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Reviews!

Reviews!

Reviews!



Meet C.A. Czarek, one of
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THE
INNOCENT AUCTION
Their love was a death sentence.



THE
INNOCENT AUCTION
Their love was a death sentence.

Victoria Sue

THE INNOCENT AUCTION

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CONTENTS

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Romancing the Vines	4
The First Spotlight Interview is on... C.A. Czarek	8
The Other Spotlight is on.... Kate Angell	12
Creating a Beautiful Day by Debra Parmley	14

Departments and Columns

Movies of Your Mind	10
Fun and Games	17
Previews of Upcoming Releases	18
Contemporary Romance Reviews	19
Historical Romance Reviews	26
Paranormal Romance Reviews	30
Mystery Reviews	33
Romance Audio Reviews	35
Booty from the Other Genre	37
Better Late Reviews	38



Romancing the Vines

*Just sayin'! California authors know how to do it right!
Use the environment of a world renowned movie maker, add enough wine to buzz the entire western seaboard, stock said environment with romance authors and their undying fans, and voila!
It's a huge promotional success, one that created even more fans and more fun.*

It was a perfect day in the Sonoma County wine country at Francis Ford Coppola Winery featuring excellent wines, scrumptious desserts, and absolutely terrific romances. What could be better?

New York Times best-selling author Sharon Hamilton invited twelve other romance authors to participate in a get-together Saturday, February 20th at the beautiful Francis Ford Coppola Winery in Geyserville, California. **Romancing the Vines** was a success – the first-ever reader/author book signing event in wine country. The day was perfect with clear skies in the midst of El Niño weather patterns, and included exclusive desserts and fabulous wine pairings for an afternoon spent talking – and buying – books, meeting authors, and exploring the spectacular winery.

Sharon and the other authors attending the event – Catherine Bybee, Marina Adair, Kate Douglas, Carolyn Jewell, Tiffany Snow, Lisa Hughey, Lori Ryan, Susan Stoker, Chris Keniston, Diana Orgain, Kathryn Le Veque, and Pamela Gibson – spent the afternoon chatting with readers, sipping wine, and talking books.

Turnout was excellent, and next year's event is already on the schedule. Watch for it March 4, 2017.



Beautiful Coppola Winery (owed by Frances Ford Coppola) in the Sonoma Valley in Northern California was the site of Romancing the Vines, a gala affair



Catherine Bybee in lower left with readers, Pamela Gibson at table on right (plain red shirt) event organizer Sharon Hamilton, back to camera behind Pamela wearing red w/black print.

Article by Kate Douglas

www.katedouglas.com

kate@katedouglas.com

www.facebook.com/katedouglas.authorpage



Who in their right mind or a decent palate could pass this up?



Copperfield's Books, Healdsburg, store manager Kaitlin Smith and assistant manager Tyler Cook handled sales for the event

For up to date info on next year's event, sign up for Sharon's newsletter at <http://authorsharonhamilton.com/contact.php#mailing-list> and "Like" the Facebook page for Romancing the Vines at <https://www.facebook.com/romancingthevineevent/?fref=ts>



Spotlight Interview



This month the Spotlight Shines on...

C.A. Szarek

Bestselling, award winning author of romantic suspense and epic fantasy romance, C.A. Szarek loves to dabble in different genres. If it's a good story, she'll write it, no matter where it seems to fit!

She's a hopeless romantic and always will be. Risking it all for Happily Ever After is what she lives by! She's originally from Ohio but got to Texas as soon as she could. She's happily married and has a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice. She works with kids when she's not writing.

Meet C. A. Szarek

AdC: *When did you start writing and why?*

C.S.: Oh gosh, I have been writing since I was very young. Poetry when I was seven or eight, and then stories that slowly wended themselves into novels when I was about fourteen. As for why, I can't imagine NOT writing. It's as much a part of me as breathing. And just as necessary.

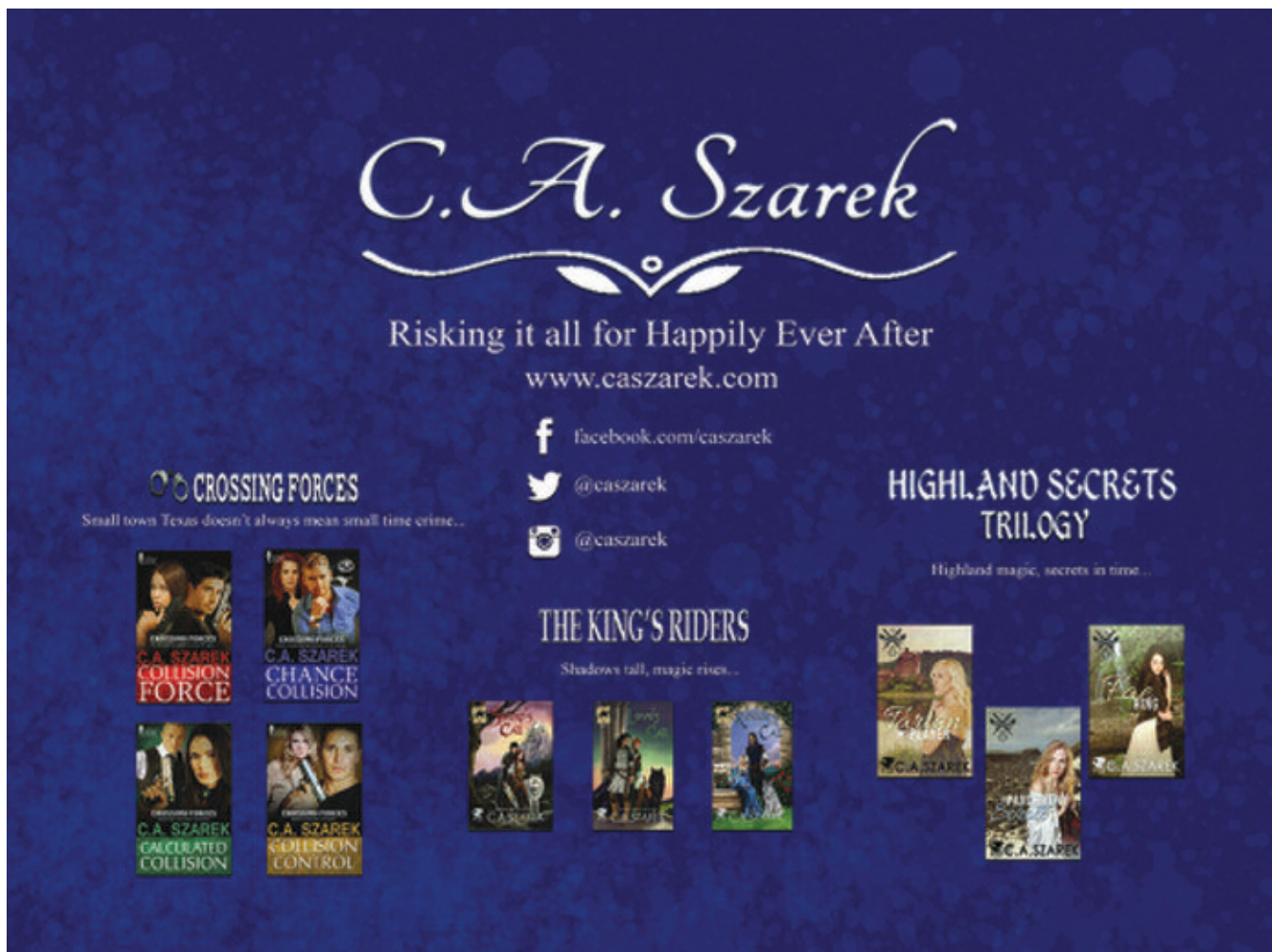
AdC: *What have you learned about writing since you started?*

C.S.: So much I don't know if I can be concise about an answer. LOL. I think many writing things (technique, the do's and don'ts) come from experience. The more words put to the page, the more I learn. I've learned so much from other awesome authors, and I've learned TONS about the business. Invaluable information freely given by the awesome romance community, as well as things I've learned along the way by trial and error.

AdC: *Tell us about your new book or series.*



C.S.: Well, I'm still going strong on my multiple series. My latest release



came out 1/26/16, and is a novella called, *Fate's Call*. It is a companion to my "King's Riders" epic fantasy series, and it's a great little read. It doesn't have to do with the overall arc of the series, so you can pick it up and dive right in. It's about Erron and Jarek, and while it has some dark elements, it's a love at first sight story, and the E-book is only \$.99! There are three other books in the series, and more to come!

Also, I just sold a book to my fab publisher, Totally Bound! Book 5 in my "Crossing Forces" series, and it's called *Superior Collision!* It's Shannon and Taylor's story, and I am SUPER excited about it!

Here's the tagline: "Rigid FBI agent collides with a patrol sergeant while on the path to catch a killer."

The cover will come soon, and I will share it on social media! There are four other books in the series, so you

can check them out! I adore this series, and there will be more to follow.

Also, I'm in a boxset called, *Shades of Desire 2*, and you can pick up 12 AWESOME stories on March 7. It's for a limited time, so make sure you grab your copy! My book, *The Tartan MP3 Player*; the first book in my "Highland Secrets" trilogy is in it, and it's a GREAT Scottish Highlander time travel that will always be near and dear to my heart. There are two more books in this trilogy, and they're out, so you can get the first book in this set and then check out the other two books!

AdC: *What is your idea of a perfect day?*

C.S.: Getting enough sleep (lol!) and then having enough time to get all the writing and editing I need to do in, and with everyone leaving me alone to do so! Me and my laptop alone.

AdC: *Do you have any hobbies?*

C.S.: I do! I love to scrapbook, and I read a TON. I've always loved to read. I also watch way too much TV. I love cop shows, but my fave right now is probably *The Walking Dead*.

AdC: *What authors do you admire?*

C.S.: Oh, wow. This is a tough one because there are literally tons. So many for so many reasons. Here are a few of my faves, and I mean it when I say this is the tip of the iceberg; J.R. Ward, Pamela Palmer, Monica McCarty, Cherry Adair, so many more.

AdC: *What is the worst thing about being an author?*

C.S.: Having more ideas than I have time to write. I just have to make a list and tell the characters to wait. (Sometimes they are not good at listening.)

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AdC: *The best thing?*

C.S.: Getting that next book out. Two things that are equal for me: Typing “THE END” and then release day, and having a new baby for people to devour.

AdC: *What do you expect to be doing 10 years from now?*

C.S.: Writing lots of books, and hoping to have a TON of books out by then. ☺

AdC: *What can we expect from you next?*

C.S.: Most of my planned 2016 releases are for the end of the year. I’m working on a wolf shifter book that’s been a long time in coming, as well as a Scottish Highlander time travel that’s associated with my “Highland Secrets” trilogy, but it’s in continuity, with 13 other authors, or

what we might call a world. All the stories have a common myth story, and it’s based in paranormal, so if you like to read that, please look forward to “Enchanted Keepsakes,” which is what the series is called. MY book will be on pre-order late November and released in March 2017, but we have two releases a month starting in Jan, 2017! It’s exciting stuff, and I can’t wait.

