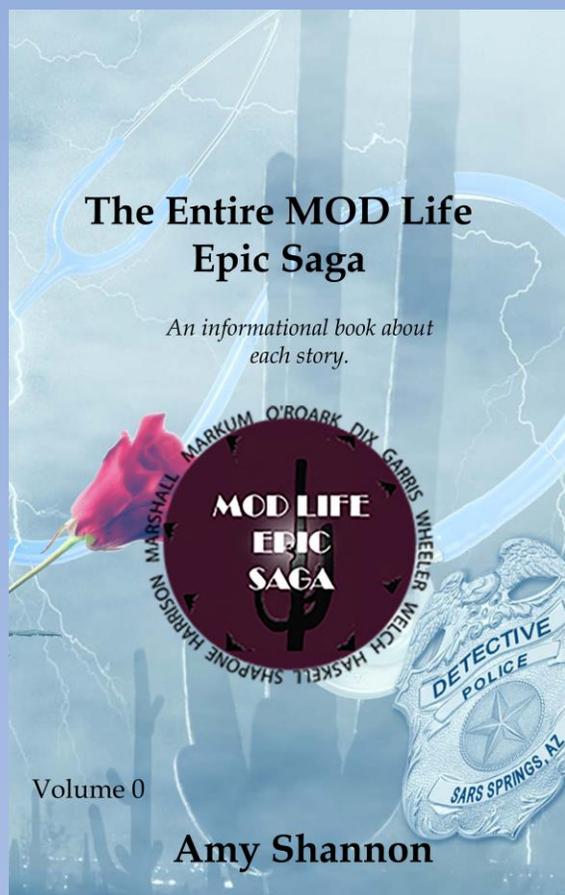
This is an expanded version and Fourth Edition.

Names have been deleted or changed for privacy reasons.

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



# 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](#).



# **Author Spotlight**

# Author Spotlight

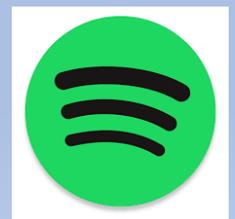
## Melina Druga

Rumor has it that Melina Druga came out of her mother’s womb with a pen in her hand. While we can neither confirm nor deny this, you could say she was destined to become a writer.

Melina was so young when she began writing that she can’t remember exactly when the urge began. She does remember, however, her first novel—an historical fiction story about two sisters living in an Ohio canal town in the 1840s—that she wrote at age 10.

Music keeps Melina sane, and it has gotten to the point that she cannot write without it. It keeps her awake, alert, motivated and productive. Music has even inspired her fiction. And not just The Rock Star’s Wife series. The My Chemical Romance song “Mama” was the inspiration for her historical fiction novel Angel of Mercy.

Melina lives in the Midwest with her husband, daughter, black cat, books and CD collection.



# Melina Druga's Rock Star Romance

**Rock Star Romance** is the third volume in the **Rock Star's Wife Series**. (Series link [HERE](#)).

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.

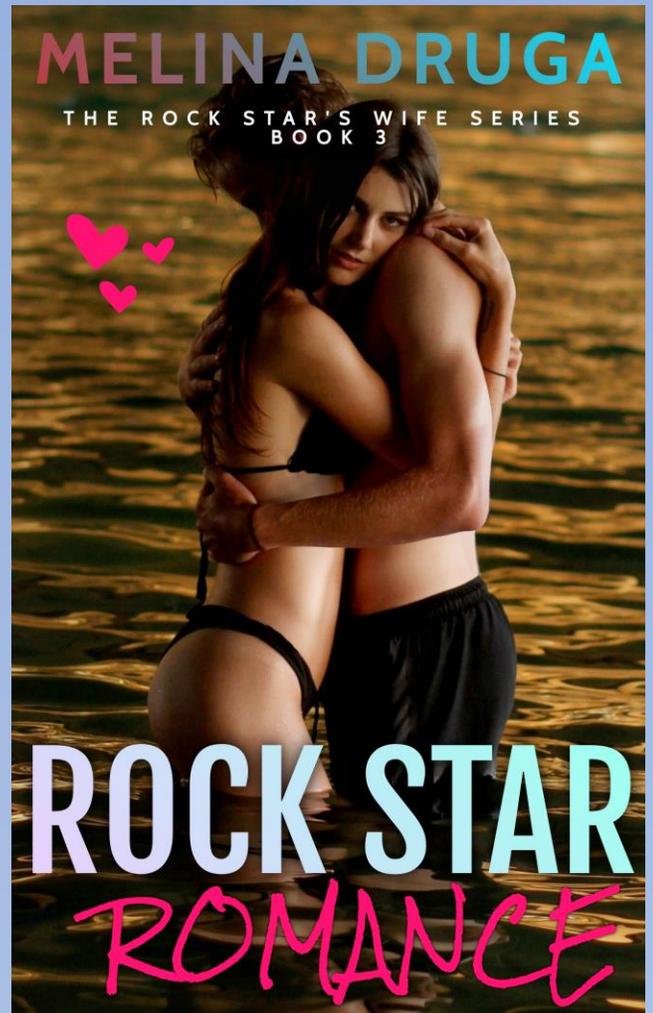
A year after she and her now-ex-boyfriend were forced into a devastating decision when life took them — literally — in different directions, Cassandra Economos is done with men. Or so she thinks. Just as Cassie's getting bored and starting to think she needs to get back out there, she meets Nat, and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

With tour dates looming on the horizon, Cassie's already seeing parallels to her last breakup. But what happens if this is more than just a summer fling?

Jam-packed with sizzling scenes and post-Y2K nostalgia, *Rock Star Romance* is a must-read for fans of Scarlett Cole and Christina Lauren.





# Author Interviews

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kojniejszym...

# Amy Shannon

Literate-Ly Magazine “chats” with its owner “Amy Shannon” who is not just the owner of the magazine, but a book reviewer and author as well.

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

Amy Shannon: kind, creative, smart

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

Amy Shannon: Under my current and real name, about 123 books. I am in the process of republishing many of the books that never got published as part of my MOD Life Epic Saga (there are 67 volumes and 9 bonus books). I used to write under two other pennames, Alex Tempera and Royal Henry Bleu. Alex wrote erotica (12 books published and still available) and Royal wrote “erotic thrillers through the eyes of gay serial killers” (6 published and still available).

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

Amy Shannon: I’ve always done research for my books, especially when the character had a certain occupation, and I wanted to get my facts straight. Even if what I write is impossible, I want to make sure that if it was possible, this would be a possibility of how it is done. (In my MOD Life Saga, there are medical ways and experimentation of creating clones and awakening the dead, but not like zombies or the undead, real people who don’t age until they are alive again.)

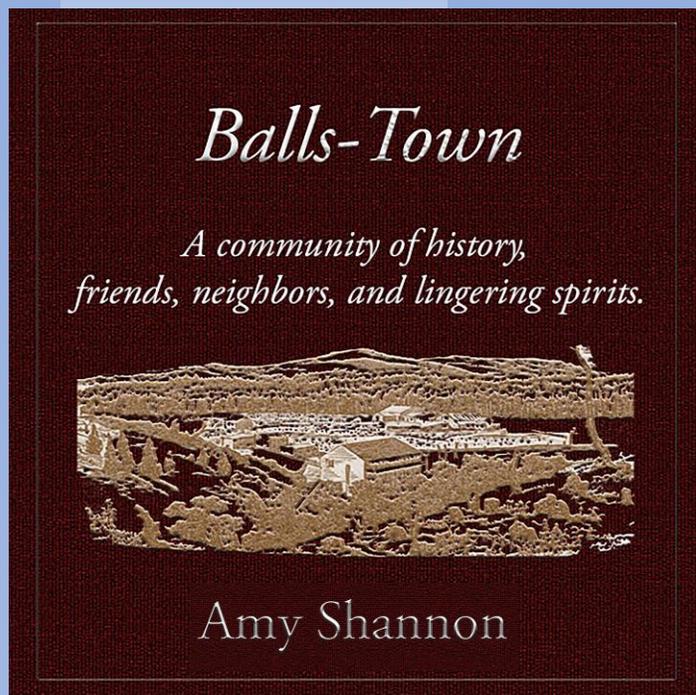


My book to be published, I spent most hours of my day, gathering information, finding valid sources, reaching out to local historians, and the historical society. I am disabled, so I accessed a lot of information using the internet, asking questions of authors who published books about Ballston Spa (the ones who are still alive).

*Literate-Ly Magazine:* What is the title of your upcoming book, the one you did all the research for, and when will it be released?

Amy Shannon: Balls-Town: A community of history, friends, neighbors, and lingering spirits. It will be released on March 21, 2024. The book is about my home town and how it came to be. March 21 is the village of Ballston Spa’s 217 anniversary of incorporation. That is why I chose that date.

# Amy Shannon cont'd



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

Amy Shannon: I gathered a lot of information first, using valid websites, such as Internet Archive, Find a grave (yes, you can find out a lot about a person where they are buried, who their family was, and what was written in their obituary. I also discovered a lot of untruths to rumors and stories about people in the town, so I rectified the information. I even updated a lot of information on the "Find a grave" website, as some information was very little or incorrect.

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

Amy Shannon: I was writing my short story, *The Forsaken*, about a woman who talked to spirits and lived in Ballston Spa. I had to do research for that, and that inspired me to use the left-over information I didn't use, and keep diving so I could write the nonfiction book about the townships.

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

Amy Shannon: I read a lot (whether for reviews or just for myself). I love rocks and I collect, study them, and make sculptures and crafts out of them. I love wine (especially chardonnay and Pinot Grigio) and enjoy a great cup of coffee (mostly all day). I share an apartment with two of my sons, William and Louis, (they are fraternal twins), and Louis's fiancé, Freesia. We are all roommates, and we like this arrangement. We can be by ourselves, but when I need help, one of them, or my son Robert, who doesn't live with us, but helps me with my needs, as I use a wheelchair when necessary. Robert lives with his husband, Darrin, and my grand-furbaby, Hyper. I also have Red-eared slider Turtle, named Stanley (after the great Stan Lee) and later found out she was a female, but I kept her name as it was, and really she identifies as a submarine (ha ha). We have two cats, Flash and Tanj, a bearded dragon that I'm taking care of for my son, Robert, Han. And about 25 goldfish, all with names.

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

# Amy Shannon cont'd

Amy Shannon: I'm in the process of reading *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, but also several books that I have to do early reviews for, and upcoming reviews.

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

Amy Shannon: When I write fiction, I just sit and write until I can't write anymore, but I always write at least the first line of the next chapter, and that's where I pick up. I don't read what I already wrote (unless the start of the book has been set aside for quite awhile), and my second draft is reading it from beginning to end, making sure all the loose ends are tied up.

*Literate-Ly Magazine*: Why do you write?

Amy Shannon: I have no idea. I find myself as always being a storyteller, no matter what. Writing is just another way to share my stories in my head. I can't always write or type, since I have RA, and tremors, but I write what I can. I always carry a notebook with me, wherever I go.

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

Amy Shannon: Yes, I do. For me it's like watching reruns of your favorite shows, only this is your book that you created the characters. I read it as if I am a reader, not the writer, and that gets me more into the stories. And, if I find the story needs a refresher, new cover, updated storytelling or whatever, I am an Indie author, so I can create new editions whenever I need to.

*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?

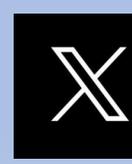
Amy Shannon: My mother (she died at age 44 in 1997), my Gramma who died in 2009, and my Gram (she was 101) died last year on July 4<sup>th</sup>. She was my best friend in the whole world, and I miss her, my mom, and Gramma every day.

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

Amy Shannon: To have at least one person read your work, and like it.

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

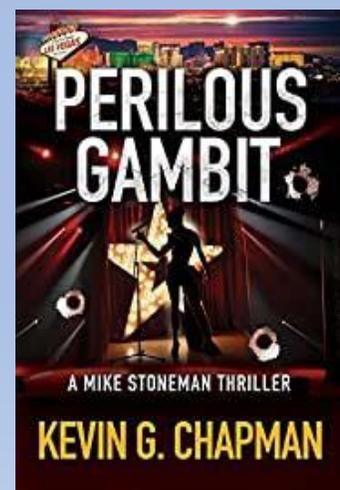
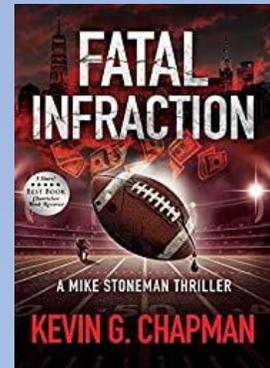
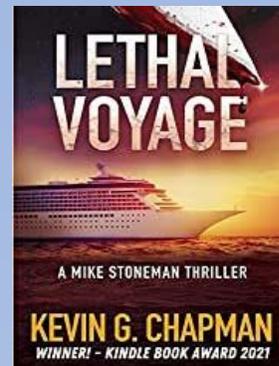
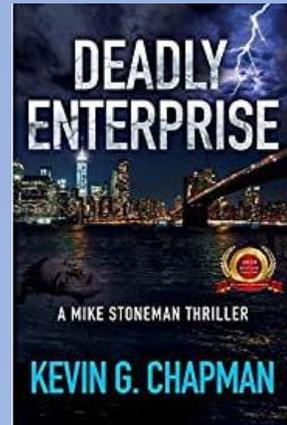
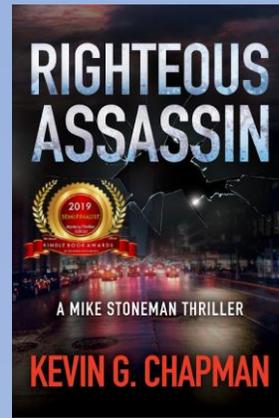
Amy Shannon: I am known for Amy's Bookshelf Reviews, but I would like to be known for my writing as well, and the kind of person I am. I am kind, and polite and it's not fake or anything. I truly am honored when an author wants me to read their work. I know how hard it is to allow someone else to read your book, and not know if they'll like it or not. I want my stories to be my legacy, but my kind-heart to all who "know" me, know that I truly love helping others, and especially authors.