Also, for those of you who liked my “Highland Secrets,” there will be another trilogy called “Highland Treasures,” as well as a prequel I already have a cover for. (It’s delicious, can’t wait to share). There will also be a more “King’s Riders” books, and three more “Crossing Forces” to finish that series.

I am also working on a standalone romantic suspense that’s pretty awesome! It’s called *Moving Target* and it will be out late 2016.

The last thing is a FREE Christmas boxset I am in with some FAB other authors. It’s all short and contemporary built around a small town in Texas called Ten Rigs, and it’s got laughter, fun and match-making!

So, as you see, I have a lot on my plate and can’t wait to share more stories with the world!

AdC: *Pass on some words of wisdom, please, to aspiring authors.*

C.S.: Never. Ever. Give up. If you want this, you have to work for it, but don’t be afraid of that. Don’t let anyone tell you no. Persevere.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/caszarek>

Blog: <http://www.caszarekwriter.blogspot.com>

@caszarek Twitter & Instagram

Fate's Call

by C.A. Szarek

A runaway daughter, seeking escape from abusive hands.

A journeyman tanner willing to risk safety to aid her.

When Jarek steps into the alley to toss out the trash, he finds Erron and can't look away. Even when her father roughly jostles her out of sight, claiming she'd made a wrong turn.

He should leave well enough alone, but those desperate eyes haunt him. And he's never been one to turn his back on someone in trouble, especially the most beautiful lass he's ever seen.

He just never imagined it'd be his life in jeopardy, and his heart that needed saving.

Excerpt:

Erron ran.

Tears streamed down her face, blurring her vision, but still she forced one foot in front of the other. Moving forward.

I have to go. I have to get away.

Her chest heaved and her lungs burned, aching as she pushed air down and forced her muscles to work harder than they were used to.

Most likely, she wouldn't get away.

He'd probably punish her for trying to flee but...she had to try.

She couldn't deal with her father anymore.

Erron was done with his flippant moods, his heavy hand...and his rapes.

Move. Go. Faster!

Sweat beaded her brow, dripped down her cheeks and even into her eyes, but she didn't pause. She had to go.

Since she'd turned eleven or so, and even before developing breasts or starting her monthly cycles, he had...taken what only a wife should be expected to give willingly.

Making it into the market center, she continued on. It was busy and loud. Perhaps she could really disappear.

But where would she go?

Erron glanced over her shoulder, then skittered around shops displaying their wares outside open doors in the warm spring morning. The sun was high in the cloudless clear blue sky, welcoming and bright.

It belied her urgency. Her terror.

Stalls and tables were crowded as people perused or bartered over their items. A man cursed as she bolted around him, then another small group of three, making them jump apart.

She ignored them, keeping her legs in motion though they burned, calves throbbing as her muscles flexed.

Erron dashed through an alley and down an almost empty street. She was moving toward the outskirts of town now, nearing Lower Dalunas—not the best part of the Province. But the prospect of brothels and less than reputable taverns didn't scare her more than her father did.

What will he do when he catches you?

No. She couldn't think like that. She didn't regret taking this chance, and needed to make the situation the best she could.

Exhaustion was settling over her bones, begging her to stop, rest.



Collapse. She panted puffs of air.

No. Keep. Going.

Her chest burned and her heart pounded, but she couldn't stop now.

She turned into another alley, risking another glimpse behind her. Was her father there? Did he know she'd run? Erron didn't slow, but the movement made her feet falter and she stumbled. Her line of vision wobbled and the edge of her shoe caught her skirt.

Down she went, throwing her hands out just in time to avoid landing on her face. Pain shot up her wrists as they absorbed the impact of her body, and her knees smarted because her dress wasn't padding enough on the hard ground.

"Oomph," whistled from her mouth. Her breath was gone now; she had to concentrate to get any air down. Her temples pounded with rushing blood, but she couldn't muster the strength to push herself off the ground, let alone to her feet. Her head swarmed with dizziness, but Erron refused to pass out.

"Are you all right?"

She startled and tremors rushed down her spine. The voice was male, and she fought a full body shudder.

Continued on page 24

Movies of Your Mind -- Why I Haven't Been Around

Bennet Pomerantz



“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.”-- Confucius

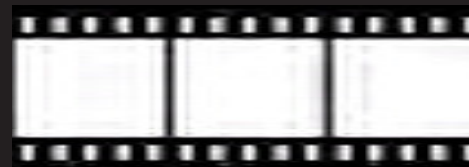
“All life demands struggle. Those who have everything given to them become lazy, selfish, and insensitive to the real values of life. The very striving and hard work that we so constantly try to avoid is the major building block in the person we are today.”-- Pope Paul VI

“It’s like Forrest Gump said, ‘Life is like a box of chocolates.’ Your career is like a box of chocolates - you never know what you’re going to get. But everything you get is going to teach you something along the way and make you the person you are today. That’s the exciting part - it’s an adventure in itself.”--Nick Carter

* * * * *

I wanted to bring this situation to the forefront and let you know what has been happening to me on a personal and business level. Many people knew I had been sick...some knew I had something wrong with me; I have not hidden this fact from anyone. Some assumed everything from cancer to MS. It is bad, but not that bad. But, I did not and will not parade my illness around either. I still write & work (sometimes burning the candle at both ends) (NOTE: I AM NOT RETIRING EVER!), I still do three radio shows on blog talk radio (I am still wanting a few of the staff to come on one of the radio shows), I still write columns in newspaper & magazines, I still teach college...and I still live a full life.

However, since August, 2015, I have also been dealing with kidney dialysis with many of the hospital stays and surgeries that are involved with it. It is a hard task for me to admit I was sick. This is NOT a part time thing; this will be the rest of my life. You have to understand that dialysis is three days a week (usually Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings), a four to five hours a day process...and it tires me out...and I still work, listen to audios and write on my iPad, while the machine cleans my blood.



Trigger Mortis: A James Bond Novel

Written by Anthony Horowitz; Passages from Ian Fleming

Narrated by David Oyelowo

Blackstone Audio;

Unabridged; 9 hours 30 minutes

B00U1ZV63Y

Anthony Horowitz, the creator of the Alex Storm novels and TV series, *Foyle's War*, took on the challenge to play in Ian Fleming's literary world with the novel *Trigger Mortis*. Moreover, the thrill of this Bond novel is the audio version. This is more exciting due to narrator David Oyelowo. Oyelowo is the first black man to narrate a Bond novel and he does an amazing job. He takes Bond places in his vocals unheard of by Simon Vance, who does most of the other Bond audiobooks for Blackstone audio.

The problem is the novel itself. This is the Bond of Fleming and not of the cinema. Most know Bond as a movie character, not a book character. However, this unabridged audio book started right after the events of the novel *Goldfinger*. The character of Pussy Galore has joined Bond back in England. Her character is a distraction to this latest *007* opus. Author Horowitz crafts this Bond well, as well as the short piece from the novel that Fleming was writing. He used a few pieces that Fleming wrote from an unpublished Bond book, utilizing interesting blending.

The mix of auto racing, girls and SMERSH agents gives this novel a great starting off point. However, a sense of nostalgia prevails too much in this book. Bond is in his prime - the 1950-60 Bond world - and the novel and this audio take too long to get the action started in this book. It does build, but slowly... sometimes too slowly... for my tastes, even on audio.

If you want to enjoy the Bond adventure, the audio talent is not to be missed, but the text does bog it down slightly.

* * * * *

Gone With the Wind

Written by Margaret Mitchell; Read by Linda Stephens

Brilliance Audio; MP3

Unabridged; 49 hours

B016FZ6JTE

Many years ago (2001 to be exact), Recorded Book (Books on Tape) released this unabridged audio version on cassettes. Narrated by Linda Stephens, it was ahead of its audio time. At 49 hours, this is the complete *GONE WITH THE WIND* unabridged. It is still the only audio version of this classic novel.

Brilliance has re-released this lost recording to MP3s. These four MP3 disks (and also available on audible) showcase what a great solo voice effort really is. Other than a few vocal changes, this is a great spoken word recording. Trust me, 49 hours is a long time and this recording will keep you busy.

Stephens makes each voice a solo character, which was rare in 2000 when this production was recorded.

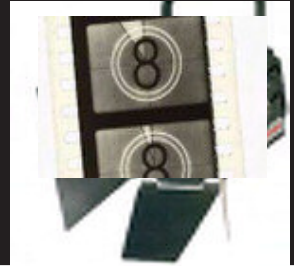
It seems like a dream come true for fans of older audiobooks, from the recorded books vaults...and tomorrow is another day!

Until next time, I'll be under the headsets!





Spotlight Interview



Kate Angell *Bestselling Romance Author*

AdC: *Where do you call home?*

K.A.: Beautiful Naples on the Gulf of Mexico, Florida.

AdC: *Do you have another job other than writing?*

K.A. Full-time author.

AdC: *What is your favorite place to eat?*

K.A. Capital Grille for special occasions.

AdC: *What are your favorite foods?*

K.A. Fried chicken and mashed potatoes. Although breakfast is my favorite meal of the day.

AdC: *Where do you like to go when you want to run away? Where is the farthest place you have traveled from home?*

K.A. I've traveled much of the world, but my 'run away' is to North Dakota to visit my mom. At 91, she still spoils me. Spending time with family is comforting and all-important.

AdC: *What genres do you write and do you go by different Nom de Plumes?*

K.A. I write contemporary romances; with some humor.

AdC: *Tell us your latest news? Current projects?*

KA. I have three releases in 2016. July 26th, single titles; *No Breaking My Heart*, *Barefoot William* (Beach and Boardwalk) and *Richmond Rogues Spring Training*. September, I'm part of a Halloween anthology, *Corner of Pumpkin and Vine*. In October, another anthology, *Mistletoe Moment*.

AdC: *Describe one of two of your biggest learning experiences during your writing and publishing process?*

K.A. Trust your editor. When you sign a contract, meet your deadline.

AdC: *What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?*

K.A. Be cautious, and don't take reviews to heart. Books are subjective. You'll face the good, bad, and ugly. If you've written the best book possible, that's all that matters.

AdC: *What are the easiest and hardest thing about writing?*

K.A. Keeping a writing schedule. I get distracted and procrastinate. Over the years I've developed a routine where I write four hours in the morning, two during the afternoon, and I edit at night. Breaking up the day works for me.

AdC: *What ignites your creativity?*

K.A. A sunrise. I'm up early. Love the start of a new day. Full of promise.

AdC: *Do you have any life experiences tangled in the storylines?*

K.A. I write baseball romances. My grandfather took me to my first professional baseball game when I was twelve. It was a bonding time for us, and I fell in love with the game. Whenever I write my "Richmond Rogues," I have wonderful memories of my granddad and our days at the ballpark.

AdC: *What book are you reading now?*



K.A. I enjoy Stuart Woods, the “Stone Barrington” series. I’m presently reading *Scandalous Behavior*.

AdC: *What do you like to read/ favorite genre?*

K.A. Mystery cozies and romance.

AdC: *If you could say one thing to the next generation*

of authors, what would it be?

K.A. Be true to yourself. Write what you love. Your reader audience will find you.

AdC: *What would you like to say to your readers?*

K.A. You are like family. So many of my readers go back to my very first book, 16 years ago. They’ve stuck with me. I’m

appreciative.

What is your web page/Facebook/ twitter contact information?

Web page: www.kateangell.com

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Affaire de Coeur

Creating a Beautiful Day

by Debra Parmley

I've been imagining stories in my head ever since I can remember. My oldest girlfriend, Ginny, whom I've known since we could crawl, remembers me saying I was going to be a writer when I grew up. My first poems were written in high school. I wrote poetry and short stories in college while working on an English degree. After graduating, I wrote *A Desperate Journey*



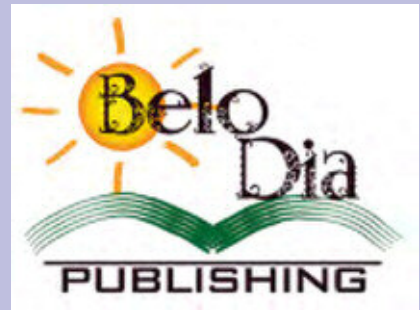
and it was published in 2008. Publishing has changed greatly since then, but writing and the core of good storytelling remain.

Today I am an author and publisher. This is my second career as an author. I started writing for Samhain Publishing with my first book, *A Desperate Journey*, and went on to write for Samhain, Secret Cravings Publishing, Desert Breeze Publishing, DCL Publications and Boroughs Publishing Group.

There have been two dividing lines in my writing career. The American Title II contest launched my career with *A Desperate Journey*. What most people don't know is that during the contest I nearly lost my husband. He was to have one stent put in; a simple heart surgery that suddenly was not simple when he flat lined on the table. He was out for three minutes and when they brought him back he was on total life support. That was ten years ago and I am happy to report he is in good health today. This was the first dividing line for me and there was a time gap between my first book release and later books. The lesson for me was the realization of how quickly someone you love can be gone. Friends often hear me say, "Every day is a beautiful day." I believe every day we have is a gift.

The second dividing line came in 2015 after one of my publishers closed its doors and books at another house dropped off contract. I made the choice to become a hybrid author and to publish my backlist of books. Since then a third publisher has closed. I opened my own publishing company and

named it Belo Dia, which means beautiful day in Portuguese.



Every day we are alive is a beautiful day. I say it often and I live by it. Each day is a gift we are not promised and every morning when I wake I am thankful for that gift. This personal quote and belief forms the bedrock of Belo Dia Publishing. At Belo Dia, a boutique-publishing house, my intention is to produce books which uplift the human spirit and celebrate life and the gift that it is.

Within the next two months, my entire backlist will be re-published through Belo Dia and we will be focusing on entirely new works. You will see new books by Debra Parmley and my writing partner Robert Arrow in the romance genre, when we write as a team. You will also see our individual books in various genres. I plan to release my second poetry anthology by the end of 2016.

Isabella, Bride of Ohio, book seventeen in the "American Mail Order Bride" series, was our first new release.

Check Out, a military romance, was our second new release.

A Change of Scenery, a



futuristic romance, is undergoing revision and expansion before we re-release it as the first in the “Deep Nest” series.

The book I am writing now, *Dancing Butterfly*, is the second in the “Butterflies Fly Free” series set in the 1920’s.

Having control over my books means I’m able to do series and interconnected books without waiting on publisher approval and to bring them out faster. I enjoy the freedom to put more books out to my readers. It’s a bit like my 1920’s heroines who cut up their corsets. I no longer have to write in a restrictive corset.

There are many things, which could drag an author down. I have experienced and learned to overcome rejections, being orphaned at my first publishing house, two of my five publishing houses closing, not being paid for my work, having to fire people who did not do the jobs I hired them to do. These things were all difficult. I can’t look back through the years and say which was worst. At the time, everything you deal with seems worst, doesn’t it? I

think the worst thing for any author is that which derails you from writing your next book and it is the lesson I take from all my experiences. The worst thing is that which derails you off course and you alone control that.

The act of writing is the best thing about being an author. It is pure joy for me and I also enjoy working with a good editor to polish the work. Now I am able to experience the joy of publishing my work through Belo Dia. Ten years from now I expect to be doing exactly what I am doing now, writing new stories and sharing them through my publishing house.

My best advice to authors looking to self publish is to make sure your work is professionally edited and formatted with professional cover art; taking the time to put out a quality product, rather than rushing to put your work out. Your first book sells your next book, so you want it to be

the best it can be. Every reader comes hopeful to the page and this is true even of the most critical reviewers as well. We all want to read a good story. Strive to deliver one. Then keep writing. Publishing has changed greatly, but writing and the core of good storytelling remain.

Debra Parmley is a hybrid author and publisher. Belo Dia Publishing is her boutique press. Debra loves hearing from readers. Time is precious to her and she treasures the messages her readers take the time to send.

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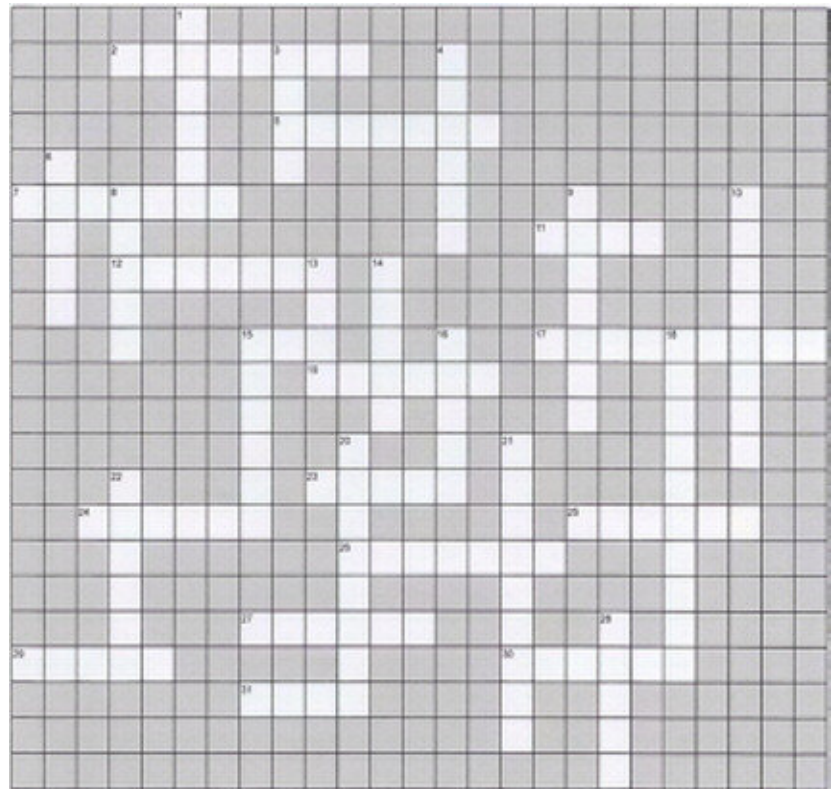
Spring is Here!

Across

2. Spring _____, baseball players prepare for the season.
5. Spring is the Vernal _____.
7. April _____ bring May flowers.
11. Meteorologists say March “comes in like a Lion and leaves like a _____.”
12. College basketball’s tournament--March _____.
15. Flower for April - Sweet _____.
17. April 4th is School _____ Day. (She’ll help you find the answer to this clue.)
19. National _____ month celebrates writers of this rhythmic genre.
23. National day to honor Mother Nature.
24. Bullish zodiac sign for the end of April.
25. Venue for showing off new clothes. Easter _____.
26. Spring _____, Fall back.
27. Good _____.
29. Leporidae.
30. April 15th - _____ Tax day
31. Don’t be tricked on this day. April _____’s Day.

Down

1. Christian holiday commemorating death of Jesus.
3. “Beware the _____ of March.”



4. First flower of the spring.
6. This little fowl depicts spring.
8. National _____’s Month is in March (See me roar!)
9. This Saint is a well-known March holiday.
10. _____ Savings Time
13. Irish Spring is a _____.
14. Early April’s Zodiac sign.
15. Zodiac Sign for the first of March.
16. _____ Heritage Month is in March.
18. March’s birthstone.
20. March’s flower.
21. Birds heading south.
22. Time to start planting this.
28. First bird of the spring. _____ Redbreast.

answers on page 38



Contemporary Romance Reviews

A Better Man

Candis Terry

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062351173

★★★★

Jordan Kincade loves playing hockey, and his Vipers are competing to get into the playoffs. But his parents have died while on vacation, and he must go home to be with his family. He feels pressure to stay at home because he has spent so much time away from the family over the last fifteen years. He barely knows his baby sister Nicole, and she needs help dealing with grief and anger. He can't reach her because he's been away for so long, so he asks one of her teachers for help.

Lucy Diamond knows Jordan--he stood her up for a dance many years ago. She's not inclined to forgive, even after he remembers who she is. But Nicole needs help--and he is also sexy enough to melt butter. He wants to be involved with and help his family, but he also wants to start something with Lucy so he becomes determined to get her out of her shell.

Candis Terry launches a new series with this engaging family story. An adorable yet flatulent dog adds

humor to the tale, and Jordan's brothers and sisters will leave readers looking forward to their stories. Hockey fans might notice a small error, but all readers will turn pages rapidly to finish this delicious tale.

Heather Nordahl Files

Dangerous to Know (An Unbroken Heroes Series)

Dawn Ryder

St. Martin's

Mass Market

978-1250075215

★★★★



Zoe Magnus came from a military family and had been taught from an early age to keep her private life close to her chest. One just didn't let anyone into your world when both your father, a Colonel, AND brother, a Captain, are deployed across the world from each other and your only family contact is the occasional phone call until they come home. It was a lonely life, so when Zoe's best friend Roni suggested they go out to a bar, Zoe reluctantly agreed. As soon as she walked in, she

Contemporary

spotted him. Dressed in all black leather, he screamed, “Bad Boy!” and everything in Zoe woke up and answered!

Mercer Peter St. Clair was Special Ops and the best at what he did. His assignment was to determine whether Zoe Magnus or a member of her distinguished military family was a traitor to her country. Information that had been passed had been traced back to her computer, and Mercer was to gain her confidence and find out if she was the one passing the information...using any means possible. His specialty was sex. He used sex to gain information. He could read women and know just how to approach them to make them interested in him and, in Zoe, he knew it was the bad boy, leather biker that would pique her interest. But once he had that interest, something in him shifted. He knew she was innocent and unlike anyone he had ever investigated before. Was it possible for him to remain objective and do his job? What if she were actually guilty?

Dangerous to Know is the first book in Dawn Ryder’s “Unbroken Heroes” series, and she pulls out all the stops in this first of the series. Mercer oozes sex and danger but has a conscience, and Zoe is no pushover either. Ms. Ryder incorporates the elements of undercover work, military intelligence and a humorous performing parrot with raw, steamy sex and makes it work magnificently. This is one book you won’t want to put down and this reviewer can’t wait for the second book in the series.

Lani Roberts

Dirty

Kylie Scott

St. Martin’s Griffin

Trade paperback

978-1250083210

★★★★★

Lydia is in a pickle for sure. On her wedding day she finds out that her future husband is having an affair with his best man. A broken woman, she can only think to run away from it all and just be alone.