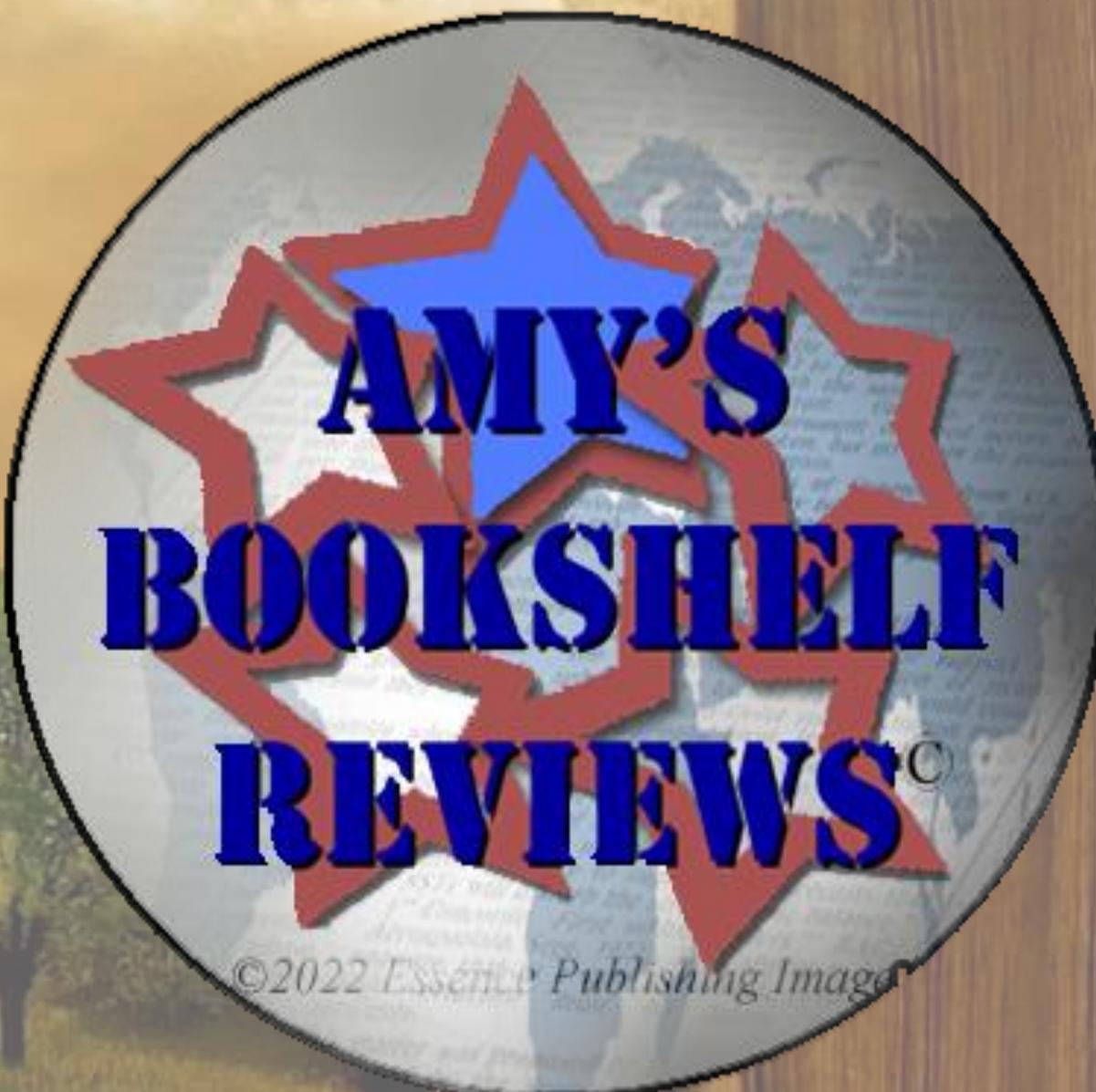


# AUTHOR KEVIN G CHAPMAN

## The Mike Stoneman Thriller Series

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





**AMY'S  
BOOKSHELF  
REVIEWS®**

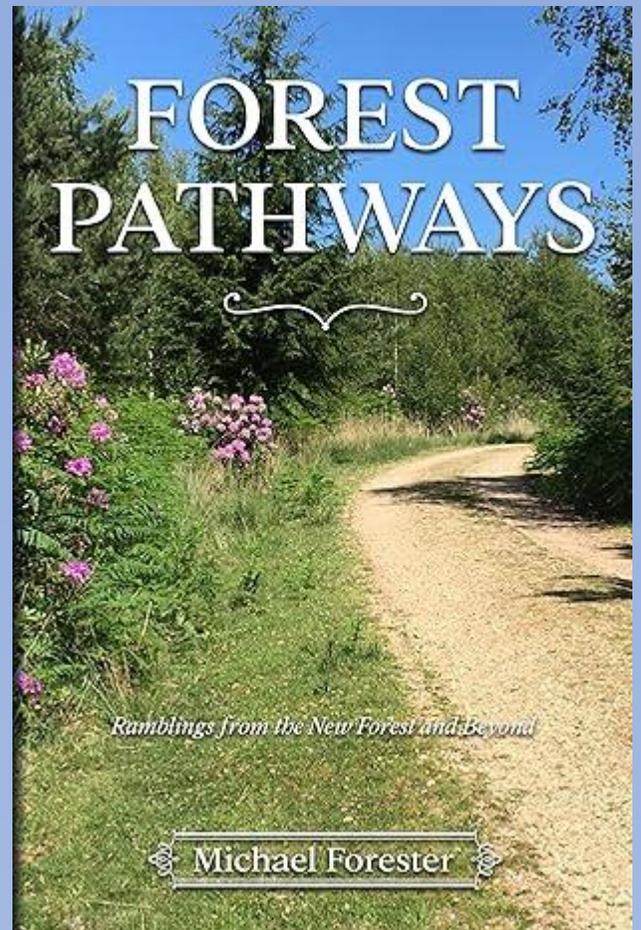
©2022 Essence Publishing Image

# Michael Forester- Forest Pathways: Ramblings from the New Forest and Beyond

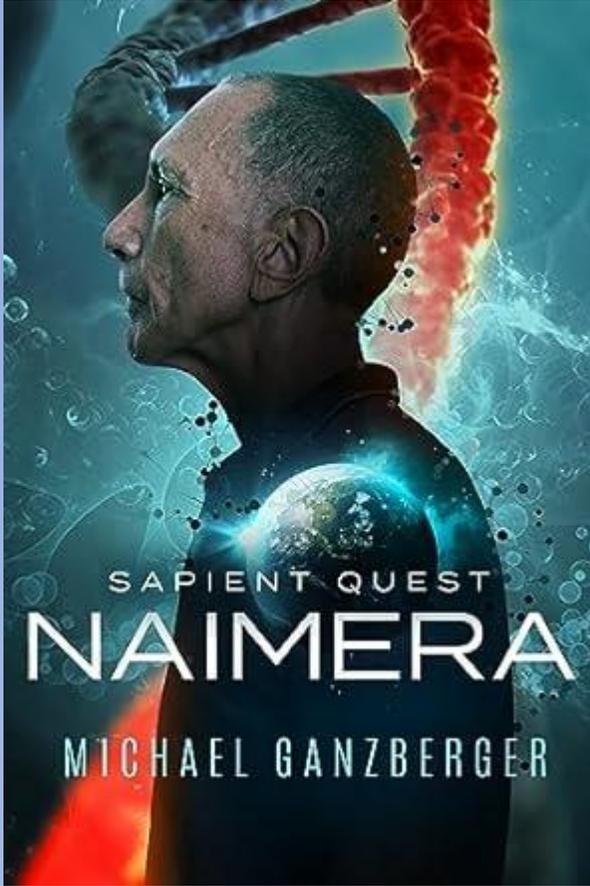
5 Stars

Soulful!

This collection of essays, metaphors and verse by Michael Forester is a magnificent work of words. I enjoyed reading this collection, the third in the Forest Series, and entering the mind of this prolific poet. Such a wonderful read. My favorite was Red Warning, it's short, but so impactful and powerful. When I read these kinds of books, a mix of story types, and yes, even poetry tells a story, in a very emotional and specific way, that emotes whatever the author was feeling when he was writing it, but it may emote feelings in the reader, that are different from the poet. Each chapter in this collection, shares something that the author may not tell anyone else, but his own pen. Inspirational, motivational, and one of the collections where every bit, every single word is cherished, and even read more than once. I look forward to reading more by this poet.



*Poetry/ essays/  
metaphors /verse*



*F/Science Fiction/  
Techno-Thriller*

## Michael Ganzberger- NAIMERA: Sapient Quest

4 Stars

A Grand Sequel

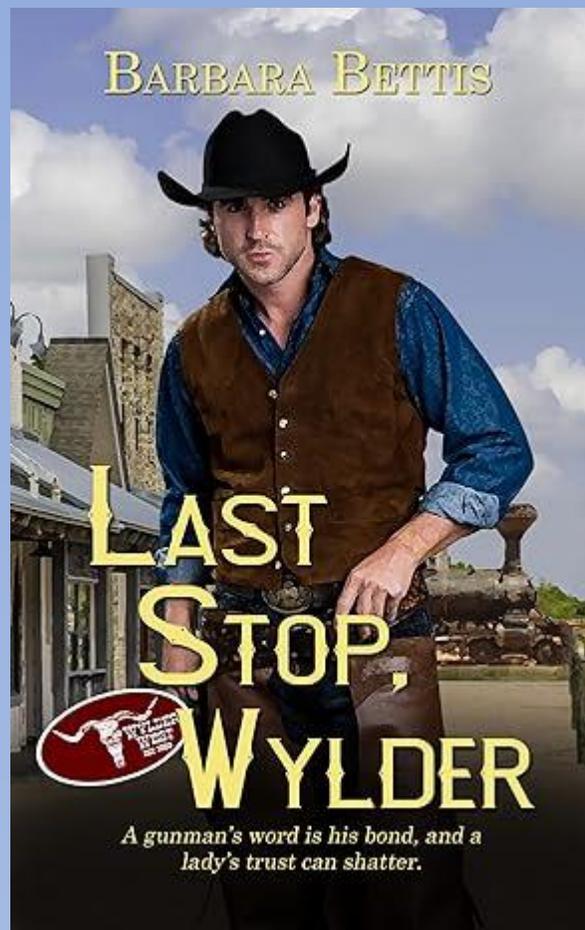
Michael Ganzberger writes an intriguing sci-fi, techno-thriller tale with NAIMERA: Sapient Quest. This book is part of the NAIMERA series, and this is volume two, and I have been waiting for the sequel for a while to be released! I was very excited to read this, and I went back and read the first book, just to get back into the story. I am a big fan of Michael Ganzberger and want to read whatever this author writes. This author has a grand imagination, and talent for showing the story. Welcome to Binary Star System V Sagittae, 7800 light years from earth, which (I used a calculator) about  $4.5853e+16$  miles from Earth. The inhabitants of this star system must feel because the system is dying. There may be a light at the end of the tunnel for the inhabitants. Insert Dr. Miles Pierce, and bio-engineered NAIMERAs, giving hope, but also there is danger, and a mix of fear and excitement. This story is action packed, and almost believable. The author weaves a tangled web of story, and captures the reader. It's literally out of this world! Yes, it's the end of the world as we know it, and may be the end of the residents of Binary Star System V Sagittae. It's a story of survival, and trust in others that are not of the same species, but they all have a common goal. A genuine character driven story!

## Barbara Bettis- Last Stop, Wylder

4 Stars

A Grand Read

Barbara Bettis writes a romantic western tale with Last Stop, Wylder. I haven't read anything by this author before, and what a hidden gem. I enjoyed it so much that I have now followed the author and look for more books to read. The reader is introduced to Emily, who has just moved to Wyoming to meet up with her brother, who runs the local newspaper. However, he is out on a story, so she decides this is just what she needs to move forward, especially after ending her engagement. So, she decides to start a new life, and help her brother out by running the paper. However, a stranger is there to do a job, get rid of the paper. Morgan is the name he goes by for now, and is a hired hitman, set out to destroy Emily and the paper. But, something happens, and it seems like dangerous chemistry between Morgan and Emily. his author brings the story to life. The characters are so real, it's like being with them within the story. The chemistry is there and not forced, but so is the tension of what could or could not happen next. A very unpredictable story, my favorite kind! Morgan is intrigued and attracted to Emily and her tenaciousness, but that may not be enough for the couple, especially if they want to stay alive.



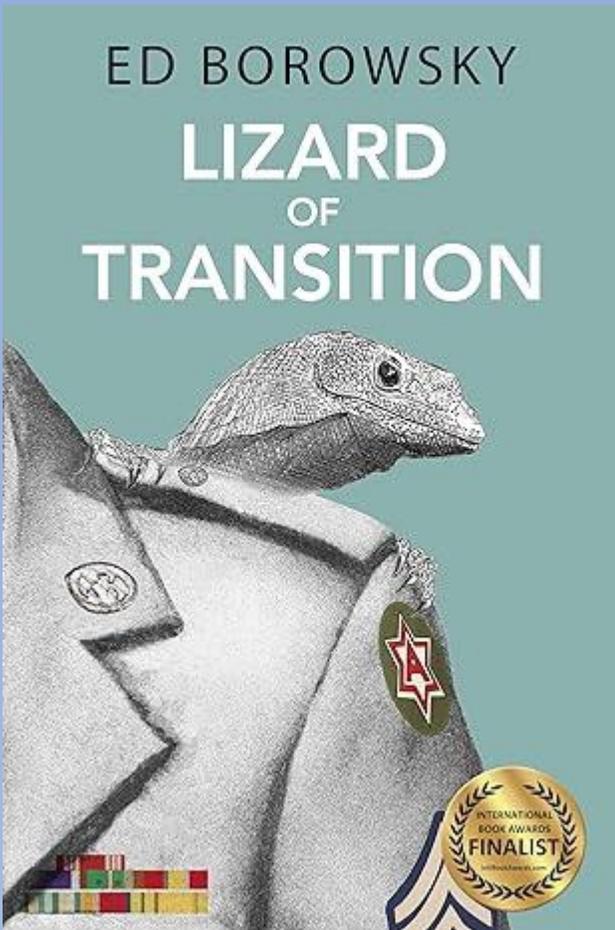
*F/Romance/Western*

## Ed Borowsky - Lizard of Transition

5 Stars

Heartfelt and emotional

Borowsky pens an interesting story about a person in hospice and receiving palliative care in *Lizard of Transition*. I am a big fan of this author! Whatever this author writes, I read. This author brings the story to life. Joe was going to die. He knew he was dying, and he wasn't even himself. His family had their own feelings and relationship with Joe. Joe had symptoms of dementia, and his battle with that, brought him back to a time that was horrid and torturous, those memories of the war. When I read this book, it reminded me of my grandmother, who lost her life from dementia. I remember sitting with her, and she was semi-conscious, mumbling to herself, and if you listened carefully, you could hear her stories of her torturous childhood. It was worse than I knew. I don't know why, when you're at this point, the edge of dying, your mind plays against you. Borowsky brought out emotions that I hadn't thought about in years. This book deserves a second read! (and maybe more). It's one of those embraceable stories. Wow! Simply masterful. This reader could feel the author's emotions, and the passion this author must have had when writing it. The title makes you think, but when you read it, you understand it.



*F/Literary/Drama/  
WWII*

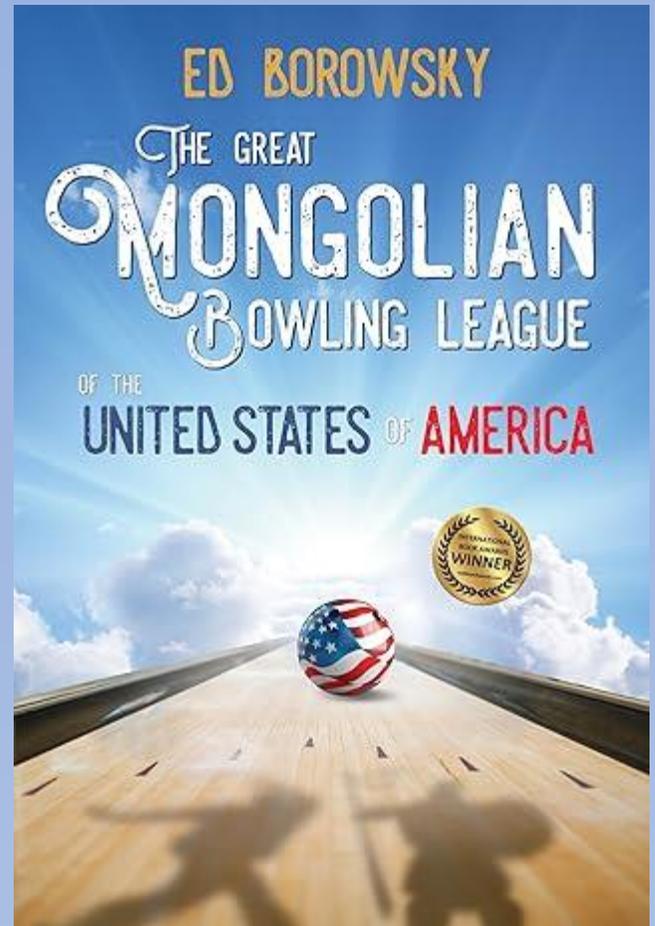
# Ed Borowsky The Great Mongolian Bowling League of the United States of America

5 Stars

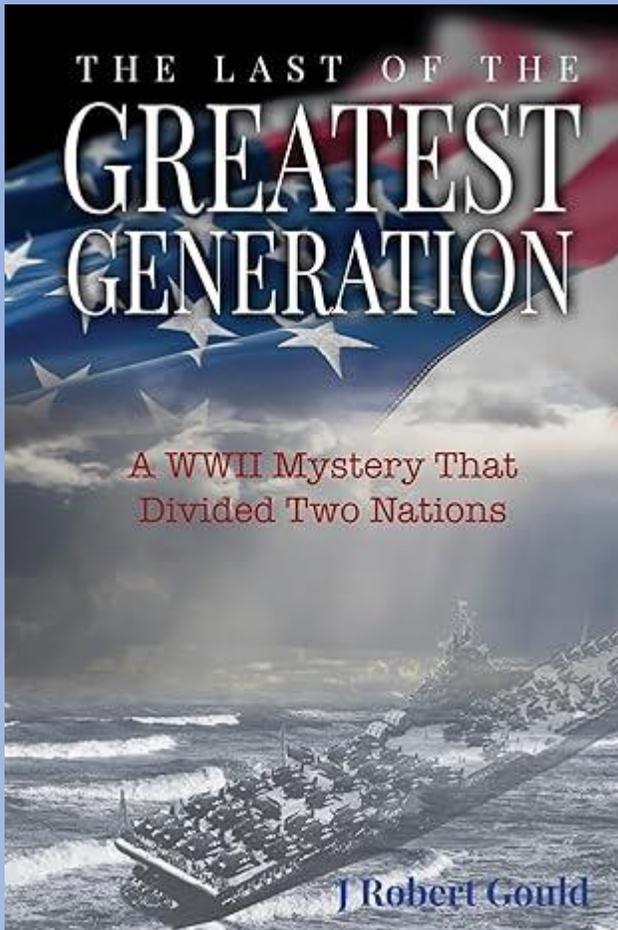
A grandly compelling story

Borowsky pens a great story in The Great Mongolian Bowling League of the United States of America. I really enjoyed this story. Ok, first, I really enjoy Harold's character, and his relationship with Murray. That was really what sent me reading on and on. At first, I wasn't quite sure where this was going, because of the title, or even when I started reading chapter 1. Well, I loved learning about both Harold and Murray, and it did make me think of the old television show, "The Odd Couple," (and I'm probably dating myself, but I don't care). It was amusing, and yet, familiar, especially with the aches and pains of getting older, even if you want to feel like you're twenty, you just can't, no matter what. And yes, even women get hair where they don't want it. This author brings the story to life. I read a lot of stories, and I love the different writing styles and storytelling abilities. This author has a unique writing style all his own, and indeed can show the stories. I know part of this author's background, and he has many different genres of stories, and has a majestic talent with the pen, and his passion shows in his work. I love how The Great

Mongolian Bowling League of the United States of America was born, and how anything can happen just because it does. I also love the "Afterword" where the author tells about his inspiration, for the book.