She finds herself at Vaughn’s home and possibly in his heart. He was a musician but now tends bar and is flat broke. Can this pair be brought together by fate?

Well! Well! Well! What can I say? I like this. The whole bar scene as a romance setting is brilliant and

simple. Vaughn and his musician past is one thing that is very appealing to many females, me being one of them. Having lived a little, I also relate very easily to the broken bride character with her broken heart. This was a very genuine simple plot that left me satisfied.

Lenore Lovecraft

Doing It Over (Most Likely To Series)

Catherine Bybee

Montlake Romance

Mass Market

978-1503950726

★★★★

Melanie Bartlett had been voted “Most Likely to Succeed” when she graduated from high school in River Bend, Oregon, ten years ago, but that definitely had not come true. Now, the single parent of a small daughter, homeless, jobless, and with a car that had died on her 20 miles outside of town, she was returning to River Bend to see about starting over and getting her life together. But sitting on the side of the road in the middle of the night in the pouring down rain with no cell phone service didn’t exactly seem like a good sign towards a new start. Then the stranger in the truck came by and offered to help, but Melanie didn’t know him and didn’t trust strangers--especially with her seven-year-old daughter in the backseat. So she refused his help and watched in apprehension as he said, “Okay,” then sat in his truck until help arrived.

Wyatt Gibson was relatively new to River Bend. He had left the big city and moved there to get away from all the trials and troubles of big city life. When the wet bedraggled woman with the small child refused his help, he didn’t argue. He understood. So he just went to his truck and waited. He would not leave her alone in the middle of the night on the side of the road, especially with a child. Besides, he wanted to get to know her and her spunky daughter a little better. Maybe once she got to know him and realized he wasn’t a serial rapist or anything, she would lower her barriers and let him get to know her and her daughter.

Catherine Bybee has definitely written a feel-good romance. Wyatt is a very likeable hero and the perfect partner to break through Melanie’s walls. She’s been hurt very badly and finds it hard to trust. But with the help of her two high school best friends, quirky Miss Gina who owns the bed and breakfast, and patient, steadfast Wyatt, Melanie discovers that true love and happiness is possible, even for her.

Lani Roberts



Draw Me Close (Hearts and Crafts)

Nicole Michaels

St. Martin's Press

Mass Market

978-1250058171

☆☆☆1/2

While in college Lindsey fell in love. Then with no warning Lindsey's boyfriend broke up with her. Derek said that he was still in love with his ex-girlfriend. Lindsey was devastated. Now she's the interior designer for the renovation of her best friend's house, and he's the general contractor.

Eight years ago, Derek's ex-girlfriend, Lisa, told him that she was pregnant. So he did the "right thing" and married her. A divorce was inevitable. Now that Derek is a free man again he wants to resume his relationship with Lindsey, but she's not interested. Well, her mind and heart aren't, but Lindsey's body has other ideas. But no matter what her body wants Lindsey will never risk her heart like that again.

As they work on the house, Derek regains Lindsey's trust. She begins to fall in love with him again. Then Lisa threatens Derek. If he continues to see Lindsey, she will stop his visitation with Tanner. Once again Derek is forced to choose between his child and the woman he loves.

This continuation of a series can be read alone. It has sexy scenes and sprinkling of vulgar language. If readers enjoy stories about couples whose entire conflict could have been resolved by simply telling the truth, they will enjoy it. If one doesn't enjoy this type of plot, they should skip this book.

Sheila Griffin

Flash Burned

Calista Fox

St. Martin's Griffin

Mass Market

978-1250072528

☆☆☆☆1/2

Ari belongs to Dane Max. He fills her every thought and desire. However, he is a man who is important, and that means that there are people who are his enemies.

Kyle is Ari's friend who has loved her for years and wants to be with her. When Dane has to leave and leaves Ari to her own devices, Kyle decides to try to seduce her and win her over. Will Ari stay with Dane, or will the more stable safe Kyle have her affections?

This is one series of books that I do not ever mind

Contemporary

reviewing. The characters are well written, and despite the fact that the plot is a little like *Fifty Shades*, I will forgive it. Ari is a main character that I could follow on many adventures should this author decide to continue. There is also a good deal of real life conflict amongst the romantic struggles that makes this feel very authentic.

Lenore Lovecraft

Hard Ever After

Laura Kaye

Avon Impulse

E-book

978-0062421722

****1/2

Nick Rixey wants to take his relationship with Becca Merritt to the next level. After she asks him to give her a tattoo that reads, "Only. Always. Forever," he asks her to marry him. She joyfully says yes. Suddenly this couple, who has been together through life-threatening events, is looking at venues, thinking about a honeymoon, and shopping for dresses. But that sense of danger has not completely let her go because she's seeing someone who can't possibly be there...or can he?

Laura Kaye ties a ribbon on her "Hard Ink" series with this sweet love letter to fans. All of the beloved characters are here, so readers can see their favorites all get their happy (or hard) ever afters.

Heather Nordahl Files

Headed for Trouble

Shiloh Walker

St. Martin's

Trade Paperback

978-1250067944

☆☆☆☆

Neve McKay had left the Southern town of McKay's Treasure nine years ago. Her Scottish riverboat captain great-great-great-grandfather and the love of his life had founded the town and made their fortune off the flowing Mississippi. Her family had money and a normal home life until that fateful night of the car accident. Eight-year-old Neve was trapped in the



Contemporary

back of the wrecked car with one dead parent and the other slowly bleeding to death and no one around to help her. After their deaths, her older siblings did the best they could, but she was pretty much left on her own. And she pushed every limit she could, earning her the nickname of “Trouble.” So she left to make her mark on the world and now, nine years later, was back with her tail between her legs. She was in trouble, needed help and figured home was the only place safe. Plus, she had discovered the tiny town had acquired some new and very interesting citizens!

Ian Campbell had left Scotland a few years ago and come to America to start over. He and Neve’s older brother had met in England in school and become best friends. Now Ian ran the local tavern for Brandon and with his thick build, Scottish brogue, gorgeous eyes and kilt wearing, he was a serious chick magnet. He would respond once in a while, but no one ever made that spark he was looking for until this beautiful, if slightly disheveled, redhead walked into the bar. Their chemistry was immediate and explosive and shortly became hot and heavy. Then Ian discovered that his hot sexy miss was the younger sister of his best friend and all bets (and hands) were off. Until he discovered her life was in danger and he vowed no one would ever hurt her!

Headed for Trouble is a truly swoon-worthy romance novel. The heroine is flawed and in distress, but very worth saving. Ms. Walker addresses the very real and serious issue of psychological abuse in a manner that many women can relate to...i.e., nobody believes them because “he just seems so nice.” But with her Scottish hunk to the rescue, Neve has never been safer. And the readers are in for a treat, not only with the sexy romance between Neve and Ian, but also the edge-of-your-seat stalking of her ex and its very satisfying conclusion. A true five-star romance.

Lani Roberts

Heart Like Mine

Maggie McGinnis

St. Martin’s Press

Mass Market

978-1250069085

★★★★1/2

Delaney is determined to make her father proud. She plans to become the CFO of the hospital where he practices. Only one person is a serious contender, and Kevin is woefully underqualified. The only thing that he’s good at is schmoozing. Delaney and Kevin have both been given one month to drastically cut the budgets of two different departments. Not only is the more successful candidate likely to get the CFO job, but the less successful one’s likely to get a pink slip. To her dismay, Delaney is assigned pediatrics. How can she take money away from sick kids?

Delaney meets with Josh, the interim head of pediatrics, to discuss her preliminary plan. He challenges Delaney to spend two weeks working on the pediatric floor. Then they can discuss whether her cuts are feasible or if they would endanger the children. Delaney reluctantly agrees.

Delaney soon finds herself deeply involved with the young patients. She also finds herself overwhelmingly attracted to Josh. But they must remain professional. Even a flirtation would destroy Delaney’s credibility and could jeopardize both of their careers. Unfortunately, these fears can’t compete with the desire that soon lands her in a relationship with Josh. But what happens if someone finds out their secret?

This is a continuation of a series. It can be read alone and is a very good book.

Sheila Griffin

One Hot Summer

Melissa Cutler

St. Martin’s Press

Mass Market

978-1250071866

★★★★★

Remedy was the wedding planner of the year. Then a scandal forced her to flee Hollywood and live in the wilds of Texas. For the next year, she’ll be the most sought-after event planner in the state. Then she’ll return to Hollywood in triumph.

In the meantime, Remedy’s new job as special event manager for the luxurious Briscoe Resort is more stressful than she expected. Demanding brides, their mothers, and even worse, the grooms’ mothers, are routine problems. Corraling a runaway elephant is an



Contemporary

unexpected duty. To make matters worse, Remedy has a run-in with the local fire marshal who's as sexy as he is irritating.

Micah takes fire safety very seriously, with good reason. Twenty-four years ago, a couple of drunk guests of the Briscoe started a fire that cost him his home, his mother and his best friend. Micah has no patience with people who are careless about fire hazards. And the number one offender in the area is the owner of the Briscoe.

As Remedy and Micah work together, the chemistry between them heats up. Soon he's warming Remedy's bed as well as her heart. But can Micah ignore the fact that Texas is just a pit stop on Remedy's road back to Hollywood?

This is the beginning of a fun new series. It's amusing, sexy and a really good book.

Sheila Griffin

Reunion Pass (An Eternity Springs Novel)

Emily March

St. Martin's

Mass Market

978-1250072979

★★★★★



Chase Timberlake and Lori Reese were the high school sweethearts that all of the small town of Eternity Springs felt good about and eagerly anticipated their wedding after college. But Lori was the small town girl who wanted to become a veterinarian and settle down in Eternity Springs, and Chase was an adventure junkie. Chase bought Lori an engagement ring, but before he could ask her to marry him, both of their big breaks came through. Lori was accepted to veterinary school and Chase, who always took pictures of his adventures, was hired as a professional adventure photographer and they went their separate ways.

After lots of hard work and sacrifice, Lori Reese returned triumphantly to Eternity Springs with a DVD after her name. The entire town was proud of her and the opening of her own clinic. In the meantime, Chase had travelled around the world taking action photos and had recently become engaged to a reality TV star and was given his own reality program with his fiancée as his pro-

ducer. He still thought of Lori often (and she of him) but wanted to get married in Eternity Springs, not realizing that Lori had returned home. But tragedy happens and Chase comes home a damaged, traumatized man. Can Lori and the beautiful Rocky Mountains surrounding Eternity Springs help him heal even with him still being engaged to the beautiful, spoiled Lana? Can Lori shield her heart while trying to help Chase or is it too late?

Reunion Pass is a five-star read from start to finish. Both Lori and Chase have good hearts and truly love each other but life and tragedy get in their way. Chase comes home a broken man but still engaged. Lori is now a vet but still unattached. Their love is a struggle, but the journey to their happily-ever-after ending is heartbreaking and funny at the same time. And the antics of Eternity Springs' residents will make the reader want to visit again and again.

Lani Roberts

Running Wild

Sara Jane Stone

Avon Impulse

E-book

978-0062423993

★★★★

Noah Tager wants his best friend's eighteen-year-old sister, Josie Fairmore, but he's also looking out for her. He catches her boyfriend slapping her, but agrees to keep this a secret, both because she's broken up with him and because no one will believe her story. Noah is tempted by her, but he's going into the military and will be gone soon. He will not make a move.

Josie has had a crush on him for some time but knows she doesn't have a chance with him.

Sara Jane Stone gives readers a short prequel novella to her upcoming "Second Shot" series. Set in 2012, this tale is a tease that should have readers eager to read what comes next.

Heather Nordahl Files

Contemporary

Serving Trouble

Sara Jane Stone

Avon Impulse

E-book

978-0062423849

☆☆1/2

Josie Fairmore is back in town, and she is in dire straits. Her son was born too soon and died at 27 days. She is grateful for every moment she had with Morgan, but that time came at a very high price. Her deep debt leaves her desperate for a job, so she approaches Noah Tager for a job at his bar.

A few years ago, Josie and Noah had sex, and she told him she loved him. Now that he's returned from Afghanistan, he does not feel like the hero that the people of Forever, Oregon see in him. He wants to stay away from Josie, but he learns how much she needs the job and hires her. She quickly makes herself indispensable, but then a complication comes into his life.

Caroline, a Marine he served with, needs to hide from the man who once raped her... her superior officer.

Sara Jane Stone's latest is an excellent tale with terrific characters and a plot that is by turns exciting and moving. Some turns of the plot slow the story down towards the end, but readers will enjoy turning every page.
Heather Nordahl Files

Stone Cold Cowboy

Jennifer Ryan

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062435323

☆☆1/2

Sadie Higgins has spent years taking care of her drug-addicted brother Connor, paying his debts. Unfortunately, he has taken things to a new low. He's been rustling cattle from Rory Kendrick's ranch and cooking meth for a very dangerous man. Sadie is trying to stop Connor from rustling a large number of cattle when that dangerous man hits her, wraps her in barbed wire, and hangs her from a tree by her wrists.

Rory finds her in this horrifying condition and rescues her. He's always found her attractive but thought

he was too old for her. Now he feels the overwhelming need to protect her while she's doing what she can to pay the ranch back for the stolen cattle. The Kendricks allow her to cook for them but don't intend to take anything else from her. Rory's grandfather wants his grandsons to marry and have babies, and he has hopes that Sadie can be the one for Rory.

Jennifer Ryan's latest "Montana Men" novel has a heroine who starts out as a damsel in distress who is rescued by her hero in a cowboy hat. Her villains are pure evil except for Connor, who teeters on the brink. Readers who love cowboys and drama will be in heaven.
Heather Nordahl Files

Suddenly In Love (A Lake Haven Novel)

Julia London

Montlake Romance

Mass Market

978-1503953284

☆☆☆☆

Mia Lassiter had always had her own style. She loved art, textures, patterns, different mediums, and saw beauty and usefulness in everything. She designed her own clothes, using various fabrics and whatever she found handy. Consequently, she always stood out; even in East Bend, where she had come home with her tail between her legs after striking out on her own in New York City. Now she was working with her Aunt Bev at her interior design shop renovating one of the rich summer people's mansions in Lake Haven while trying to figure out what to do with her life. To make matters worse, her job was to oversee the renovations on a daily basis and on the first day discovered she would have to deal with the new owner's ne'er-do-well son who drank like a fish and didn't bathe!

Brennan Ross had come home to find himself. He didn't want the banging of his mother's constant need to renovate going on while he was in his deep funk and trying to drink himself into a stupor. He was actually hiding out because, in reality, he was Everett Allen, lead guitarist and singer of Tuesday's End, one of the most popular and well-known alternative rock bands ever. They had just finished a sold out, 150-city world tour when his best friend and co-founder deliberately overdosed on heroin. The last thing he had said to Brennan was, "Is this all there is?" Brennan had no answer to that question, but as he was coming off of a three-day drunk, the first person he saw was a quirkily dressed young woman who had absolutely no idea who he was and was disgusted at what

Contemporary

she saw. He was entranced!

Suddenly in Love is a rather misleading title because it takes our lovers quite a while to discover that they actually like each other! Both Mia and Brennan are lost to their passions and are looking for something which they discover in each other. Brennan likes Mia's artistic, kooky looks and Mia's not at all impressed with Brennan because she has absolutely no idea who he is except that he's a musician. She's been hurt before. Once she finds out who Brennan really is, will he be able to convince her of his sincerity, and will she be able to forgive him for his deception? *Suddenly in Love* is a feel-good-happy-ending kind of love story, even if the heroine is a little over-the-top stubborn at times.

Lani Roberts

Fate's Call, cont.

Where had he even come from? She'd not seen anyone when she'd entered the alley.

"Miss?"

Oh. Right. He'd spoken to her and awaited an answer. Erron tried to nod. Had her head even moved? Her thick blonde plait fell forward. Escaped wisps tickled her cheek and forehead.

"Here, let me help you."

Brown hide boots entered her line of sight, then a hand. It was large and calloused, but something made her want to take it. She lifted an aching wrist and placed shaking fingers into his.

Warm. His touch was warm and firm.

Strong.

She looked up as he pulled her to her feet without effort. Her eyes scanned his face and locked onto his. Brown. All Erron saw was a dark gaze that made her stomach flip.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

Dark brows drew together as he studied her; Erron couldn't find her voice. He was so handsome, with high

cheekbones and clean-shaven cheeks. He was concerned for her, too; it was all written over his expression.

Erron's heart stuttered. No one had ever looked at her like that before. Tears pricked her eyes.

He was tall and lean, dark hair shaggy and in need of a trim. He wore a dark leather apron over his tan long-sleeved linen tunic and brown breeches. Whatever his trade, he was a hard worker.

She yanked her hand from his grip and looked away. "I'm fine. Thank you," she whispered. Erron jumped as his fingertips brushed her jaw.

He gripped her chin, guiding her face back to him.

I need to get away.

Erron didn't know this man; why was she letting him touch her? But when she met his deep brown eyes, she fell into their depths. She froze in place.

He wasn't hurting her. She wasn't afraid of him.

His touch sank into her skin, warmth spreading down her neck and into her shoulders. The gesture was casual and comforting...and wholly unfamiliar. It left her wanting more of his... gentleness.

"Why are you crying?" the man whispered.

Erron blinked. Her tears were still flowing? How did I not know?

"Are you injured?" he repeated.

"No."

His gaze raked up and down her body, those brows still tight. Like he didn't believe her.

"Erron." The barked demand in her name made her tremble.



Historical Romance Reviews

An American in Scotland

Karen Ranney

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062337528

★★★★1/2

Rose comes to Scotland to sell cotton in order to feed her family who resides on a plantation in South Carolina. The United States is in the thick of the Civil War, and many are suffering. When Rose arrives at Duncan MacIain's home, she faints from hunger and exhaustion. As the generous MacIain family cares for and feeds her, she fights guilt, for she has allowed lies about her identity to stand.

Duncan feels compassion for his widowed American cousin and wants to help her. He also needs cotton for his struggling mill. It takes some convincing, but he agrees to buy her cotton. But he does not want to take her with

him when he retrieves it, because he does not want her there for the risky blockade run. They travel to Nassau and then South Carolina, where secrets come to light.

In Karen Ranney's latest, she wisely leaves Rose a mystery, revealing her secrets gradually. Setting part of the tale in Nassau and South Carolina adds great richness to the story. The characters, good and evil, will linger in readers' minds long after the last page is turned.

Heather Nordahl Files

The Debutante is Mine

Vivienne Lorret

Avon Impulse

E-book

978-0062446275

★★★★

Lilah Appleton is used to men forgetting her

Historical

name and ignoring her, but now this needs to change. If she can't find a titled husband by the end of the Season, she'll have to marry a truly repulsive man. She'll need a transformation to reveal the beauty she has unknowingly hidden, so titled suitors will seek her out.

Jack Marlowe hates the aristocracy. He is the illegitimate son of an earl, and he blames that man for much of the troubles his mother had in her life. He can see that Lilah is different, though, and he can't stop putting himself in her path. He drives Lilah crazy, and she finds him impossible to resist, but he doesn't have the social status she needs to help her out of her situation. All that can help her is to become The Season's Original, for then she would have her pick of titled suitors.

Vivienne Lorret's latest stands alone, but readers will want to read the novella that precedes this tale ("The Duke's Christmas Wish" from *All I Want for Christmas is a Duke*) to get the whole story. The plot is strong and the characters charming and readers will greatly enjoy this tale.

Heather Nordahl Files

Good Dukes Wear Black

Manda Collins

St. Martin's Press

Mass Market

978-1250061089

☆☆☆☆

"The Lords of Anarchy" Regency historical romance series continues with Miss Ophelia Daunty and Piers Hamilton, The Duke of Trent's long-awaited courtship. Trent and Ophelia have tiptoed around each other, constantly brought together socially since her friends both married his. Ophelia seeks Trent's help when her fellow Society writer friend is suspiciously committed to an insane asylum by her husband, who disappears suddenly afterwards. Trent feels compelled to help Ophelia, and not just from chivalry. Ophelia might just make him the perfect duchess, after all.

Manda Collins has a very pleasant voice with a witty narrative. Both leads are likable with good chemistry together, and their courtship draws the reader in. The love scenes are delightfully sensual. Ophelia is feisty and independent, but also sweet and caring. Trent is a

good-hearted and manly hero that readers will fall for. The intrigue of Ophelia's missing friend forms an interesting backdrop for the romance. Collins sheds light on the flawed English mental health system of the 19th century, although this could have been more developed, with more insight into the villain. Readers looking for a lighter, but well-written book with an enticing romance will enjoy *Good Dukes Wear Black*.

Danielle Hill

The Groom Wore Plaid

Gayle Callen

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062268006

☆☆☆☆1/2

Maggie McCallum and Owen Duff met when they were young, and they made a real connection. However, he is betrothed, and she's upset to learn this. She has a dream that his fiancée drowns. He does not believe that she can dream the future, even when her dream comes true, which cuts her to the heart.

Years later she finds herself betrothed to Owen in a plan to end the feud between their clans, but he still does not believe in her dreams. She has another dream that he will be very badly injured--maybe even die--if they marry. She is determined to end their betrothal but still end the feud. When she tells Owen they cannot marry, he will not believe in her reasons. He cannot trust her, but is intrigued by her, and that intrigue turns to passion.

Gayle Callen's latest has an immensely sympathetic heroine and a marvelous hero. This is the second in a series, but while the first couple makes an appearance, the tale stands alone. Readers will enjoy putting the pieces together in the suspenseful plot. A delightful series!

Heather Nordahl Files

Her One True Love

Rachel Brimble

Lyrical Press

E-book

978-1601832771

☆☆☆☆

Jane Danes wants more than her life in Biddestone. She's wasted too much time dreaming of Matthew Cleaves. He got married, and though his wife had an affair and left, he is out of reach for her. Her dream is in Bath. She intends to go there and devote her life to orphaned children. But when she leaves with her companion, she

Affaire de Coeur

Historical

is also stuck with Matthew!