*F/Comedy/Literary/  
Realism*



*/ F/ Mystery*

## **J Robert Gould- The Last of the Greatest Generation**

5 Stars

A unique story that takes place during WWII.

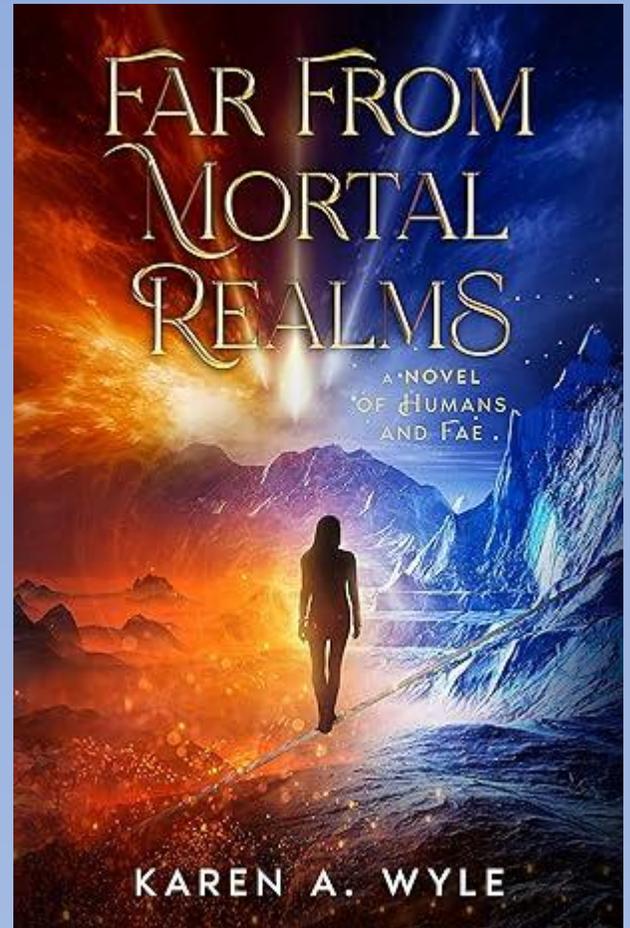
J Robert Gould writes a WWII mysterious tale with *The Last of the Greatest Generation*. I haven't read anything by this author before, and what a hidden gem. I enjoyed it so much, that I have now followed the author and look for more books to read. This author has a grand imagination, and talent for showing the story. The story is dedicated to the memory and stories of the author's father-in-law, John. There are different stories within these two timelines of the story. Love stories, patriotism, and a hard-nosed reporter with the lust for alcohol, but can still do his job, looking for the truth. It takes a great talent to take stories you've heard over the years, and put them in a wonderfully written book, with a grand plot as this one. It's not an easy time in the middle of the War, where things are harrowing all over the world. It's action packed, and goes at a perfect pace for telling this story. The author weaves a tangled web of story, and captures the reader. The reader just embarks on a superb journey. This is a magnificent plot that kept this reader turning the pages. This journey was very unpredictable.

## Karen A. Wyle- Far From Mortal Realms

5 Stars

Fantastically written!

Karen A. Wyle writes a fantastical tale with Far From Mortal Realms. I am a big fan of Karen A. Wyle and read whatever this author writes. This author has a grand imagination, and talent for showing the story. Karen A. Wyle has a way with words and creating worlds filled with fairies and humans, and the incredible realms of the fairies, giving temptation for others wanting to hone and steal their magic. I've read different genres from Wyle, and I am always impressed with her writing. She is a multi-genre author, and some of my favorites of hers are the fairies and their magic. There is always a story that she sees, and then allows the reader to also vision. This author brings the story to life. The characters are so real, it's like being with them within the story. The story brings in the believable, even if almost impossible. This story makes you believe in magic, and how it can be life changing, and even evil can seek it. The reader just embarks on a superb journey. This is a magnificent plot that kept this reader turning the pages. Who could ask for more when it's filled with magical/fantastical creatures and other interesting beings? Magically bewitching.



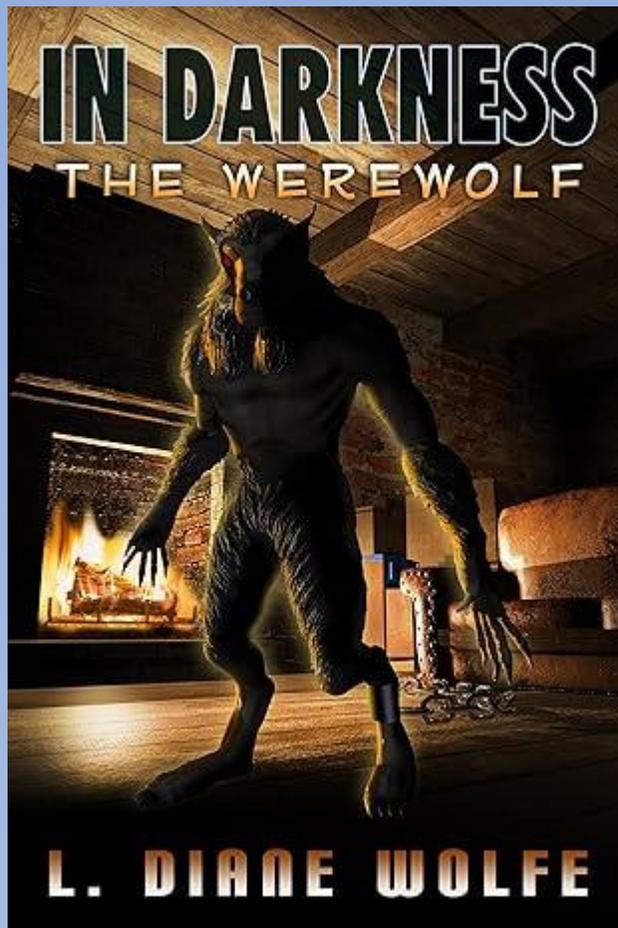
*F/Fantasy*

## L. Diane Wolfe- In Darkness: The Werewolf

5 Stars

Paranormally Magnificent!

L. Diane Wolfe writes a paranormal tale with In Darkness: The Werewolf. This book is part of the In Darkness series, and this is volume three. The reader is introduced to Vicki, who trains in fencing. Because of a facial birthmark, she doesn't trust who show an interest in her. She is all of a sudden approached by Nicholas, a shy recluse, and can't understand why he would be interested in her. Before his true being is revealed, they start to build trust in their relationship, and she even may be falling in love with him. Then she sees his transformation, Lycan, a werewolf, who does not live up to the beastly legends and stereotypes. I think this was my favorite of the three books, and I liked all three of the stories. This is one of those books that grabs you from the start and pulls you in. I'm a big fan of this author! This is a magnificent plot that kept this reader turning the pages. The author's technique of raw, magnetic characters and great plotlines is a gift. A very unpredictable story, my favorite kind! This read is more than just words on a page.



*F/Paranormal*

# Amy's Bookshelf Reviews

## Changes for the Future!

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

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews website. [amysbookshelfreviews.com](http://amysbookshelfreviews.com)

### **December 1, 2023**

Amy's Bookshelf Reviews will no longer accept any book review requests that have already been published. However, any book that is on any of the bookshelves in Amy's Library as of that date, will still be read, reviewed and the review posted. After this date, the only requests (not including exceptions) will be for Release Date and Express Release Date Review Requests.

The VIP Legacy Bookshelf and Standard New Author Bookshelf will remain until there are no titles left on those bookshelves.

### **Release Date Review and Express Release Date Review Requests**

Release Date Reviews: Still require a 2-month advanced request.

Express Release Date Reviews: The donation and posting dates are the same.

Posting Dates: Monday through Friday. Saturday and Sundays ONLY if there is a release date review request. Holidays listed [HERE](#) will not be posted, and if there is a release date, it will be posted the next posting day.

### **Exceptions:**

Audiobooks. The audiobook shelf will remain. I will accept requests for audiobooks that have been released at any point, if I have read the print book. If there is an accompanying print book, and I haven't read it yet, that is a special request.

It's on an author-to-author basis. There may be times when I will make an exception, such as any of my clients that I do work for (past or present), such as publishing, editing and/or formatting. Those clients will receive a review from Amy's Bookshelf Reviews. There will still be a Special Requests Bookshelf, and there will be a minimum donation of \$25 to be on that shelf (for those who do not have upcoming releases). (Another exception would be for those authors who have a book series, and the book that will be released is a volume of the book after Volume 1. (I need to read all the books in the series leading up to the one that will be released).

**Other Exceptions:** I choose to be included on a blog tour, and will post a review during that time. I am on several publisher's influencer and review teams, and I will continue to review for these publishers. Sometimes, when I receive an email notification about a publisher's upcoming release, I will request to read and review that book.

I like to send congratulations emails to authors that I follow either on Amazon, their newsletter or the publisher's newsletters. So, if you want a review after you get one of those letters, that is also an exception. You don't need to get a review from me, if you don't want to.

# Literary Professional Referrals



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

## Private Referral List (Free)

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

Bulletin Board (Public Referral list)  
\$50.

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

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

Literary professionals include but are not limited to:

Publishers (any type)

Literary Agents

Literary Book Reviewers/Influencers

Literary Publicists

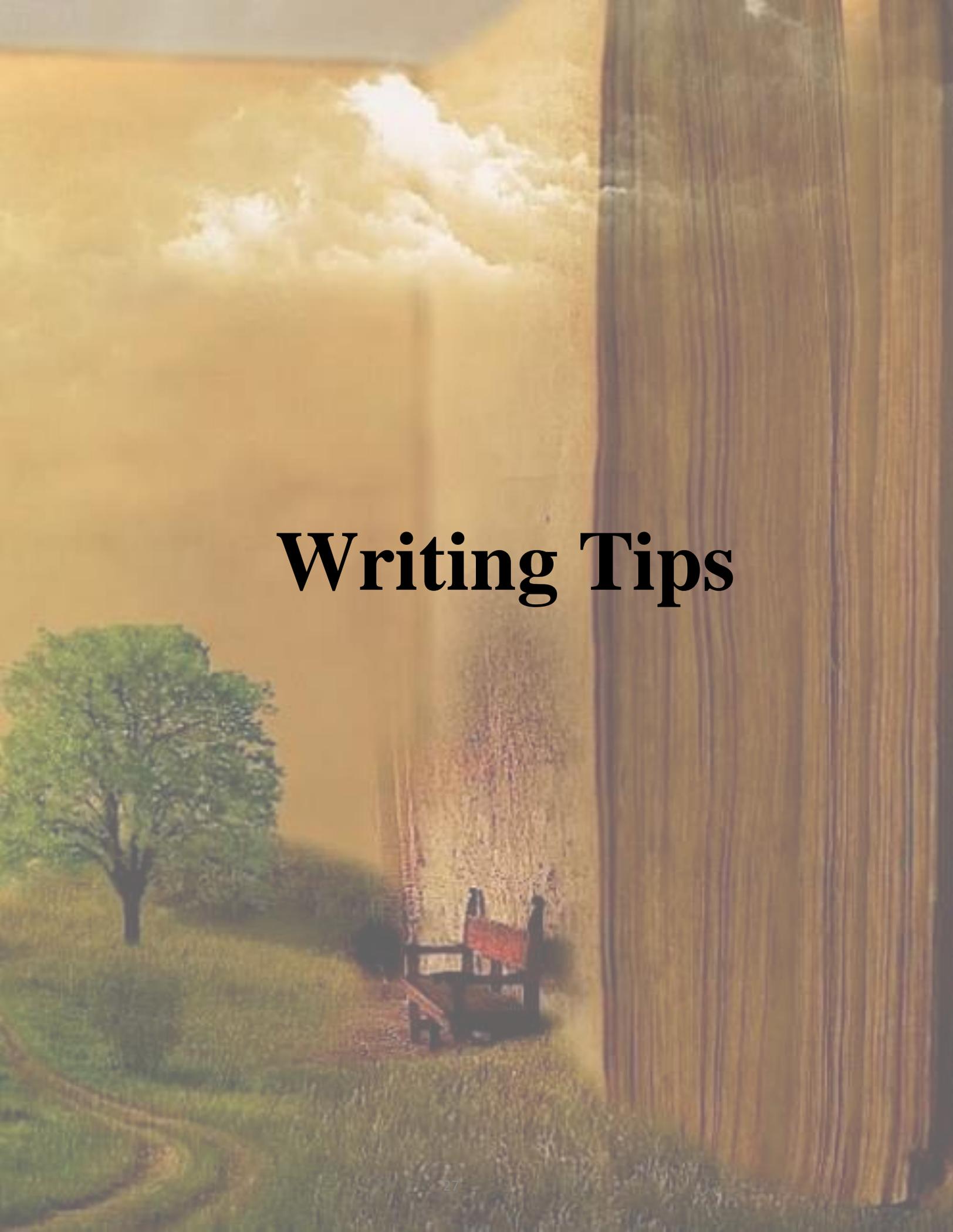
Literary Podcasts

Book Blog Companies

Cover Designers/Illustrators

Editors

Literary magazines

The background is a soft, painterly landscape. On the left, a vibrant green tree stands in a field. In the center, a small house with a thatched roof is visible, partially obscured by a path. The right side of the image is dominated by a large, vertical wooden plank with a natural grain, which appears to be part of a book cover or a window frame. The overall color palette is warm and golden, with a hazy, atmospheric quality.

# Writing Tips

## Large Print Books

As a writer, I didn't always think of the size of the font that I was using for formatting my stories. I mean, I format them appropriately for print and ebooks. I always follow the specific rules of the different formats, such as using 11 or 12 points, using specific font types. However, recently I purchased a large print book so it would be easier to read for me (small fonts bug my aging eyes), I realized that NONE of my published books were printed in large print.

As an Indie Author, I (currently) use Create Space as a platform for print books. At the end of the publishing process, there is a box that can be checked if the book is a large print book, but I never checked the box.

So, what does this mean? I'm thinking of publishing some (or all) my books in also a LARGE print format. I've been doing a little bit of research for this process, and I found some interesting information.

The American Council for the Blind has standards for printing for the visually impaired. (The website <http://www.acb.org/large-print-guidelines> identifies all of these guidelines). Here are a few guidelines that could help the Indie Author prepare and format their book for Large Print.



\* 18 point to 20 point, bold, sans serif, mono or fixed space font. Examples are Adobe's Verdana, Helvetica, Tahoma, Arial; Linotype's Futura Light Bolded; and Typography's Gotham Rounded fonts. (I also found that there is an a download of a font called APHONT and it can be downloaded for use at the American Printing House for the Blind at (<http://www.aph.org/products/aphont/>).