His intention is to keep her safe from those who would prey on her. She's too naive to be in such a big city without protection. But as he spends time with her, he realizes that he must move forward with divorcing his wife. Jane will never allow a courtship of any sort unless he is truly free.

Rachel Brimble's latest is connected to earlier tales, but new readers will not be lost. The expertly crafted plot moves slowly, but the characters are well drawn and likable.

Heather Nordahl Files

The Rogue

Katharine Ashe

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062412737

☆☆☆1/2

Constance Read has been on a mission to learn what happened to two missing girls. All she has to go on are chilling details that point to dark rituals. The law knows about the disappearances, but has not been able to solve the crimes. She wants to know how to fight with a blade, and her father provides her with a teacher: Frederick "Saint" Sterling, swordsman par excellence.

Saint met Constance six years before, and the meeting did not end well. He wants no part of instructing this duke's daughter but eventually changes his mind. There are strange doings here, and Saint wants to get to the bottom of it.

Katharine Ashe's latest features characters from earlier books, but this tale stands alone. She has a lyrical writing style, but sometimes it feels like key pieces of information linger tantalizingly out of reach. The tale's villain may be easy to identify by some, but the journey to the thrilling climax will captivate readers.

Heather Nordahl Files

Savage Nights

Mia Gabriel

St. Martin's

Trade Paperback

978-1205076816

☆☆☆☆-2

The Earl of Savage is part of an adult game that is being played among the wealthy people of London. During this game, he meets Evelyn Hart whom he instantly feels something for. They have been playing the game for sure and have been enjoying it. This all changes when jealousy among the other players begins to develop. The Earl and Evelyn will have to be willing to fight to keep each other among the most influential families in London.

What can I say? I love this. The plot with all the aristocracy and their naughty little games was a wonderful idea to get the main characters together. It also added the necessary drama to keep the book both interesting and steamy all at the same time. There was a little issue for me with how intense and fast the pair bonded, but, other than that, this one had me hook, line, and sinker.

Lenore Lovecraft

Six Degrees of Scandal

Caroline Linden

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062389787

☆☆☆☆

James Weston and Olivia Herbert have known each other since childhood. When Olivia is seventeen, their relationship takes a turn for the romantic and they make love. Unfortunately, he goes away without telling his family that he intends to marry her, and her family marries her off for money. She tries to contact Jamie, but he does not get back to her in time.

Years later, Olivia is a widow, and her situation is dire. Her husband had been involved in smuggling and left her nearly penniless. With an evil lord after her, she turns to Jamie for help. He never got over her and will do anything to help her escape Lord Clary's clutches. She's held herself away from him for years, but she cannot resist him anymore.

Caroline Linden's latest brings together elements from past books in this series, though readers will not be lost if this is their first title. The characters are engaging, and the plot moves swiftly. And Lord Clary is a compel-

Historical

ling villain who is truly terrifying.
Heather Nordahl Files

Three Weeks to Wed

Ella Quinn

Zebra

Mass Market

978-1420139556

☆☆☆1/2

Lady Grace Carpenter made a vow not to marry. She is the guardian of her seven younger siblings, and marrying could mean losing them. When she encounters the source of her girlhood infatuation, Mattheus, Earl of Worthington, at a coaching house, she decides to seduce him and have her one night of passion before she returns to her life of spinsterhood and raising her brothers and sisters. Matt knows that this mysterious woman is the one woman he wants to spend the rest of his life with, but she keeps running away. She doesn't realize that Matt will overcome every obstacle to claim Grace as his forever.

Three Weeks to Wed is a Regency historical romance with a hero in pursuit that will make die-hard romantics swoon. Matt is a sweet, sexy and loving man. His care and devotion to Grace makes this book. Grace is a kind and devoted heroine. Her hesitation to embrace the future with Matt is understandable. The love scenes are sexy and passionate. The shortcoming of this book is there is not a lot of conflict in the story other than Matt continually overcoming Grace's reservations about marriage. The potential external conflict isn't impactful at all, but otherwise, this is a diverting read.

Danielle Hill

Wedding Night with the Earl

Amelia Grey

St. Martin's

Mass Market

978-1250042224

Wedding Night with the Earl concludes Amelia Grey's "The Heirs Club of Scoundrels" Regency historical

romance novel series.

Recent heir to the earldom, Adam, Lord Greyhawke, has sworn not to remarry after his wife died in childbirth. He cannot cause another wife to go through that agony. His return to London is to steward the earldom for his young cousin and heir. He encounters the enchanting Miss Katherine Wright and asks for a dance, not knowing that she will threaten his vow not to marry.

While Adam and Katherine are perfectly likable characters and their love story is pleasing to read, the spark that makes a Regency romance highly appealing is missing. This novel suffers from a lack of palpable conflict and tension. Both characters have legitimate emotional angst with painful pasts, but the story feels bland. Despite good tension between Adam and Katherine, it's not enough to cause a good sizzle in the storyline. The cameos of Harrison and Bray, heroes from past books and Adam's friends, were a nice touch, but otherwise, the secondary characters don't stand out. While *Wedding Night with the Earl* is enjoyable, some humor, a good villain or more intense internal conflict would've elevated it to being unputdownable.

Danielle Hill

Paranormal Romance Reviews



Ghost Gifts

Laura Spinella

Montlake Romance

Trade Paperback

978-1503950771

★★★★1/2

Aubrey sees dead people. She writes fluff pieces about homes for sale. It's the perfect avenue for her to find uneasy spirits in need of help. Then a young woman's body is discovered hidden inside the wall of a prominent citizen's home.

Missy, a local girl, disappeared twenty years ago. The town was in shock and demanded action. So, despite the lack of a body, a drifter was convicted of her murder. Finding Missy's corpse throws doubt on the man's guilt.

Levi is a hotshot reporter sent by the newspaper's

corporate headquarters to cover the story. The local editor insists that Levi partner up with Aubrey. Being involved with the spirit of a murder victim is the last thing she wants to do. Angry ghosts can cause physical harm, and Aubrey has the scars to prove it. But her boss insists.

Surprisingly, Missy isn't the ghost that shows up. It's someone close to Levi. Too bad Aubrey can't tell him. Levi is rigid in everything, from his posture to his thinking. He'll never believe her.

As Aubrey and Levi search for the truth behind Missy's murder, they begin to fall in love. But what will happen to their new relationship when Aubrey tells Levi that she has a message for him from beyond the grave? This is a really good book!

Sheila Griffin

Paranormal

Knight Defenders

Victoria Sue

Create Space

Trade Paperback

978-1523695669

★★★★1/2

After the illness and death of her father, Gwen Marshall had to drop out of college and get a waitressing job to support herself. Left alone to close up, she was attacked in the back alley. Lance Buchanan came to her rescue. Gwen watched as the man and beast-like being fought with swords. When the fight was over, Lance introduced himself.

Lance immediately realized that a connection existed between the two, putting her life in danger. He had been alone without a soul mate for 1,500 years and now that he found Gwen, the De-Valls had a way to get to him through Gwen. The beasts would go after her.

Victoria Sue brings King Arthur's court to the 21st century, seizing her readers with the magic of her talented pen from the very first page. Warning: This is a stay-up-all night until the very last page romance.

Lauren Calder

The Return of the Witch

Paula Brackston

Thomas Dunne Books

Hardcover

978-1250028815

★★★★1/2

Gideon, an evil warlock, has escaped from his "escape-proof" prison. He's going after Tegan, one of the witches who banished him. Elizabeth, the witch who escorted Gideon to the Summerlands, must get to her first.

Elizabeth knew that taking Gideon into the Summerlands would be a one-way trip. She would have to leave behind the daughter of her heart. But no one else could transport him. Elizabeth wonders if Tegan understood her decision, or does she hate Elizabeth for abandoning her?

Tegan was lonely when Elizabeth left, but she recognized the necessity. She's spent the last five years traveling the world, learning about different forms of magic. Tegan is excited to share everything she's learned

with her mentor.

Elizabeth warns Tegan that Gideon is coming for her. At first, Tegan's cautious. But time passes with no sign of him and she grows complacent. That's when Gideon kidnaps Tegan and takes her back in time. Elizabeth's desperate to follow them, but she doesn't have that ability. Elizabeth summons a Time Stepper.

Erasmus and Elizabeth track Gideon and Tegan from one time to another, always a step behind. As they spend time together, Erasmus and Elizabeth fall in love. But before they can begin to think of a life together they must rescue Tegan.

This is a sequel that can be read alone. It's a very good book.

Sheila Griffin

Love (Gargoyles Series)

Christine Warren

St. Martin's

Mass Market

978-1250077370

★★★★1/2

Kylie is being mugged when a nearby gargoyle statue shatters. A giant stands in its place. Kylie decides that either she's in a coma or she was rescued by a gargoyle! People in comas don't feel any pain, right? Every inch of her body hurts. Therefore, the gargoyle/giant must be real.

Dag, the giant/gargoyle, says Kylie smells like a witch. Kylie replies that she's not but her best friend, Wynn, is. Kylie calls her. Wynn convinces Kylie to come over immediately and bring Dag. She'll explain everything.

The muggers were minions of the Seven Demons of Darkness. Centuries ago mages created Guardians to fight the Seven. The Guardians prevailed and the Seven were imprisoned. The mages turned the Guardians into gargoyles to await the day they would again be needed to fight evil. The Guardians are beginning to wake and the Seven are beginning to break free.

As the Guardians prepare to stop Armageddon, Kylie and Dag fall in love. But before they can concentrate on their newfound love, they've got to prevent the end of the world. Once that's done they'll figure out what the future looks like for a computer hacker and a gargoyle.

This is a continuation of a series. It can be read alone. It's sexy and somewhat humorous. Unfortunately, the humor sometimes seems forced. Overall this is a good book.

Sheila Griffin

Affaire de Coeur

Paranormal

Runaway Vampire

Lynsay Sands

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062316042

☆☆☆☆

Mary Winslow is traveling in her RV when she hits something in the road. She investigates but is unable to find what she hit--until she discovers the naked man in her RV's bedroom. He's in such bad shape that she can't understand how he could get himself inside. He needs medical care, so she goes to a truck stop as quickly as she can to get him help.

Dante Notte was kidnapped, along with his twin brother, and is naked in a cage when he gets free and flees. When he comes upon a road, he slams into Mary's RV, then is run over. When Mary brings him help, he uses his immortal powers to control minds and take blood in order to heal. Mary is shocked to find such a badly injured man is suddenly without a scratch. But that's only one shock in a string of them for the sixty-two-year-old widow.

This latest in Lynsay Sands' long-running "Arge-neau" series takes an older heroine and hits the ground running. Her hero seems oblivious to any shame about being naked for a large portion of the story. The tale gives readers insight into Mary's character. Dante is a bit more mysterious, but the action will keep readers locked in until the end.

Heather Nordahl Files

Smoke and Fire: A Dark Kings Novel

Donna Grant

St. Martin's Press

Mass Market

978-1250071965

☆☆☆☆ 1/2

Kinsey and Ryder were in love. Then with no warning, he left her. She hadn't seen him since. Then last month, Kinsey was attacked. A dragon swooped down from the sky. As it landed, it transformed into Ryder! As he fought off her attacker, Kinsey fled.

Ryder is a Dragon King. These immortal guardians of humankind are dragons that can shapeshift into humans. Kinsey arrives at Dreagan Industries to work on their

computers. Is she there on legitimate business or seeking revenge? Regardless, it's too dangerous for Kinsey to leave. Ryder believes that she's trustworthy and puts Kinsey to work.

As Kinsey and Ryder work together to find out who sent her to Dreagan, their attraction reignites. But Kinsey's not interested in restarting a relationship with Ryder. Well, her mind and heart aren't, but her body is. Kinsey's decided that she'll never risk her heart like that again. Unfortunately, Kinsey forgets this resolve every time she's around him. Soon Ryder finds his way back into Kinsey's bed and then into her heart. Then damning evidence shows up. Will the Dragon Kings again have to kill the soulmate of one of their brothers?

This is a continuation of a series. It can be read alone but will be less confusing if one has read the previous stories. Despite some vulgar language, it's a sexy, interesting book.

Sheila Griffin

Wild Man's Curse

Susannah Sandlin

Montlake Romance

Trade Paperback

978-1503934740

☆☆☆☆



Whiskey Bayou is home to Eva Savoie, a voodoo priestess. On a very fated morning, wildlife agent Gentry Broussard sees a man he killed years ago leaving Eva's home on the swamp. He is very frightened by the sight and goes to investigate the home to find Eva dead... murdered.

Celestine is Eva's heir and comes to aid in the investigation of the murder. She begins to receive threats, and Gentry vows to help solve the murder and keep Celestine safe at the same time. Could a voodoo curse be responsible for the growing number of bodies?

This reviewer was happy to see a voodoo-themed story. This was right up my alley. The characters were well written and the suspense built in a natural way. It was refreshing to read something that was also a little gory, as I am a horror fan as well--so this fixed all my problems. Certainly, this is a book I would have bought.

Lenore Lovecraft



The Cracked Spine

Paige Shelton

Minotaur Books

Hardcover

978-1466861213

★★★

In need of adventure and employment, Kansas native Delaney Nichols takes a job at a secondhand bookstore in Edinburgh, Scotland. She's fresh in town and very welcomed by The Cracked Spine's eccentric staff. Delaney is equally eccentric—books talk to her. But the voice that has her seeking a murderer is suddenly drowning out the literary voices. Her inner amateur sleuth is awakened by her new employee's sister's murder, a woman with a history of drug abuse, and a missing priceless antique book.

The Cracked Spine isn't light enough for a cozy mystery. A good dose of humor would have fixed that. The premise is interesting, a bookish heroine who actually hears book characters talking. This intriguing aspect needed more exploration to give this book a distinctive feel. Similarly, Delaney's motivations to become an amateur sleuth were nebulous, and considering how she was continually putting herself in danger, that was a crucial

explanation. The viewpoint into contemporary Scotland will be much appreciated by readers with an interest in all things Scottish, as well as a fascinating cast of secondary characters. Although this was a slow read, the premise shows potential for an ongoing series, with a few tweaks.
Danielle Hill

Skinny Dipping With Murder

Auralee Wallace

St. Martin's Paperback

Mass Market

978-1250077776

★★★ 1/2

Auralee Wallace delivers zany cozy mystery with *Skinny Dipping with Murder*. Erica Bloom fled her small home town of Otter Lake after a prank that left her publicly exposed (literally). She returns to help her aging hippie mother with her retreat business, and stays to solve a series of attacks that involve the trio that took a part in Erica's mortification. Can she find the culprit and avoid falling for her teenage crush-turned sheriff Grady Forrester in the process?

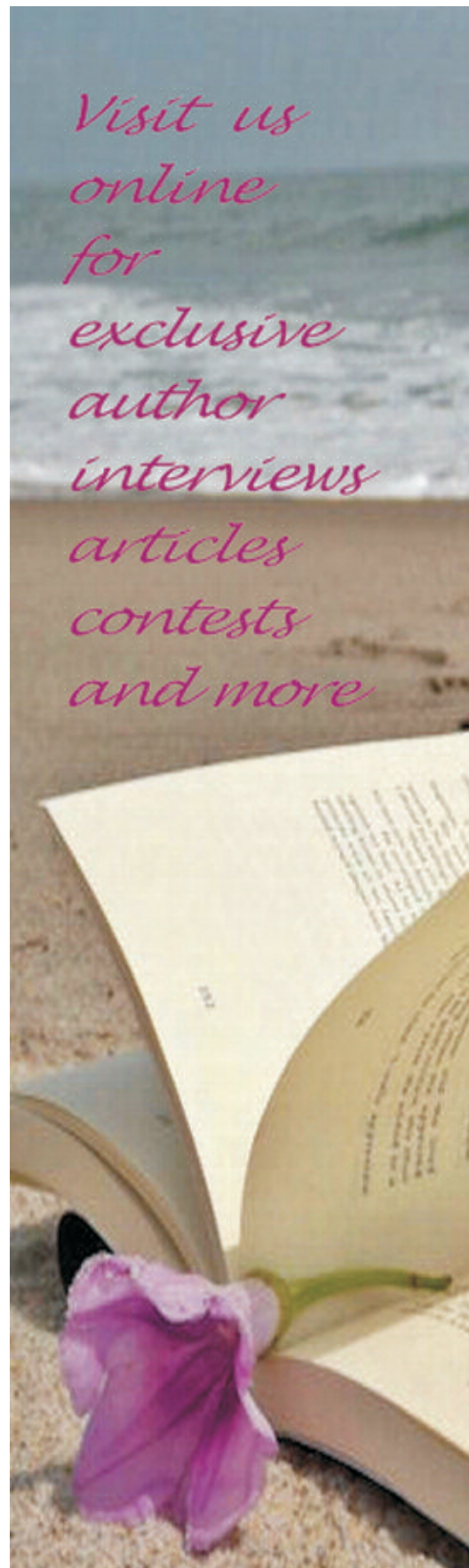
While this is a genuinely funny book that will keep
Affaire de Coeur

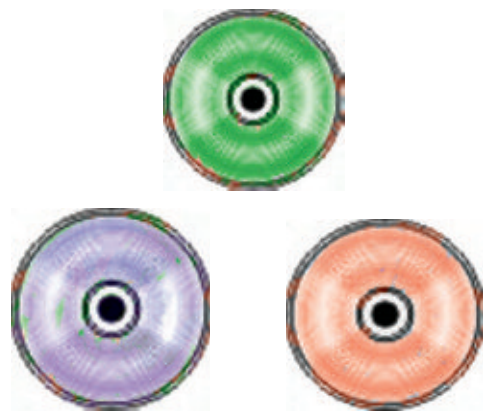
Mystery

readers laughing, the mystery falls short in comparison. It lacks cohesiveness and feels like an afterthought in the midst of hilarious jokes and silliness. Readers who enjoy comedic mystery will appreciate Wallace's capable humor.

Erica is a likable lead character that readers will hope finds closure on her painful past. The numerous secondary characters, including Grady; Erica's mother and her woman's retreat members; and Erica's best friend Freddie, help make this the highly amusing book it is. If the mystery was more solidly written, this book could have been close to a five star rating. Hopefully, this will be a continuing series because the inhabitants of Otter Lake make for an enjoyable read.

Danielle Hill





Audio Books

The Bridal Path: Ashley

Sherryl Woods

Brilliance Audio

978-1501214967

☆☆☆

Dillon Ford was the “bad boy” in high school, the one every girl wanted and every guy wanted to be like. Grown up Dillon is more than what meets the eye, and Ashley Wilde is about to discover that.

Ashley was a prim and proper “little rich girl” in school with a brilliant modelling career ahead of her. Now she has returned home to her father’s secluded cabin to nurse her wounds and figure out what to do with the rest of her life. Little does she know but Dillon has secured the cabin for a much needed vacation. Stuck in the secluded cabin, will these two people iron out their differences?

Ashley and Dillon have chemistry and are interesting characters in their own right. Both are hiding their true selves from each other to protect their hearts, but the listener is aware of their secrets from early on. Read by Amy McFadden, Ashley and Dillon feel like friends, and her clear voice brings them to life for the listener. Sherryl Woods has written another small town story with well-developed characters in interesting situations the listener can relate to. *The Bridal Path: Ashley* is heartwarming, sexy, and perfect for a light read.

Leticia Elsasser

Fire Song

Catherine Coulter

Brilliance Audio

978-1455830923

☆☆☆

Second in Coulter’s “Song” series, bad boy knight from the first book, *Warrior’s Song*, has his own story in *Fire Song*. Recently returned from the Crusades, Graelem has received property and a bride for his rescue of a French nobleman. Kassia, the nobleman’s daughter, is severely ill and not expected to live. He expects Graelem to protect and cherish his beloved daughter as much as he does. On their wedding night, Graelem rapes Kassia, which leads to her being afraid of him. This does not go over well with the arrogant knight, so he seeks his pleasures elsewhere. When Kassia walks in on her husband having sex with another woman, she tries to leave him, but he hauls her back and threatens to rape her again.

Graelem has to be one of the most unlikeable characters of all Catherine Coulter’s books. Typical of the time, 1272, women were treated mostly as “breeders” and were not thought of much better than dogs. Though his thinking is the normal thinking of males of this time period, I could not warm up to Graelem. Kassia, on the other hand, could have been a much stronger heroine, in my opinion. She was passive and meek and did not seem a good match for the arrogant knight.

Read by Anne Flosnik, *Fire Song* is 11 hours 52 minutes. Her voice sounds clear and bright as she performs each character’s part very well. Her vocal inflections and dialogue give a good sense of time and place. I have listened to other books read by Ms. Flosnik in the past

Affaire de Coeur

and enjoyed her voice immensely.

Letticia Elsasser

Invincible

Diana Palmer

Brilliance Audio

978-1491524756

☆☆☆

Carson is a mercenary, a loner, a womanizer, a proud Lakota Sioux. He doesn't have time or the interest in a relationship. Working with his friend, Cash Grier from Jacobsville, Texas, on a difficult murder investigation, he comes in contact with the innocent Carlie, Cash's secretary. Shocking her with his sexual exploits turns out to be more fun than he thought. But when she saves his life, his attitude begins to change.

Carlie Blair, a naïve, innocent young woman, finds herself in danger when she witnesses something she shouldn't have seen. She must rely on Carson to keep her safe. Once despising him, she begins to learn more about the man beneath the surface. Now she risks it all by losing her heart to the proud warrior.

Invincible is a traditional Diana Palmer love story. Shy, virginal woman tangles with a womanizing, alpha male hero. The plot elements are strong, the characters are well developed, if cookie cutter similar to previous books, and the sense of time and place is familiar. The secondary characters are important to the storyline, and they add a little "homecoming" to the background. If you are a Diana Palmer fan, you will enjoy this book. Todd McLaren's voice is rich and smooth, his vocal inflections adding just the correct emphasis to correct situations. He definitely makes the 9 1/2 hour story fly by.