\* Line spacing of at least 1.5

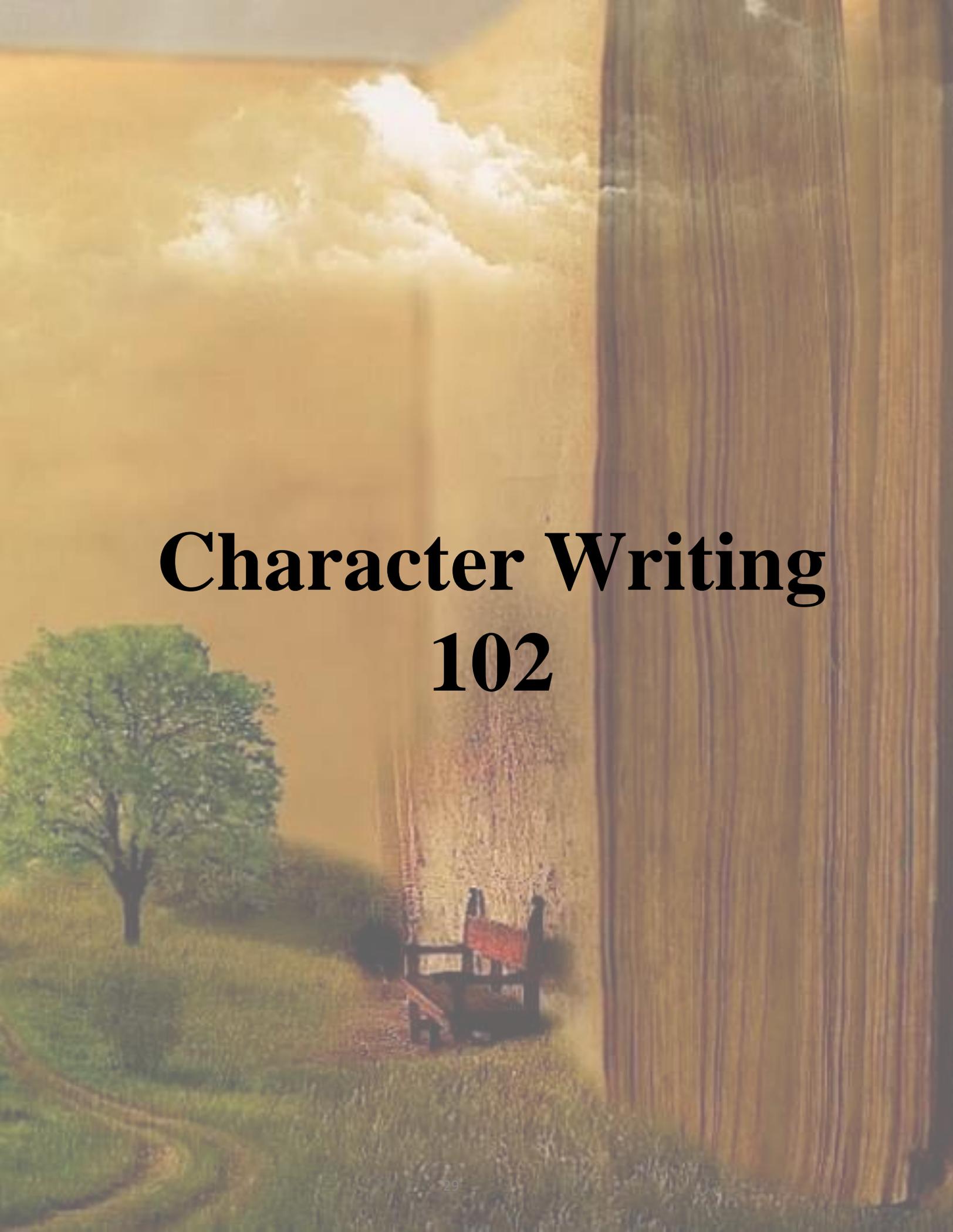
\* Titles and headings should be larger than the text of the document and contain both upper and lower case letters.

\* Titles and headings should be aligned left

\* Eliminate "widows" and "orphans" when continuing text from one page to the next.

\* Page numbers should be the same font style and font size as the normal text

This is just a little bit of information on Large Print books, and it may even add more sales by opening it up to more readers. Just because someone is visually impaired in some way, does not mean they are not readers.

The background is a soft, painterly landscape. On the left, a large, leafy green tree stands in a field. A dirt path winds through the grass. In the center, a small house with a thatched roof is visible. The right side of the image is dominated by a large, vertical wooden plank with a clear grain pattern, which appears to be part of a book cover or a window frame. The overall color palette is warm and golden, suggesting a sunset or sunrise.

# **Character Writing 102**

## **Environment/Location**

Setting is a major part of the story. It can almost be another character in the story, as it can affect other characters in the story.

The climate or weather may affect others, such as implementing natural disasters or storms that may add or affect the plot or the characters. A flood, tornado, blizzard or other natural disasters can add to the action of the plot, with the desperation to survive or how to survive and mourn those who didn't make it. Characters may have to mourn later in order to survive now.

Setting can be a real place or a fictional setting. Sometimes the use of real landmarks can lead to a setting of a fictional town. If using a real place, or landmark, make sure that the research has been done, or the writer is familiar with the place.

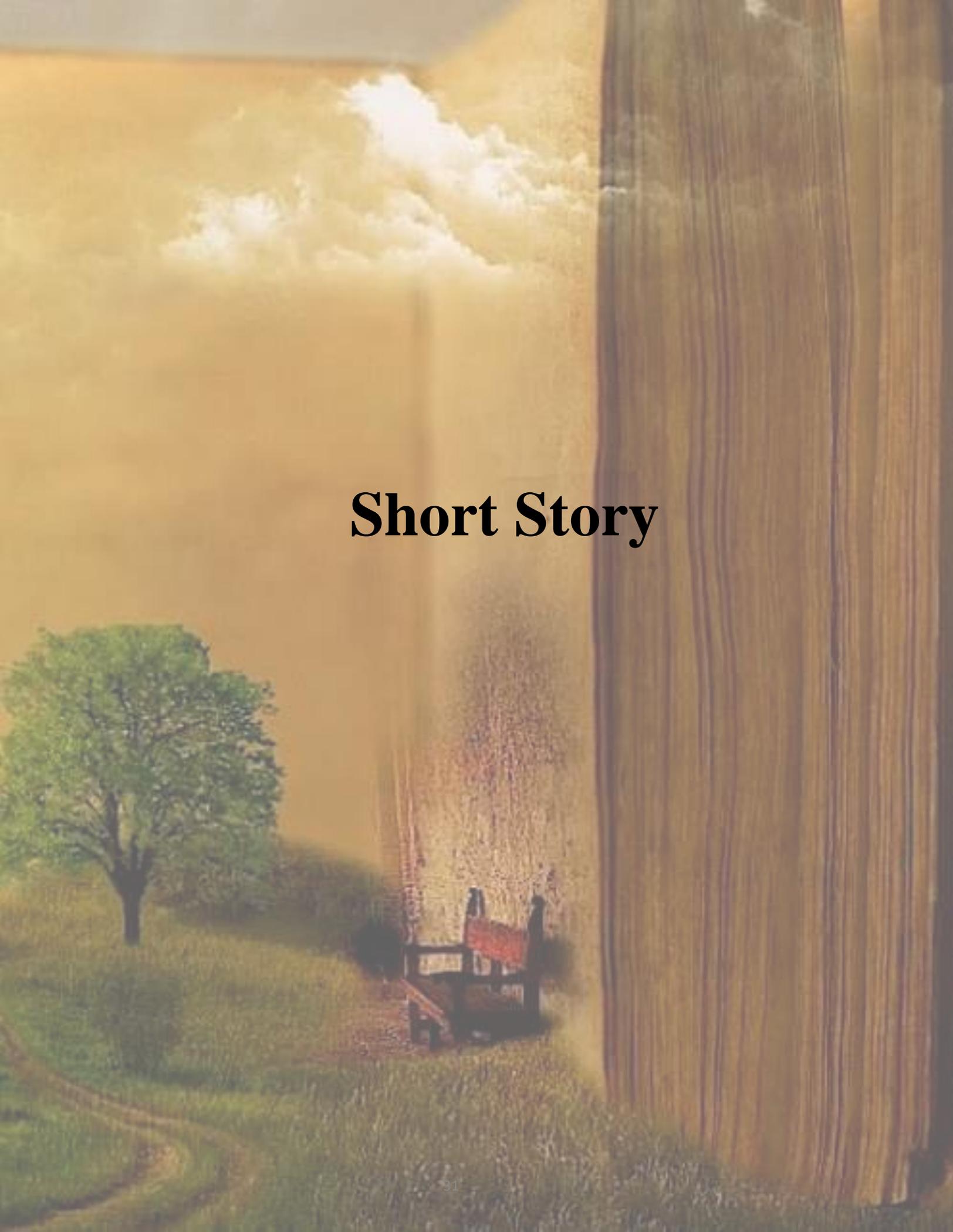
I've written a saga around a fictional town in Arizona, called Sars Springs. I even made up a few of the surrounding towns. Currently, if it was a real town, it'd be smack in the middle of the desert in Arizona. However, I did my research about real towns in Arizona, and used such towns as Florence, Phoenix, and Scottsdale as reference points. Be thorough with the research, even if you've never been to the town or region the book is set in.

It goes along with what I said in the beginning of this book, write what you know and what you want to know. You don't need to drown in order to write a story about a flood, but it helps to know how it can be destructive and how people would or wouldn't react.

In my saga, I've written about the town being in a flood and an earthquake, and how lives were lost but how others survived. I did my research to find out if it was even remotely possible for an earthquake to hit that part of the country or the state.

The place of the setting can factor in the environment. There may be a reason the environment is the way that it is. Environment can be part of the story, and how it is brought to life and creates obstacles or comfort for the characters.

Within the setting could be where the characters work, such as a hospital or office setting. It could be the whole story is told out of one room, or one area, or it could be a town wide or even countrywide journey. It could be similar to a "one-man show," where it is just that one character and how he/she behaves and interacts with the setting or scene.

A painting of a landscape viewed through a window. The window frame is a vertical wooden plank on the right side. The landscape features a green tree on the left, a thatched-roof building in the center, and a path leading towards it. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds. The overall color palette is warm and golden.

# Short Story

# Marcus and Lois

## By Amy Shannon

### Chance meeting One.

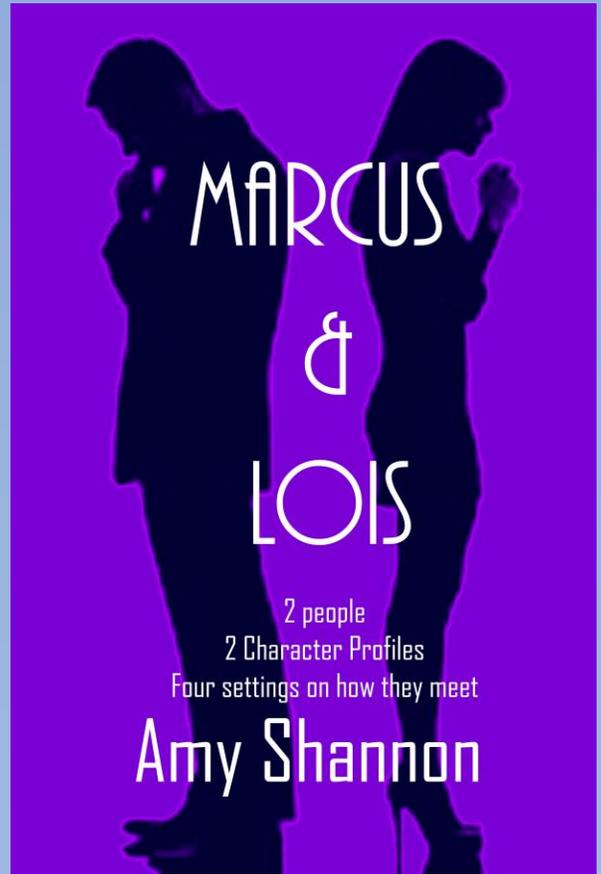
Marcus and Lois are two characters, in which they share 4 different situations where they meet. The writing challenge was to write for the same two characters, and have them interact in different situations, and see how different the same person can be. Both Marcus and Lois were created by a character profile, so they are the same person, but are put in different settings.

This is the first one. (The second, third, and fourth one will appear in the next three issues of this magazine).

#### Meet Lois and Marcus in By Design.

Marcus tapped his pencil on the worn green desk blotter that lay on top of his large mahogany desk. The desk was cluttered with four monitors, and two keyboards, as well as a mouse and piles of spiral notebooks. The thunder boomed outside the large window, splattering rain against the cold glass. Marcus shuddered slightly, still tapping the pencil. He should've been concentrating on his latest project but the call from his grandfather, Arturo, still weighed on his mind.

Marcus tossed the pencil on the desk, remembering Arturo's words. *I'm getting' old, son. Either you come on your vacation next month, or I'm comin' there. We need to talk. It's important.*



Raised by his grandparents when his parents died in a plane crash, Arturo is the only family Marcus has left. He still feels the loss his grandmother, and it is just a reminder of how short life really is. Lost in his own thoughts, he jumped slightly when the phone buzzed.

He picked up the receiver, “Yes, Constance, what is it?”

“Mr. Civitello, Ms. Reeves has been sittin’ out here for twenty minutes.” She said.

“Oh, OK, who’s that?”

“The one Mr. Barker told you about. You need to meet with her about the new software.” Constance reminded him.

# By Design by Amy Shannon (Cont'd)

“I don’t know what you’re talkin’ ‘bout.” He sighed, his accent emitted a New York, yet Texan accent.

“Sir, you’re supposed to train her.” Constance said.

“Oh, damn, well, give me a sec and bring her in.” He dropped the receiver back onto the phone. “*Trainees*, humph!”

Constance stood up and straightened out her long, black dress, her gray eyes smiled toward the woman. “Ms. Reeves.” She nodded. “Mr. Civitello will see you now. Please, join me.”

Lois Reeves smoothed out her hair and ponytail as she stood up. She shoved her sketchpad under her arm and picked up her large black bag, flinging it over her shoulder. She followed Constance into the large office, as she noticed the man, whose back was toward her as he looked out the large floor-to-ceiling window. “Nice view.” She said as Constance left the office, closing the door behind her.

“Now, I hope I don’t have ta hold your hand on this.” He reluctantly turned around. He did not want to train anyone. He wasn’t good at it nor did he like doing it. He caught his breath instantly, trying to remember to breathe. He stared at her and gulped heavily. “Um, Marcus Civitello.” He immediately extended his hand to her.

Lois smiled, her hand meeting his in a gentle shake. “It’s nice to meet you. I’m sure this was an inconvenience for you.” She pulled her hand

back, and dropped her sketchpad to the floor.

“Oh, damn, sorry.”

He kneeled immediately with her as their hands met to grab the sketchpad. “Oh, here you go.” He noticed the drawing on the page as he handed it to her. “You did this?”

“Um, yeah, I was bored in your waiting room.” She smiled.

“It looks just like Constance.” He smiled. “Please, have a seat Ms. Reeves.”

“Lois.” She smiled. “Just call me Lois.” She sat down in one of the plush chairs that were in front of his desk.

Marcus sat on the edge of his desk and faced her. *Wow, she’s beautiful and those eyes, something about those eyes.* He eyed her left hand, noting no ring, but a slight indentation where a ring probably had lived until recently. “Um, you look so familiar. Have we met before?”

“Um, I don’t think so.” She smiled, nervously crossing her legs and balancing her sketchpad on her leg.

“Are ya’ sure?” He smiled so deep that his one dimple almost flirted with her.

“Um, have you ever been ta’ *Bawston*?” she emphasized her slight Boston accent.

“Nope, have ya’ ever been ta’ New York?”

“I’m originally from New York.” She smiled.

“Which Burrough?”

“Um, *upstate* New York. Everyone thinks that New York is only five Burroughs big and forgets the rest of the state.” She snapped but calmed her demeanor. “Anyway, we should get started on whatever you need ta show me. I’m sorry that Mr. Barker wasn’t able to meet with me.”

# By Design by Amy Shannon (Cont'd)

“Ah, don’t worry ‘bout it.” He smiled. “So, ya’ need to learn this new software I built.” He walked around his desk and sat down in his leather high back chair. “I would’ve thought they’d send the engineer or the architect or whatever, not the assistant.”

She stood up abruptly, her sketchpad falling to the floor. “I see this was a bad idea.” She raised her voice.

“Now, hold on, honey.” His smile grew across his face. “Don’t get all riled up, now.”

She turned on her heels and stormed to the door, and as she grabbed for the knob, she realized what happened. *Dammit, my pad.* She turned around, glaring at Marcus. “You should learn ta know what you’re *tawking* ‘bout before you speak.” She walked over to the chair and bent over to pick up her pad. Her eyes focused on Marcus as she stood up. “I thought you could be professional, but I see your reputation is dead on.” She walked out of the office.

Marcus ran his hands nervously through his black hair, gritting his teeth. He almost growled but then he thought of her eyes, her smile, her presence that immediately drew him to her. He hurried out of his office and down the corridor toward the elevator.

Lois stepped onto the elevator and she noticed him hurrying toward her as the elevator shut. She pressed her back against the far wall of elevator. *They always expect a man. I’ve been doing my job for ten years and they always expect me to be or act like a man. Jack never acted that way.* Somehow, her thoughts always

led back to Jack, her late husband. He died two years ago in the line of duty. Jack was a Boston Police Officer and they met when he was a rookie officer and she was designing one of the buildings for a new Police precinct. He was the only man she ever loved, and they were only married six years when he died. She never let anyone get close to her again, but of course, most of the men in her life didn’t feel she was in the right line of work.

The elevator doors opened to the lobby and she stared into his eyes. Marcus stood outside of the elevator. “We need ta’ talk.” He sighed.

“I don’t think we have anything to tawk about.” She sneered, getting off the elevator.

He followed behind her outside of the building, grabbing her arm as they reached the wet sidewalk. The humidity almost hit him in the face, as he noticed and was greatly thankful that the rain had stopped. “Please, give me five minutes to apologize.” He said.

She stopped, shrugged off his hand, and then stared into his eyes. She couldn’t admit that she found him attractive, not even to herself. An attraction or even simple flirting would just get in the way. “You need *five minutes* to apologize? How long does it take to say *I’m sorry*?” she crossed her arms.

“Well, I’m Italian and I’m told I talk a lot. I *am* sorry. I made an assumption. Can’t we just start over?”