Lettitia Elsasser

Let Sleeping Rogues Lie

Sabrina Jeffries

Brilliance Audio

Audio CD

978-1441847201

☆☆☆

Let Sleeping Rogues Lie, #4 in the "School for Heiresses" series, pairs Anthony Dalton, the Viscount Norcourt, a rake and playboy, with Madeline Prescott, a teacher at Mrs. Harris' School for Heiresses.

Madeline needs help in saving her physician father's reputation after a scandal involving a patient. Anthony needs her assistance securing a position at the school for heiresses for his orphaned niece, Tessa, who is living with

their abusive aunt and uncle.

Anthony is a man severely traumatized by the abuse and bullying he faced as a child at the hands of his aunt and uncle. He does not want his niece to go through the same thing he did, so is trying to gain custody. Enrolling her in the school will help with that. In exchange, he will provide lessons to the students on how to avoid a rake.

Jeffries has penned a typical "school teacher meets handsome aristocrat" with scorching passion, witty dialogue, and likeable characters. At times, Madeline is deceptive and not quite interesting to this reviewer, but Anthony and his story more than made up for my lack of interest. The audio version of *Let Sleeping Rogues Lie*, performed by Justine Eyre, is 9 hours and 37 minutes. Her voice flows smoothly from one character to another and makes the book come to life with the richness and vocal inflections for each character.

Letticia Elsasser

When Snow Falls

Brenda Novak

Brilliance Audio

978-1469220062

☆☆☆1/2

Welcome back to Whiskey Creek with this newest installment featuring Cheyenne Christensen and her quest to solve the mysteries of her earliest memories. Moving from town to town, living in cheap motels with her mother and sister is how Cheyenne grew up. She is frequently troubled by early memories of a blond woman, though no one is willing to help her solve the mystery.

When her closest friend becomes attracted to the man Cheyenne has secretly loved for years, she steps aside so as not to ruin it for Eve. When she meets Dylan Amos, bad boy of the Amos clan, she knows to avoid him; she can't afford any mistakes at this point in her life. She must find out who she is and where she came from, but maybe there is more to Dylan than what you see on the surface.

Read by Tara Sands, *When Snow Falls* is a heart-warming and mysterious romance from beginning. I was kept guessing throughout the story to solve the mystery of Cheyenne. The chemistry between Dylan and Cheyenne sizzles from the time they meet to the very end; so much so, that I could feel the chemistry from the vocal intonation of Tara Sands' reading. Whiskey Creek and its residents are well developed and have that friendly, hometown, welcome to the neighborhood, feel. It was a pleasure to catch up with some of the characters from previous books in the series. I can always count on a pleasurable experience with Brenda Novak's books. She truly has a flair for capturing the essence of love.

Letticia Elsasser

Affaire de Coeur

Booty from the Other Genre



Second House From the Corner

Sadequa Johnson

Thomas Dunne Books

Hardcover

978-125004140

★★★★1/2

Felicia Lyons is a New Jersey stay-at-home mother who has three children. Between her children's classes and karate, shopping and changing diapers, this actress wannabe from the worst part of Philadelphia is stretched to the limit. She feels a little sorry for herself; she needs a break from her children and her husband. She needs to score a role/commercial that will put her in the spotlight and the opportunity to climb the social ladder in her milieu without interruption from the people who depend upon her.

Felicia maintains contact with her grandmother in Philadelphia who keeps her somewhat grounded. She also keeps contact with some childhood friends with whom she should have cut ties once she left Philly. Thus, through them and Felicia's own missteps, she gets her wishes, but they come at a very high price.

This reviewer really did not know what to expect from *Second House From the Corner*. I never heard of the author Sadequa Johnson; did not know she had a previous book published. I selected to review this book solely because of the cover. As an African-American, I had mixed feelings about the contents of *Second House*. I can say with certainty that as far as characterizations go, she got it right, though a couple were dangerously close to being stereotypes. I always said there are certain things one doesn't tell about her race. Johnson revealing some of those secrets made me uncomfortable. However, the reviewer side of me says if it makes for a good story, go for it. *Second House* is a good book, though the style and colloquial language Johnson uses may not appeal to

some. Yet, the intricacy and twists in the plot make up for it. A definite winner!

Mildred Burkett

Most Wanted

Lisa Scottoline

St. Martin's Press

978-1250010131

Hardcover

★★★★★

This story is, perhaps, one of a kind. It taps into an issue that this reviewer has never encountered. A childless couple can go to institutions that provide donors and have eggs or sperm implanted.

Christine Nilsson and her husband could not have a baby. The solution is donor 3319. There is a screening process required to see if the match is right. The donor will have a profile that includes a medical history and psychological make-up. Is this person mentally stable or does he/she have HIV? Donor 3319 checks out okay, but after the point of no return, they find out that that person is a serial killer. Ouch!

Genetics is based on probability. Just because one's parents had blue eyes doesn't mean that their offspring will. Likewise, a serial killer's personality may not be passed on to the next generation, but then....it can. That could cause a lot of stress for parents. If one's parents were alcoholics, they could avoid that trap by staying away from alcohol. What happens if one inherits the personality of a serial killer? What, if all a parent can say is, "The father of my child is a serial killer."?

Most Wanted is very well done.

Paul Zunino.



Better Late Than Never (Galleys sent to us too late to go in the past issue)

The Bride Wore Starlight

Lizbeth Selvig

Avon Impulse

E-book

978-0062413963

☆☆☆



Joely Crockett Foster is in rehab, healing from a serious car accident, when her louse of a husband surprises her with divorce papers and withdrawal of financial support for the services she needs. She'll need to find a place to live because she does not want to live at home.

A combination of pride and a feeling of helplessness leaves her in a wheelchair, resistant to trying to walk on crutches. But Alec Morrissey comes into her life to force her to make changes. Her sisters get married, and he is in the wedding party. Alec is attracted to Joely right away. He knows she needs a little push, and he's there to give it to her. She fights him tooth and nail but also can't help but respond to him.

Lizbeth Selvig's latest can be hard to follow at first because it's a later entry in a series, but readers will be riveted once things get rolling. Alec is a delightful hero, as is Joely, even with all her prickles. Readers won't want to miss this.

Heather Nordahl Files

A Deadly Tail

Dixie Lyle

St. Martin's

Mass Market

978-1250078438

☆☆☆ 1/2

Deidre "Foxtrot" Lancaster is an administrative assistant to an eccentric billionaire who solves crimes with her cat Tango and ghostly dog Whiskey. She's back to solve a murder and attempted murder on the set of a zombie movie being filmed at her employer's estate. Foxtrot has the gift of communicating with animals and is the guardian of the nearby pet cemetery full of portals that lead to the pet afterlife. Foxtrot, Whiskey, and Tango work together to figure out who's wreaking havoc on the set, and they interact with many different departed animals in the process in this cozy mystery.

A Deadly Tail is a fascinating idea that is for the most part well-executed. Initially, it was confusing to decipher the dialogue of the various animals, but eventually the book finds its rhythm. Animal lovers are sure to appreciate this exploration of the animal world with a special emphasis on the human animal bond. The author seems to have many insights into animals, as the animal characters are often more well-developed than the human ones. While the mystery felt a bit anti-climactic in its resolution, *A Deadly Tail* excels with its animal-related content, and often zany humor. Cozy mystery fans will

appreciate this novel.
Danielle Hill

The Lie and the Lady

Kate Noble

Pocket

Mass Market

978-1476749396

★★★★★



Security is the most important thing in life to Leticia, the Countess of Churzy. A year ago, she was a widow with little funds at her disposal. She fell in love, but he lied about his identity, which made her a laughingstock. It required fleeing to Paris to find her ticket out of her humiliation--a man to marry. Sir Barty is everything she dreamed of in a husband so she happily travels to Lincolnshire in anticipation of being his bride.

But things are not as she dreams. She gets off on the wrong foot with her stepdaughter-to-be, who is much older than she expects. She alienates the villagers by claiming that London is the only place to get wedding finery. And one of her worst nightmares has come true, for the village of Helmsley is the home of John Turner, whose lie ruined her life the year before. John can't believe she's in his town either, and each of them fears the other will ruin everything.

Kate Noble's latest is part of the "Winner Takes All" series, but easily stands alone. Leticia is a spectacularly vivid character that readers will grow to love, and the

denizens of the tale, from Sir Barty to the townspeople, will linger in readers' memories. John and his magnificent mother, consumed in their concerns of the family mill, complete the chemistry in this brilliant tale.

Heather Nordahl Files

Wild at Heart

T.J. Kline

Avon Impulse

E-book

978-0062456281

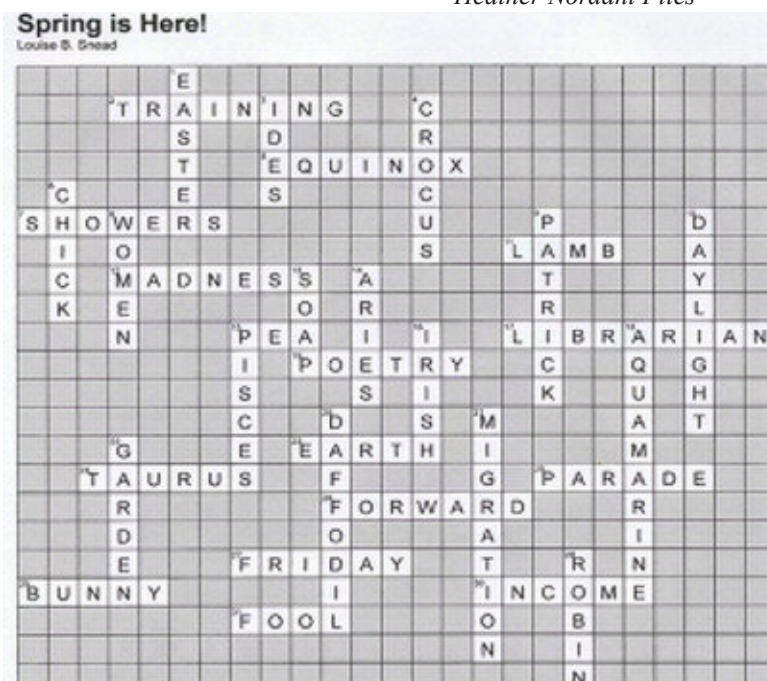
★★★★

Bailey Hart has to get out of her hometown. She does not like her reputation as the Wild Hart, a trouble-maker. Her ticket out of town is her gift for singing, and her band is waiting for her in L.A. But now, she's stuck helping her cousins and feeling taken for granted. And then there's Chase McKee, her cousin's friend. She's had a crush on him forever, but as far as she can tell, he sees her as just a kid.

Chase returns her feelings but will not act on them. He owes her cousin Justin too much. Justin would kill him if he made a move on her, as well. But the Harts want Bailey to stay, and Justin asks Chase to use his powers of persuasion to keep her in town. He can't resist Bailey's charms for long.

In T.J. Kline's latest, those who have not read the rest of the series may struggle to keep track of the characters. But all readers should be delighted with how Bailey grows during the course of the tale.

Heather Nordahl Files



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A New Day
A New Dawn
Make the best of it.
Read! Read! Read!
Write! Write! Write