# By Design by Amy Shannon (Cont'd)

She shook her head. "Listen." She was tempted to push her finger against his chest, but touching his hard body may cause an interruption in her anger and she wasn't ready for that. She held on tightly to the strap of her bag. "I am an Engineer. I work as the executive engineer at the Bosman Architecture Firm in *Bawston*. My boss sent me here ta Houston because of you, Mista' high-n-mighty. You're supposed ta' have some fancy shmancy software that's supposed ta help me do my job bettah. Well, all I need is pencil and paper to do my job, but that's not good enough anymore. So, I drag my butt all the way here in order to see a new and bettah way to do my job and you treat me like I'm some errand girl! How dare you! If I weren't a lady, I'd smack you. But hell, if I weren't a lady, maybe I'd be treated bettah."

"You should smack me, I was very rude. I am sorry, ma'am." He tipped his head gently, as if he were wearing some sort of Stetson.

"And that smile is supposed ta' make me forgive you?"

"No, don't forgive me, but let me show you the software anyway. Please." He said when his cell phone rang. He pulled the phone out of his pocket and stared at the caller ID. "I'm sorry, I have ta take this."

"Yeah, whatever." She sighed, with exasperation.

"*Nonno?* What's wrong?" his voice changed to a slight panic at the sound of his grandfather's voice.

Lois watched the expression of concern on Marcus' face. *There's more to this guy than just a chauvinistic jerk.* She couldn't quite make out what he was saying, but she watched his mannerisms as he slowly backed away from her and leaned against the building. Lois' phone rang and she reached into her bag and pulled it out. "Ted? Yeah, I'm here. We're just about ta meet."

"Ya' need to get this project done in three days or that's it, Lois. I'll rescind our contract."

"It's not my fault they kept changing their minds on the plans. I did what they asked and they still changed their minds." She explained.

"The client is *always* right. Now, I emailed the updated details. Get it done, Lois, and I don't care how. I can get a man to do more than you and work for less."

"I doubt that." Lois said. "I'll have the design specs to you by tomorrow." She hung up before he could argue anymore with her. As she slipped her phone back into her bag, she noticed Marcus' posture straightened up as he placed his phone in his pocket. "Everything all right?"

"Um, yeah, sorry, but that was my grandfather. He's on his way here."

"Oh, but he's OK?"

"He's better than he was last night when I talked to him. He talks about death a lot, but I think he just wants to spend some time with me. I hear it in his voice." Marcus said. "I'm sorry. He's flying in from New York ... the city,

# By Design by Amy Shannon (Cont'd)

not just the state, tomorrow.” chuckling slightly. “Uh, Ms. Reeves, I mean, Lois, can you give me another chance?” His tone softened and his eyes lit up. She even heard a hint of nervousness in his voice. His call from his grandfather had a dramatic change in his attitude, he was more soft spoken and pleasant.

“I accept your apology and would like to see what this program can do for me. I have a deadline.” She explained, as they walked back into the building.

Constance stood up from her desk as they walked down the hall toward his office. “Is everything all right?” Her demeanor showed that her words were genuine.

“Yes, we’re fine. A minor disagreement.” Marcus explained. “Can you bring some coffee into the office? We’ll be, uh, workin’ on the new program for quite a while.”

“Yes, sir.” She nodded as Lois followed Marcus into the office.

He walked over to the table in the corner of the room and turned on the desktop computer that was set up for testing purposes. “Have a seat.” He pulled out the chair for her.

She sat down and sighed. “Uh, thank you.”

“You seem distracted. I hope my call didn’t seem unprofessional. I am sorry ‘bout that.”

“No, that’s not it.” She sighed. “My job is on the line right now. I give 10 years of my life to Ted and because his clients keep changing their damn mind ...” her voice trailed off and lowered. “I’m sorry.”

“I don’t know how this program will help ya’, but let me show you what I put together.” He said. He clicked on the icon on the desktop labeled *By Design*. “It’s not a permanent name but this program will allow the user to scan the sketches into the computer, using even the simplest hand-held scanner or even a scanner app with your smartphone.”

“Well, I do that now. Well, not with a phone, but a scanner.”

“What do you do after you scan the sketch?”

“I have to basically redraw the sketch with the drawing software provided by an outside vendor. Then recalculate and readjust the dimensions. It was easier when I could just draw and calculate as I draw, but now everyone wants emails or digital enhancements. The hardest part is when the client keeps changing their minds.” She twisted her finger around her long ponytail. “I’m sorry.”

He rested his elbow on the table and leaned his chin on his fist. “So, tell me about this client. What’s the problem?”

“Well, he wanted an 18-story building.” She sighed. “But the zoning law only allowed for 16. He was angry that I only designed a 16-story building, but it had to meet the zoning laws. I was able to make up for the space by expanding the width instead of the height. He finally agreed, but then changed his mind as to what he wanted in the building. By the time I

# By Design by Amy Shannon (Cont'd)

changed the design to meet his needs, he changed his mind again. I couldn't keep up. It was easier when the client just accepted and worked off my papers."

"I think that this may be adaptable to your needs." He smiled.

"Seriously?" she smiled and leaned forward. "You think so?"

"Definitely." He said. "Tell me what you need and I can build it for you."

She laughed slightly. "Now you sound like me." She smiled.

"Sounds like we both build, just in different ways." He went to touch her hand but stopped himself. "So, shall we get started?"

"Coffee first?" She smiled.

"Sounds good." He nodded. "How do ya like your coffee?" He stood up and walked over to the small table by the door where Constance had set the coffee tray without interrupting them.

"Black." She smiled.

"Me, too." He grinned, pouring them both a cup of black coffee. He handed her the cup. "I think this will be the start of a beautiful partnership."

"Oh, you think so?" She smiled.

"I just have a feeling." He laughed.

"And for some reason, so do I." She clicked his cup with hers.

**CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS**



# Melina Druga - Heinous: Forgotten Murders From the 1910s

Every day, amateur sleuths take to the internet in droves to solve disappearances and catch killers on the run. Writers and public figures ask whether it's healthy to be so obsessed with all things lurid and obscene. Think this widespread fascination with true crime is merely a symptom of living in the Information Age? Melina Druga will force you to reconsider.

In this gripping volume, the journalist and author of *A Tale of Two Nations* unearths newspaper reporting from more than a century ago, revisiting 19 grisly and unnerving cases that shocked the U.S. — including a few that continue to stump investigators to this day.

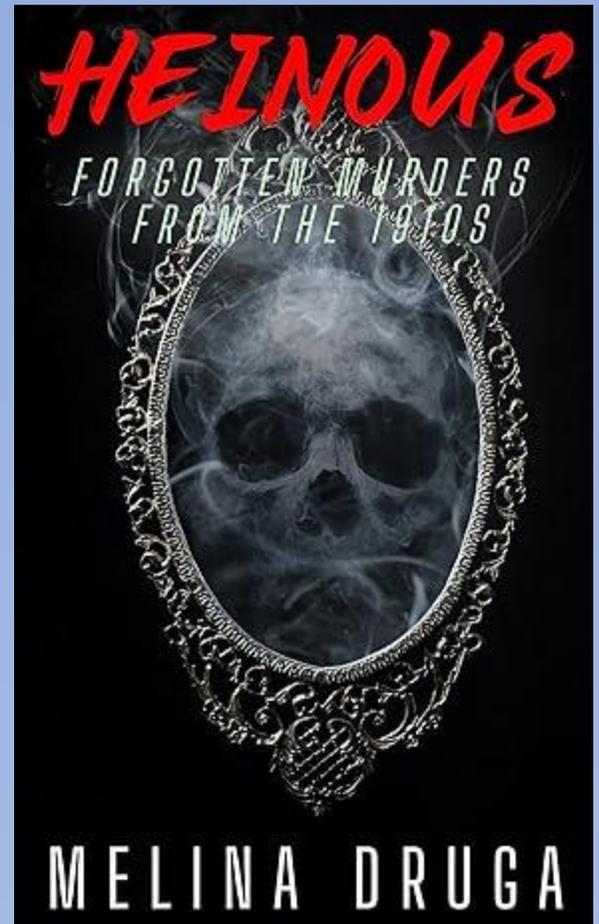
Crime was on the rise in 1910s America. As headlines about axe murderers and missing children became inescapable, criminologists and journalists alike expressed concerns about the homicidal nature of “half-wits” and “morons.”

*Heinous* collects tales of robberies gone wrong, murderous janitors, a fake priest's blood sacrifice, and a man dubbed the “dime novel fiend.” You'll meet Alice Crispell and Marion Lambert, teenagers whose still-unsolved murders fed into a moral panic over premarital sex and permissive parenting. Then there's Dorothy Arnold, the 25-year-old New York City socialite who disappeared in 1910, never to be seen again...

5 Stars

True Grisly Crimes

Melina Druga writes about historical true crimes in *Heinous: Forgotten Murders From the 1910s*. I am a fan of true crime stories. Melina Druga is a true multi-genre author, as she writes both fiction and nonfiction books. Every one of her nonfiction books, gives a great deal of details from the time period, but also tells a story of the era that this journalist selects. *Heinous* is about murders from the 1910s, and gives the reader a complete picture of the various cases, murder cases, where some were never solved, but probably forgotten, until she brought it back. This book was written very well. I learned a lot just by reading the author's notes, and the section Crime in the 1910s, such as the medical term “moron” or “idiot.” Yes, those were actual medical terms of feeble-mindedness, and those people that were “morons” or categorized in one of those



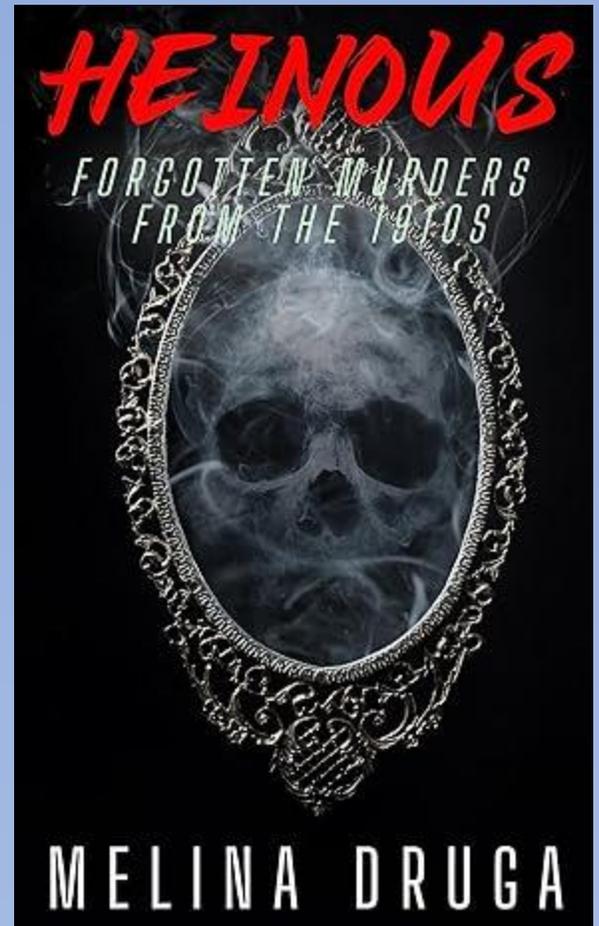
# Melina Druga - Heinous: Forgotten Murders From the 1910s

## The Review

5 Stars

True Grisly Crimes

Melina Druga writes about historical true crimes in *Heinous: Forgotten Murders From the 1910s*. I am a fan of true crime stories. Melina Druga is a true multi-genre author, as she writes both fiction and nonfiction books. Every one of her nonfiction books, gives a great deal of details from the time period, but also tells a story of the era that this journalist selects. *Heinous* is about murders from the 1910s, and gives the reader a complete picture of the various cases, murder cases, where some were never solved, but probably forgotten, until she brought it back. This book was written very well. I learned a lot just by reading the author's notes, and the section Crime in the 1910s, such as the medical term "moron" or "idiot." Yes, those were actual medical terms of feeble-mindedness, and those people that were "morons" or categorized in one of those feeble-minded disorders, were always the first suspects. Each case was powerful and terrifying, especially because one might think that there were times in the past that were in order, and safe, but that is not the case. As the author put it, crime has been around since the beginning of time. Murder was one of the first crimes, and it still is popular and disheartening. I applaud this author for bringing these cases back to the limelight, to share, and maybe some can be solved, or a reminder that over time, some things are just forgotten, good and evil.



# Brian Whitney and Nic Edwards- THE DELPHI MURDERS: The Quest To Find 'The Man On The Bridge'

On February 13, 2017, two Indiana teenagers, Abigail Williams, 13, and Liberty German, 14, went for a walk in the woods near the abandoned Monon High Bridge.

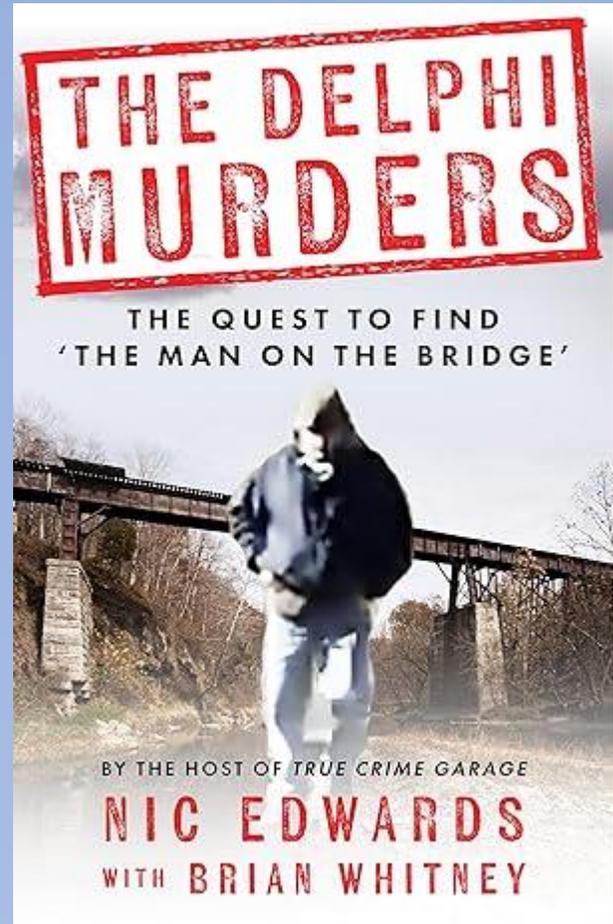
They never returned home.

Their bodies were discovered on Valentine's Day morning, sparking a torrent of news coverage and social media speculation that engrossed the attention of people around the world.

A grainy photo of the suspected killer walking across the bridge and a chilling cellphone recording of his voice saying "down the hill" captured the public's attention. Numerous possible suspects were brought to the attention of the authorities but dismissed, leaving everyone wondering who could have committed such a heinous crime.

Author Nic Edwards, host of the wildly popular True Crime Garage podcast, was fascinated by the case and for years conducted his own extensive research and commentary. As such he was able to dissect the investigation that included an extensive list of possible suspects, such as a hatchet-wielding lunatic, a kidnapper with unusual tattoos, a murderous pastor, a rapist, and a father and son catfishing team.

Then in late October 2022, local pharmacy technician Richard Allen was charged with the murders. His arrest raised multiple questions about how he was able to evade law enforcement for so long and what motivated him to commit such a horrific crime.



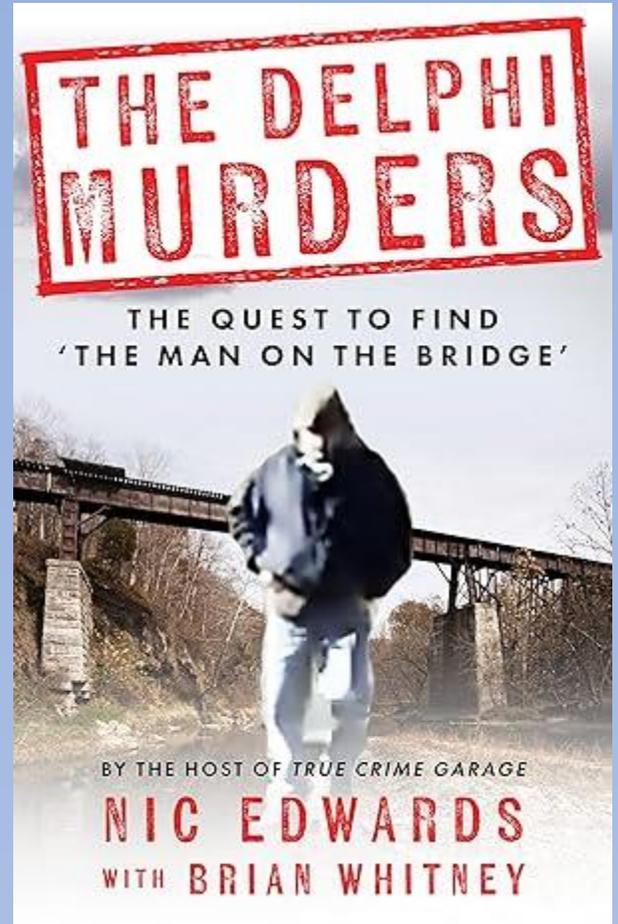
# Brian Whitney and Nic Edwards- THE DELPHI MURDERS: The Quest To Find 'The Man On The Bridge'

## The Review

5 Stars

The case of Abigail Williams and Liberty German

Brian Whitney and Nic Edwards write about the murders of Abigail Williams and Liberty German in *THE DELPHI MURDERS: The Quest To Find The Man On The Bridge*. I am a fan of true crime stories. I've read books from Author Brian Whitney before, and this book was well written, and gave some depth to the story. I think I read it at just the right time, as every time I read a true crime book, I look up more information about the case, to see if there has been any developments. And in this case, there were more developments than in the book, and it seems that court documents claim that the young girls were killed in a pagan cult, but that's according to the defense. There seems to still be a case while it is in court, and what is going on. It's called the Delphi murders because the girls went missing after going for a walk, in Delphi, Indiana. Their bodies were found near the Monon High Bridge trail in the Delphi Historic Trails. The book starts from the beginning, and goes through the motions of where the investigation went, especially in different directions, and there were different suspects, but that's how an investigation will go. The case is now in court, and I will be following it. My heart goes out to the parents of these young girls, as it is always disheartening to discover such a case.





# **Recommended Children's Books**

# Asa Rodriguez- BENJAMIN JONES: The Call of The Shaman

Is Darkness Falling upon The Face of The Earth??

When Ben meets Adit, a spiritual author and guru, he starts on an adventure to find out his shamanic roots, his magic, and his link to a wicked necromancer.

This epic story begins about 5000 years ago, in Sumeria, as they came from outer space. Ancient gods, ascended masters, beings of light, above all war and fear. Ben, a 12-year-old orphan boy, born in the 1890s, must discover himself, what happened to his parents, his shamanic powers and legacy.

He might be the reincarnation of an ancient demigod, a Wolf Boy hero emerging from ancient Sumer (Sumeria). But what is really the connection he has with the gods...?? That is the mystery to uncover here. And this quest won't be easy, because there will be dark forces, ghouls, necro creatures, curses, and much more against him.

-The Call of The Shaman is a coming-of-age, unique and spiritual fantasy story, it brings some insights and moral guidance to the reader. This author always liked the worlds of adventure of 'Harry Potter' and the spiritual/self-discovery journey of the 'The Alchemist,' so it is written in that adventure style where both meet; however, the narrative and story centers not only on the events but mainly on the emotional journey of the 12-year-old shaman boy.

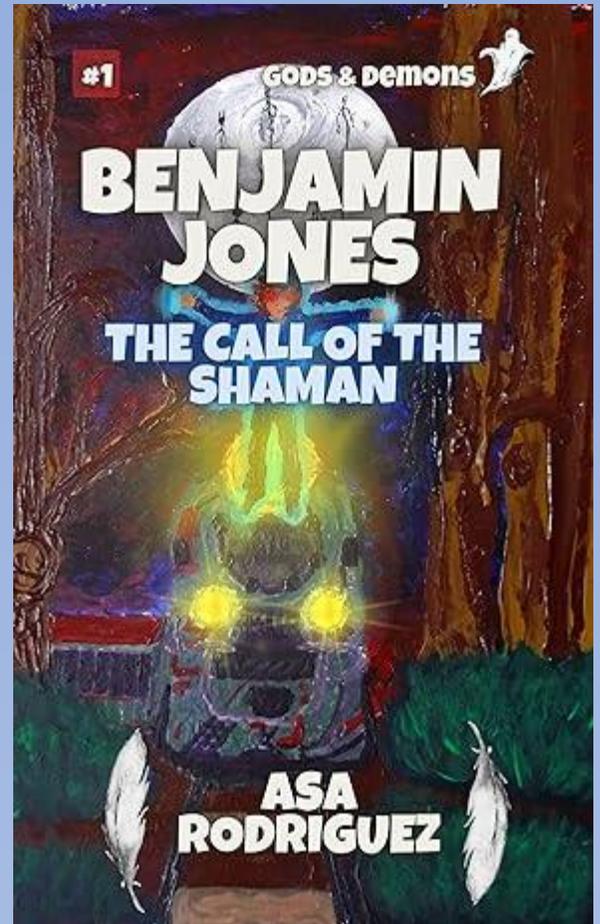
Filled with Action, Humor, Intrigue, and Heart.

Warning: some readers may find some scenes scary or disturbing while the clash of good vs. evil happens.

Series: The Spectra Crown Tales Volume: 2

5 Stars

Enjoyed this story!



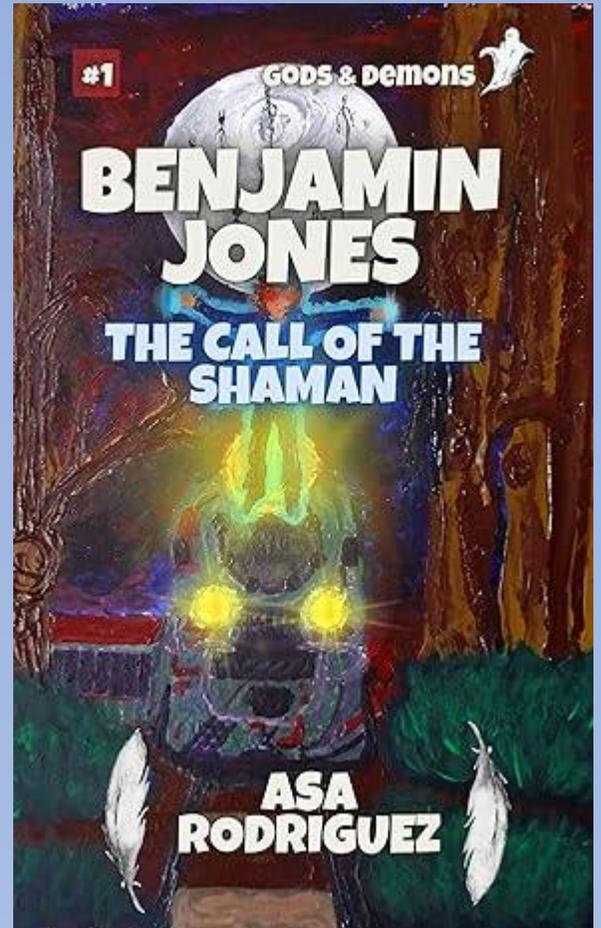
# Asa Rodriguez- BENJAMIN JONES: The Call of The Shaman

## The Review

3 Stars

Great Story.

Asa Rodriguez writes a interesting coming of age tale with a magical and mythological twist with BENJAMIN JONES: The Call of The Shaman. I haven't read anything by this author before and I enjoyed it, that I will read more books from this author. This book is part of the Benjamin Jones series, and this is volume one. It's a book intended for Young Adults, but some scenes may be a little more mature depending on the definition of young adult. The reader is introduced to Ben, a young orphan, born in the 1890s, who sets on a journey to find out the truth about his parents, and his own powers. There is a mix of magic, mythology, and action. It's a good story that sets the stage for future books, but this was an easy read, and some of the action scenes were very well written and descriptive. Most of characters had a lot of depth, and were very realistic, as we never really know who has real powers and who doesn't. It's action-packed and it takes the reader on an emotional journey. No matter the powers, this is still a young boy, discovering his destiny.



A vintage silver microphone with a ribbed grille is positioned on a stand in the foreground. Behind it, an open book is visible, with its pages fanned out. The text on the pages is partially legible, including phrases like "we could hear him laughing and crying" and "and faded and was gone." The word "Audiobooks" is overlaid in a large, bold, black serif font across the center of the image.

# Audiobooks

# Audiobook: Yurie Kiri- Moonlight Beach Murder and Magic

Narrated by: Rose London

Genre: F/paranormal/thriller

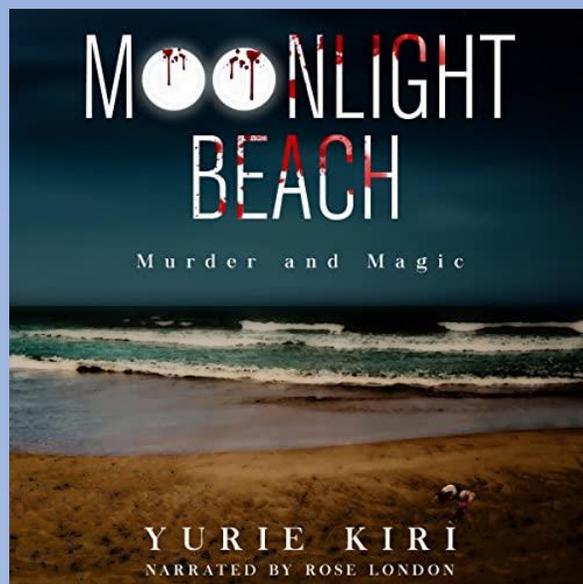
Series: Murder and Magic

Volume: 1

4 Stars

Enjoyed this story!

Yurie Kiri tells a thrilling paranormal tale with Moonlight Beach Murder and Magic. I haven't read anything by this author before, and what a hidden gem. I enjoyed it so much, that I have now followed the author and look for more books to read. This book is in print and on audiobook, and I have read the print, and listened to the audiobook, enjoying both, and writing a review for each one. The listener is introduced to Moonlight Beach, and the residents that are close by and are the ones that can afford the view. How terrible for them, that bodies are starting to wash up on shore. This is a grandly told paranormal thriller that brings in the possible, with what may or may not be possible, and those all add up to deaths, gory and terrifying deaths. So many theories as to what happened, and why it is happening, rather than how to stop it from happening, if that is even an option. The author weaves a tangled web of story, and captures the reader. Absolutely chilling, with death around every corner. This author is a great storyteller. The listener just embarks on a superb journey. It's a look over your shoulder book, because you never know who or what is going to appear next.





# Poetry

# Michael Forester- Forest Rain

Genre: Poetry

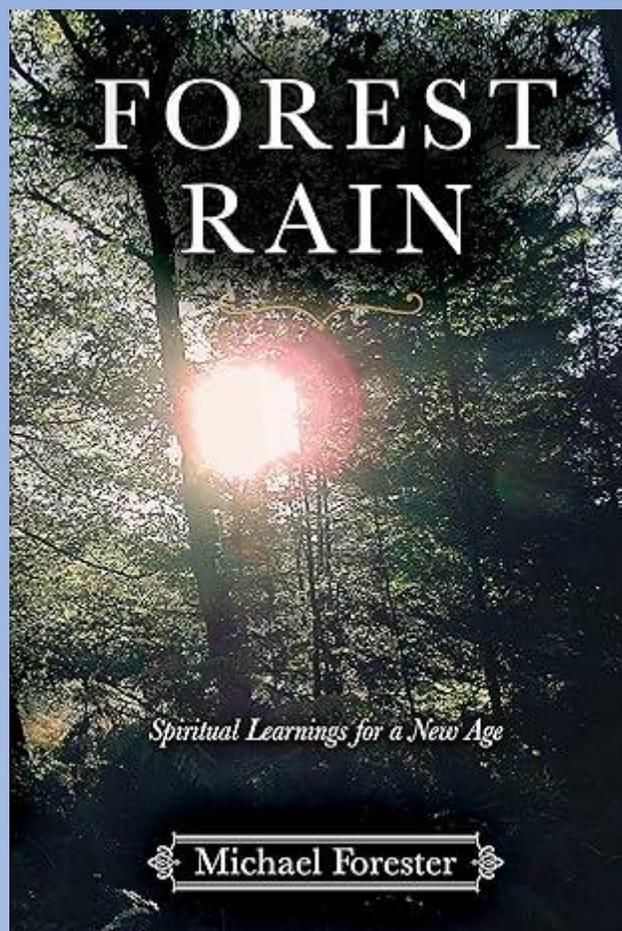
Series: The Forest Series

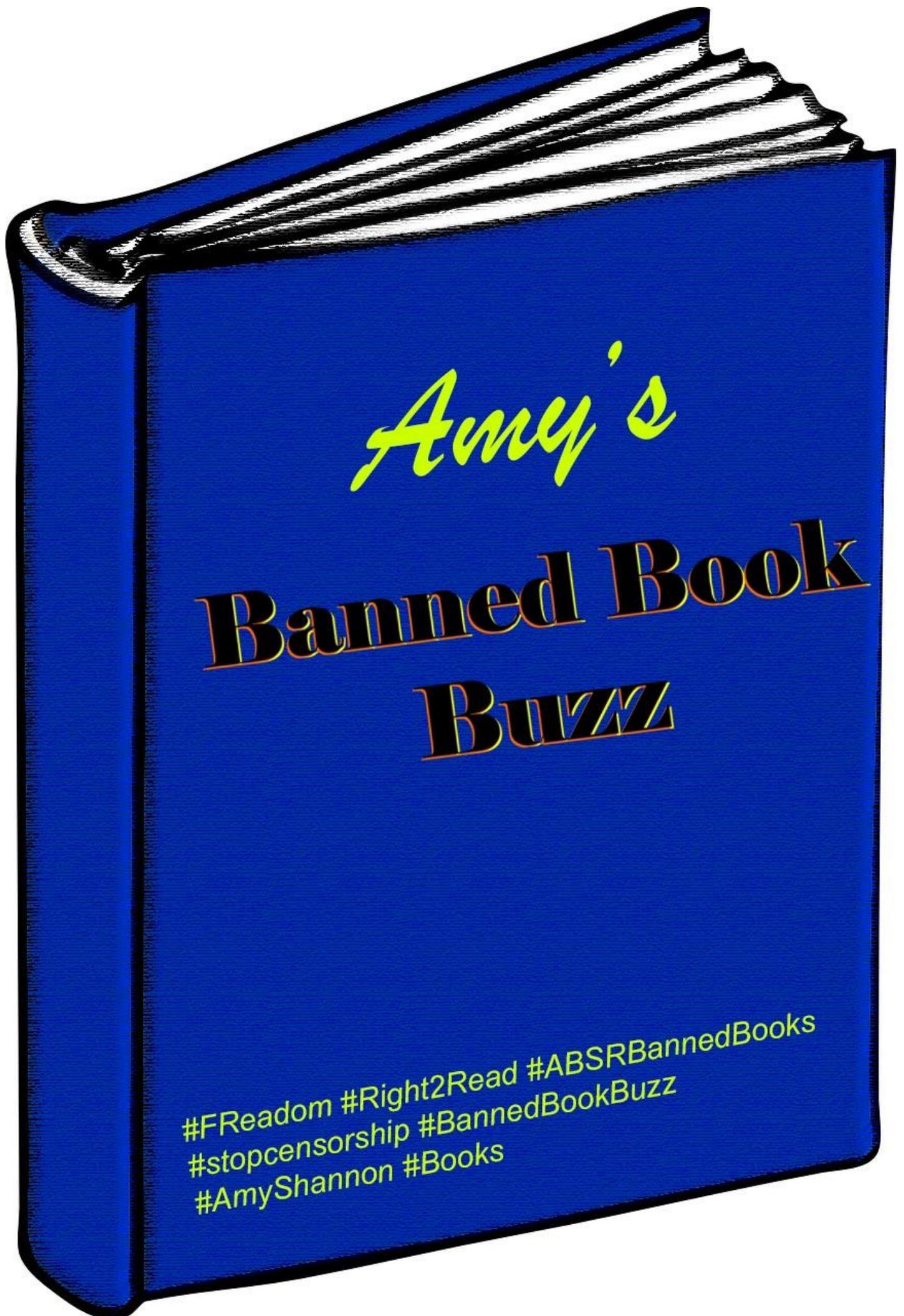
Volume: 1

5 Stars

From the Soul!

This collection of essays, metaphors and verse by Michael Forester is remarkable. The words almost float across the pages of Forest Rain. I enjoyed reading this collection and entering the mind of this prolific poet. Such a wonderful read. My favorite was Am I a writer, which was the first one, and I thought that was so poetic, because as writers, we ask ourselves that all of the time. Writing is more than putting words on paper. This collection is not just poetry, but it is poetic, whether it is an essay, metaphor or a simple verse, and no verse is simple, to be honest. Michael Forester has a very unique way of writing, and write in many different genres and perspectives, and this book, every single read will touch your soul, you'll feel emotions of the words and how they are put together. Words are more than just words when they make you think, or make you feel. This collection does this, and I can't wait to read the other books in this Forest Series. As Michael wrote in From the Darkness, 'no judge passed sentence on my lonely hard ... no man decreed that chained in isolation I should dwell.' I look forward to reading more by this poet.





*Amy's*

**Banned Book  
Buzz**

#FReadom #Right2Read #ABSRBannedBooks  
#stopcensorship #BannedBookBuzz  
#AmyShannon #Books

# Amy's Banned Book Buzz

Amy from Amy's Bookshelf Reviews is an advocate for reading and supporting the right to read what you want to read. Amy's Banned Book Buzz is on TikTok and YouTube. Amy talks about stopping censorship #ABBB #FReadom #Right2Read #ABSRBannedBooks #stopcensorship #BannedBookBuzz and also is making it her mission to read as many banned, burned, challenged or controversial books as she can (while still staying loyal to her authors that she reviews for on Amy's Bookshelf Reviews <https://amysbookshelfreviews.com/> )

Amy's Banned Book Buzz is a series of short videos where Amy will discuss a banned book, give commentary, and then read an excerpt directly from the book.

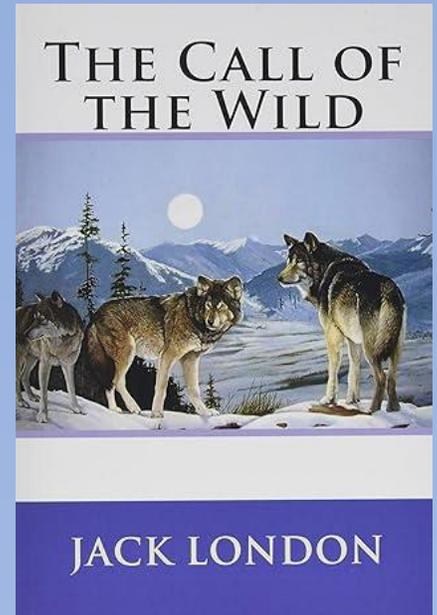
Everyone should be able to read, and everyone should be able to read what they want.



# Amy's Banned Book Buzz

## Jack London- The Call of the Wild

The Call of the Wild is a novel by Jack London published in 1903. The story is set in the Yukon during the 1890s Klondike Gold Rush—a period in which strong sled dogs were in high demand. The novel's central character is a dog named Buck, a domesticated dog living at a ranch in the Santa Clara Valley of California as the story opens. Stolen from his home and sold into service as sled dog in Alaska, he reverts to a wild state. Buck is forced to fight in order to dominate other dogs in a harsh climate. Eventually he sheds the veneer of civilization, relying on primordial instincts and learned experience to emerge as a leader in the wild. London lived for most of a year in the Yukon collecting material for the book. The story was serialized in the Saturday Evening Post in the summer of 1903; a month later it was released in book form. The novel's great popularity and success made a reputation for London. Much of its appeal derives from the simplicity of this tale of survival. As early as 1908 the story was adapted to film and it has since seen several more cinematic adaptations.



**Genre: Classic, short stories, wild, Adventure**

**5 Stars**

**Masterful Classic!**

**What a magnificent classic story in The Call of the Wild by Jack London. This book is a banned book, and so worth the read. Buck was an aristocratic dog. He was proud to be the owner of his human, Judge Miller. Then a turn of events and Buck faces an uncertain but torturous future. No longer a beloved dog, but one that was stolen, and now finds his primitive state, and the thirst to survive. Buck is stolen from Judge Miller, and then auctioned off. The era is that of the Yukon, where dogs were beat into submission in order to pull sleds through treacherous conditions, ice and snow, with heavy loads, and some of the humans had no idea how to treat animals, except the use of the whip. Buck learned to survive, and live each step of the journey that was unplanned, and again he faced an uncertain future. I tried to watch a few of the movies that were created based on this story, but I found that the movies focuses on the people, and the dogs were second, so I stopped watching the first few minutes. I would like to**

# Amy's Banned Book Buzz

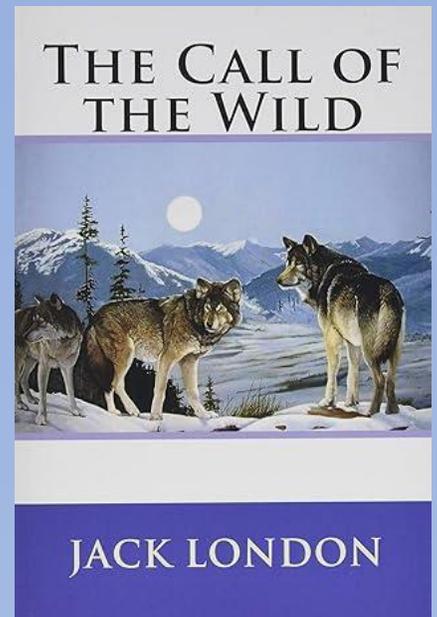
## Jack London- The Call of the Wild The Review

Genre: Classic, short stories, wild, Adventure

5 Stars

Masterful Classic!

What a magnificent classic story in *The Call of the Wild* by Jack London. This book is a banned book, and so worth the read. Buck was an aristocratic dog. He was proud to be the owner of his human, Judge Miller. Then a turn of events and Buck faces an uncertain but torturous future. No longer a beloved dog, but one that was stolen, and now finds his primitive state, and the thirst to survive. Buck is stolen from Judge Miller, and then auctioned off. The era is that of the Yukon, where dogs were beat into submission in order to pull sleds through treacherous conditions, ice and snow, with heavy loads, and some of the humans had no idea how to treat animals, except the use of the whip. Buck learned to survive, and live each step of the journey that was unplanned, and again he faced an uncertain future. I tried to watch a few of the movies that were created based on this story, but I found that the movies focuses on the people, and the dogs were second, so I stopped within the first few minutes. I usually like to watch the movies or shows based on books, and compare the two, but the book is better than any movie. The book is about Buck's life, good and bad, and the inhumanity and torture of dogs. It's a graphic book but well worth the read. The narrator is all about Buck, and the other dogs, and how it becomes survival of the fittest. Either a dog is killed by a human, or in a fight to the death with the alpha dog, or the dog who assumed he was the alpha dog. Owner after own, some experienced with dogs, and others not so much. The dogs lacked rest, and grew tired, and when they dropped from exhaustion, they were beat until they got back up. The details London put into the story showed the story in a way that no usual element could do. This reader rallied and applauded Buck's survival, and was dishearten at the abuse. All you can do is read and picture the story in all its elements. If you haven't read it before, read it now. If you have, read it again.





AMY'S BOOKSHELF REVIEWS

**AMY'S  
PICKS OF THE  
MONTH**

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# Scott Shane- Flee North: A Forgotten Hero and the Fight for Freedom in Slavery's Borderland

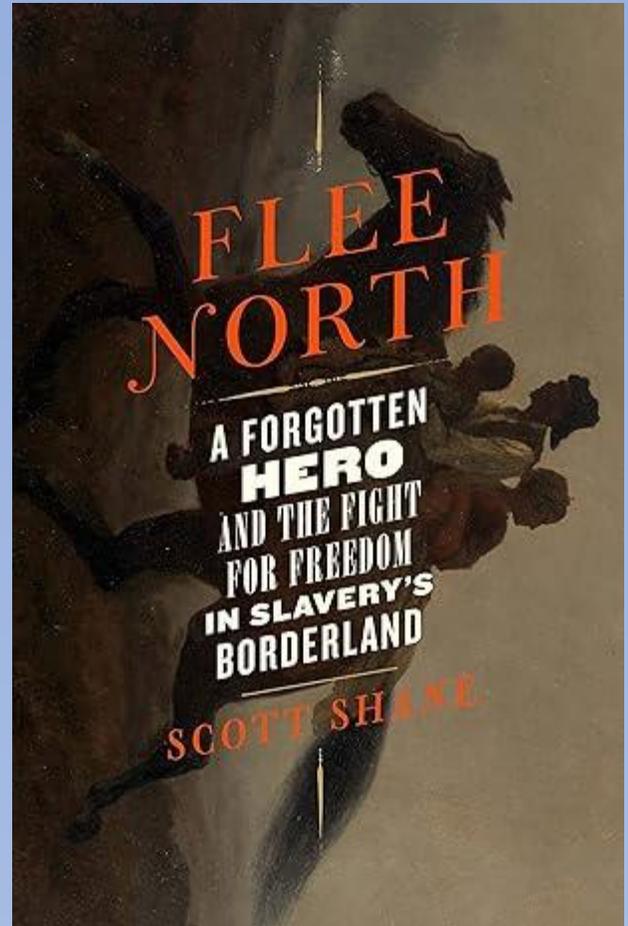
Genre: NF/Slavery/Freedom

About Flee North: A Forgotten Hero and the Fight for Freedom in Slavery's Borderland

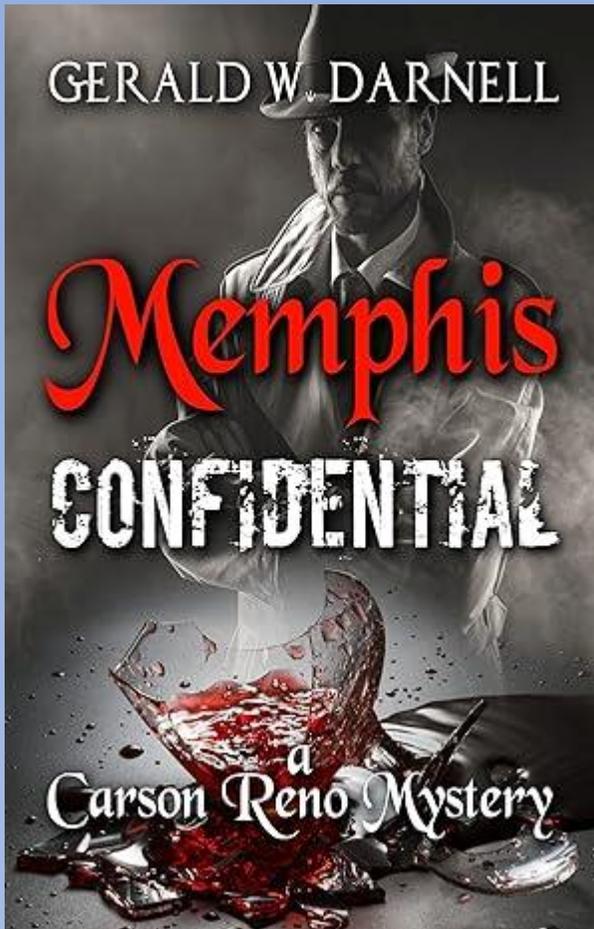
Born into slavery, by the 1840s Thomas Smallwood was free, self-educated, and working as a shoemaker a short walk from the U.S. Capitol. He recruited a young white activist, Charles Torrey, and together they began to organize mass escapes from Washington, Baltimore, and surrounding counties to freedom in the north.

They were racing against an implacable enemy: men like Hope Slatter, the region's leading slave trader, part of a lucrative industry that would tear one million enslaved people from their families and sell them to the brutal cotton and sugar plantations of the deep south.

Men, women, and children in imminent danger of being sold south turned to Smallwood, who risked his own freedom to battle what he called "the most inhuman system that ever blackened the pages of history." And he documented the escapes in satirical newspaper columns, mocking the slaveholders, the slave traders and the police who worked for them.



# Gerald Darnell- Memphis Confidential



Genre: F/Mystery/Detective

About Memphis Confidential

When an old girlfriend finds herself in trouble Carson is asked to help – things quickly get out of hand.

After getting himself arrested for murder, it seems that it's Carson who needs the help and not the ex-girlfriend.

A recent casino robbery is somehow linked to the problem, and when that investigation heats up, people start dying.

Shady characters are everywhere, and some are after Carson's head.

Join our story and come along to help Carson find the clues, search for the truth and try to solve the case of: Memphis Confidential

# Yurie Kiri- Moonlight Rip Tide

Genre: F/Paranormal/thriller

Series: Murder and Magic

Volume: 5

## About Moonlight Rip Tide

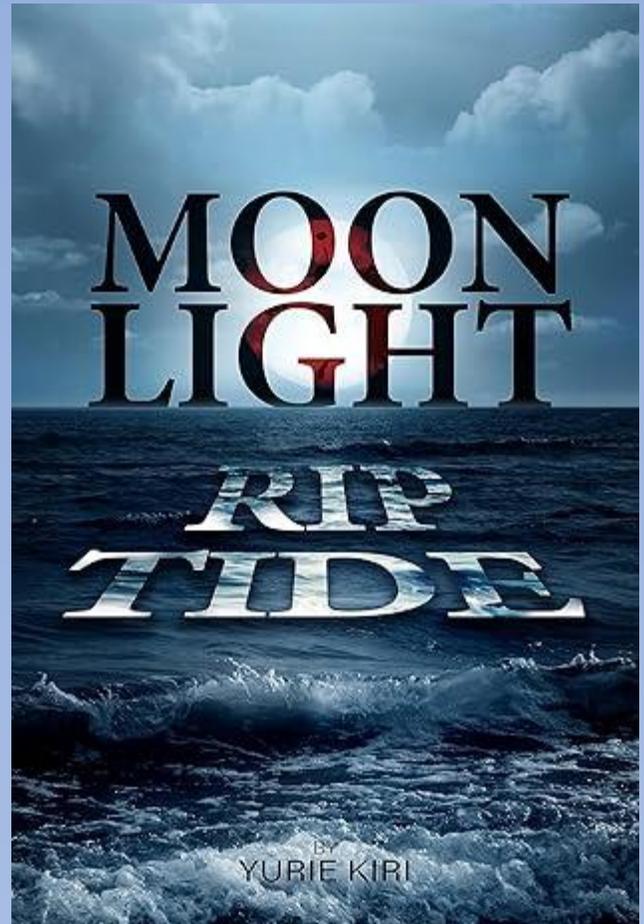
Want to go for a ride in a classic car? Park by the ocean? Sounds nice huh?

Mona found the man and his car, a beautiful, old Ferrari, very attractive. Sure, she'd go for a ride with him to look at the ocean, the party was boring anyway. Maybe by the time they got back things would liven up a bit...

She felt the bag tighten around her neck, cutting off her air supply. This cannot be happening. She gasped and struggled, but it was no use. He was as strong as he was classically handsome, a real Hollywood leading man type. Everything went dark as she lost consciousness, her last thought was about the mistake she'd made threatening to tell Danny's wife...

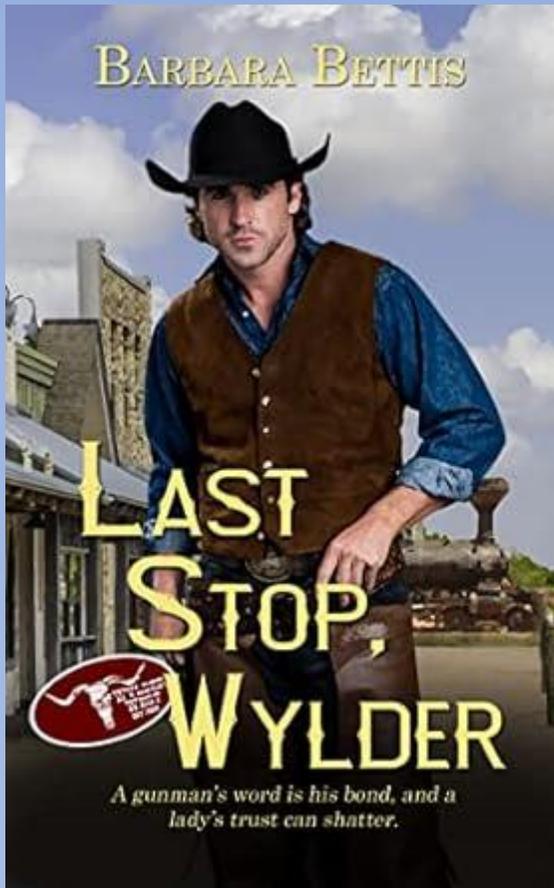
Susan felt that someone was stalking her. She'd gotten several strange calls attempting to make appointments for private exercise and aerobics lessons. Dicky and the cops had wrecked her apartment and she needed to work to get a new place but she was afraid to take on an unknown client. What should she do?

"Get in the car or your pregnant friend is dead!" he said hoarsely. Susan must save Anne, but how?



# Barbara Bettis- Last Stop, Wylder

Genre: /Romance/Western



## About Last Stop, Wylder

Gunman Morgan Dodd is headed to a new life in California, where no one knows his name. Or his reputation. Just one last job to raise money for his fresh start—gun hand for a railroad agent in Wyoming. Easy enough. Until he meets the woman who could change everything.

After ending her engagement, Emily Martin longs for independence. She sets out for Wylder, Wyoming, to help her brother with his newspaper. But when she arrives, she finds he's off investigating a story. Well, then. She'll simply publish the paper herself until he returns. Emily's prepared to face challenges, but not the dangerous stranger who ambushes her heart. The same man hired to destroy her livelihood.

When a common enemy threatens, Morgan and Emily must find a way to defeat danger and save their budding love. But a gunman's word is his bond, and a lady's trust can shatter.

# R Weir- Divine Retribution

Genre: F/Thriller/Suspense/Mystery

Series: The Divine Devils

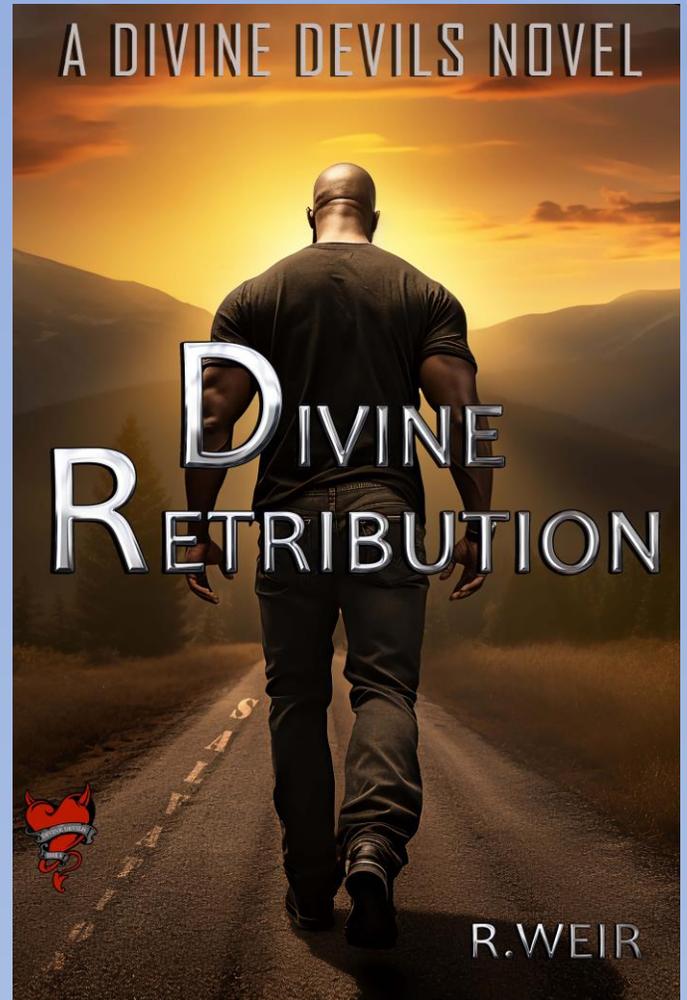
Volume: 4

## About Divine Retribution

After the murder of a woman he cared for, his world shattered and in turmoil, Hunter Divine has gone dark, living life off the grid. Fighting the internal demons that want to drag him into the mire, Hunter quietly begins a search for answers about his childhood. A mother he loved, who died too young, and the rolling stone father who left Hunter bitter and alone.

As Hunter digs deep, he learns secrets with ties to a woman in a powerful organization, who claims to be his mother. When assassins show up with orders to kill the other members of The Divine Devils, Hunter is forced to make a choice. Either ally with this evil woman or join his friends in the great beyond. A resolution he must find on his own, with the knowledge, death awaits him with every move he makes. The search down a lethal road for salvation and Divine Retribution.

Hunter Divine: willing to move heaven and hell in this riveting final chapter.



# Ed Borowsky - Lizard of Transition

Genre: Literary/drama/WWII

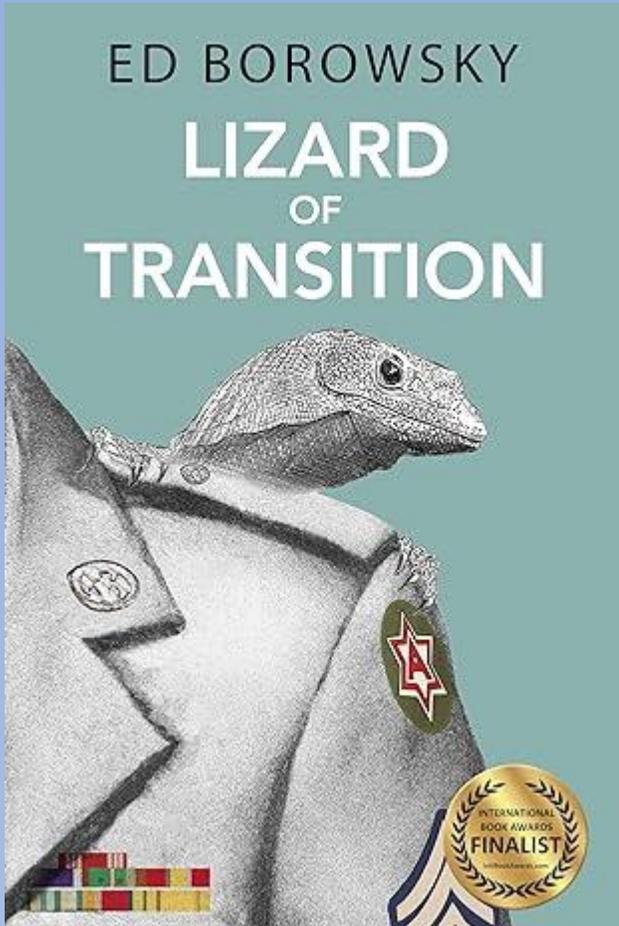
## About Lizard of Transition

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



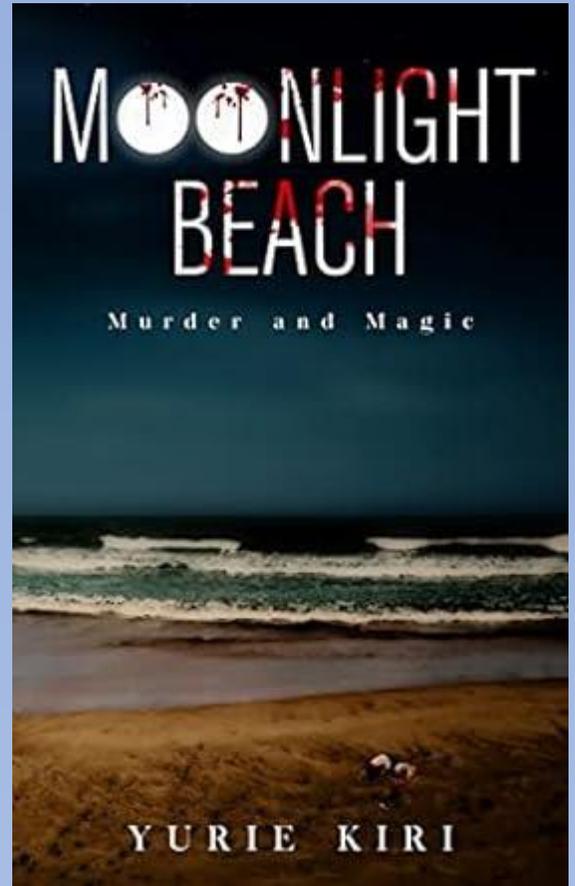
# Yurie Kiri- Moonlight Beach Murder and Magic

Genre: F/paranormal/thriller  
Series: Murder and Magic  
Volume: 1

About Moonlight Beach Murder and Magic  
What Is Shattering The Idyllic, Seaside Community Of Rancho, California?  
Grisly death. Bodies washing up on nearby Moonlight Beach. It's downright disconcerting to the privileged one percent living in their gated communities in one of SoCal's ritziest enclaves. Worse, they have no idea what or who is behind the slaughter.

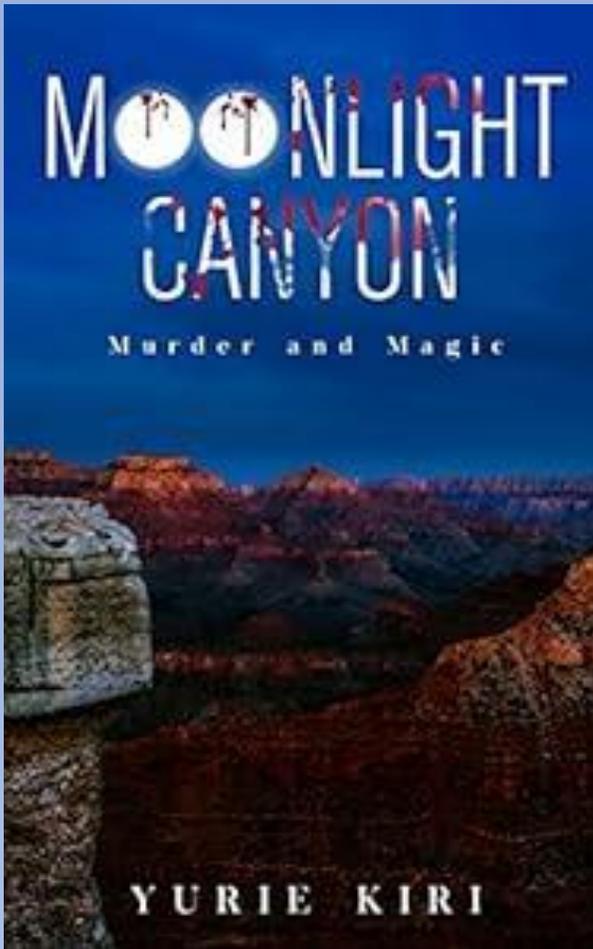
Is It Sharks? Something Supernatural? Greedy Venture Capitalists?  
Maneaters are known to inhabit the waters off Moonlight Beach, but shark attacks are rare. What about black magic, satanic rituals? A coven of witches lives nearby. Or could it be the venture capitalists, whose latest company harvests human organs for transplant, exploiting the vulnerable to save the wealthy elite?

The Violence Shows No Signs Of Ending  
Two more people are killed on a cliff overlooking the beach – and all their organs are missing. This bloody terror isn't slowing down. It's accelerating. What the hell is going on? They better figure all this out before more people get butchered or, God forbid, Rancho's inflated property values plummet.



# Yurie Kiri- Moonlight Canyon: Murder and Magic

Genre: F/Paranormal/thriller  
Series: Murder and Magic  
Volume: 2



## About Moonlight Canyon: Murder and Magic

After cursing the men surrounding her, Jane Estsana watched the knife that Tito threw hurtle towards her chest... jump or run?

Jane knew that she could easily deflect the knife and dodge the surrounding Coyote gang that she'd cursed, but she had gotten tired of being so old. Maybe it was time to move on, but she needed to linger a while and gather up some apprentices who could support her while she completed the curse she'd put on the gang.

Susan Millar pulled to a stop next to a ramshackle shop advertising Indian pottery on the way to her well-deserved vacation in scenic New Mexico with her friend Anne. However, the ancient woman who ran the shop wouldn't sell them the piece they wanted, she'd only trade it for a favor, a ride home...

"Turn here, now, quick!"

Susan slid onto the narrow dirt road, then her car died leaving them stranded next to dark, thick bushes that seemed to grow more menacing as the sun sank behind the mountains.

"Get out now and run for your lives, you fools!" the old woman shouted. "They're going to find you too. You can't stay still for a moment. They are here!"

"Come on!" Anne pulled on Susan's hand and rushed forward. Suddenly the ground opened up beneath her feet, she fell into a dark hole and pulled Susan down screaming behind her.

# Yurie Kiri- Moonlight Rocks

Genre: F/Paranormal/thriller

Series: Murder and Magic

Volume: 3

About Moonlight Rocks

What would you do if God fell into your lap?

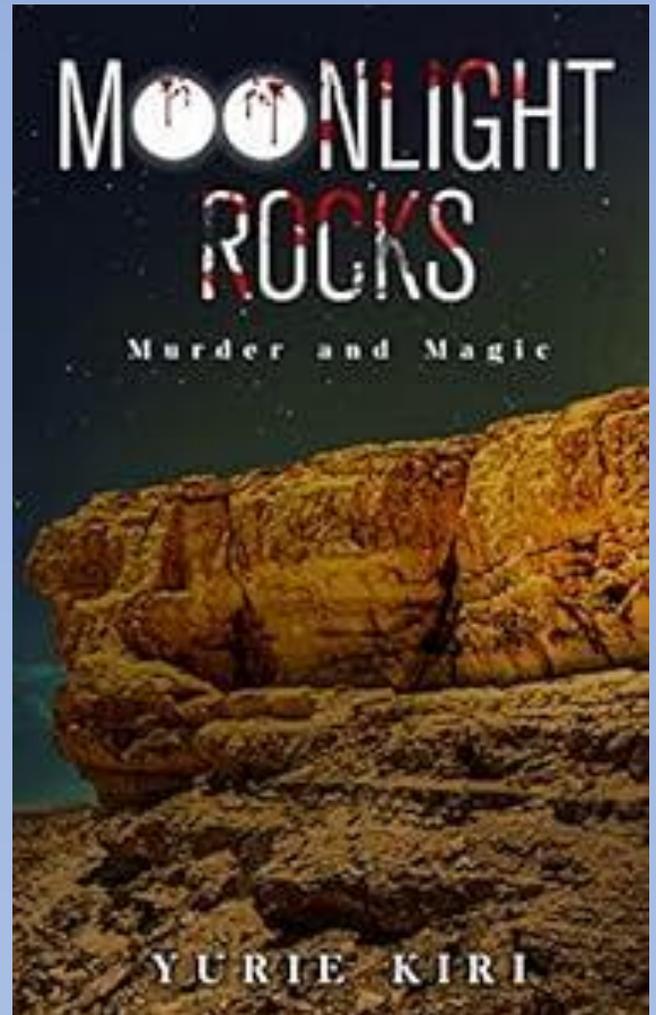
Jessy Ascher and her friends set up camp near Moonlight Rocks in the California desert to watch the Leonid meteor shower. After darkness falls, a stunningly bright meteor suddenly flashes across the sky blinding the friends to the approaching danger.

The meteorite blasts into their camp site knocking everyone unconscious but Jessy quickly regains her senses. Her friends however, cannot be roused. Instinctively she grabs the still smoking meteorite and stumbles downhill toward the jeep she arrived in, desperate to get help for her friends...

But, Jessy isn't alone in that rough, cactus-filled landscape... two dark figures who also saw the meteor flashing down to Earth are frantically searching the same area and they are ready to do anything... even murder to get their hands on a meteorite they could sell to the highest bidder.

And what about the meteorite? Others have been waiting for its arrival. Cultists, fanatical members of nearby religious or supernatural factions - some good, some evil - believe that the meteor heralds the birth of a new Messiah and they, too, are ready to do anything to gain control of the blessed rock.

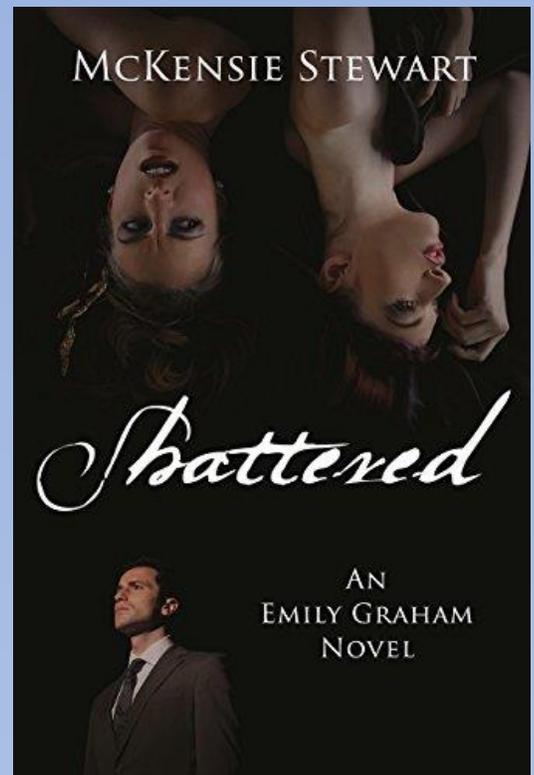
Jessy wants help for her friends, others want the meteorite for their own end, but the Meteorite, it wants something too... Is this the dawn of a new spiritual age, or just a bunch of psychos raging in the desert?



# Shattered: An Emily Graham Novel

By McKensie Stewart

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



amazon

# Coming March 21 2024

## Amy Shannon's Balls-Town

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

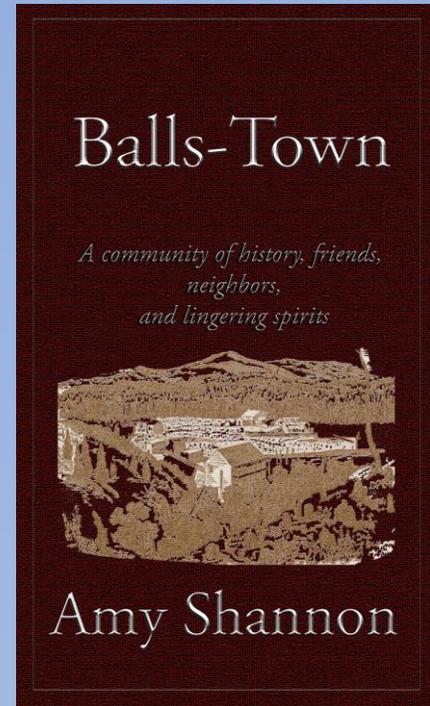
The book covers past and present, and also brings back to life those forgotten books by forgotten authors who dedicated their writing to Saratoga County, and its healing mineral springs. These springs bubbling up with their medicinal value, were the start of getting settlers to Ballston Spa, not just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

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

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

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

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



### Synopsis of Balls-Town

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

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