

July-August, 2018

Affaire de Coeur

Bringing You 38 Years of Honest Reviews

**Debra Parmley's Cover
Model
*Billy Freda***



**Reviews!
Reviews!
Reviews!**

**Meet author Her Royal Hotness,
Sabrina York**





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Fax (510) 632-8868:

Email address: affairedecoeur@adcmagazine.com

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Taking the Plunge into Publishing

Audio Books

Although I've focused on e-books and print books, audio books seem to be coming to the forefront for a lot of authors. Many aren't sure what to do or how to proceed. I've been asked several times on the promotional process, and didn't have the answers.

Taking the Audio Book Plunge is literally being written as I'm writing this book. You'll be reading this with fresh memories from me as I move forward with this wonderful endeavor.

Follow me on my step-by-step plunge into the world of audio books. I've published with a standard/traditional publishing house. I've done vanity, POD, pdf, self-publishing, publishing through KDP, and Create Space. The next endeavor will be doing an exclusive contract with Audible, Amazon's audio book publisher.

I had no idea what I was doing.

Here, you'll read about all the mistakes and successes. You'll know, perhaps before or after I do, what I've done wrong, and hopefully, when you're ready, you can learn from my mistakes. I'm putting myself out there for you to face-palm at my antics and blunders, laugh with me, shake your head, or thank me so you won't have a face-palm moment.

First, I must say that I'm already an Amazon author. If you aren't registered with ACX, their audio book publishing department, and you want to create an audio book with Amazon, you need to register an account with them. Even though I have an author account with Amazon, I still needed to fill out a registration form with ACX.

Next thing they had me do was fill out more forms. Yes, they already have the information for my e-books and print books, but they want the information for this particular department. I read the contract agreement and several other articles they'd recommended.

A lot of information was coming at me. I did print everything up, just in case. I'm sure I'll forget something and we can enjoy that face-palm moment together.

I recommend that you read them as well. It made it easier and less stressful.

Once the bank forms and W-9 forms were taken care of, I was ready.

A decision needed to be made on whether or not I wanted to be exclusive with Audible. You decide if you want to be exclusive with Audible or non-exclusive if you want to sell through other venues. It must be what's best for you.

Another consideration was how to get paid for the audio books, and how the narrator received payment.

The narrator could receive a percentage of sales or I could pay a flat fee. I chose the 50/50 and paying the narrator a flat fee. I kept the payment option to the narrator within my budget.



The directions they gave were excellent and easy to follow: Choosing a book description, expectations from male or female voice, age, accent, location, etc. There was even a section to guide the narrators on what you'd like from them. It was a very good exchange for comprehending and understanding each other's professional needs.

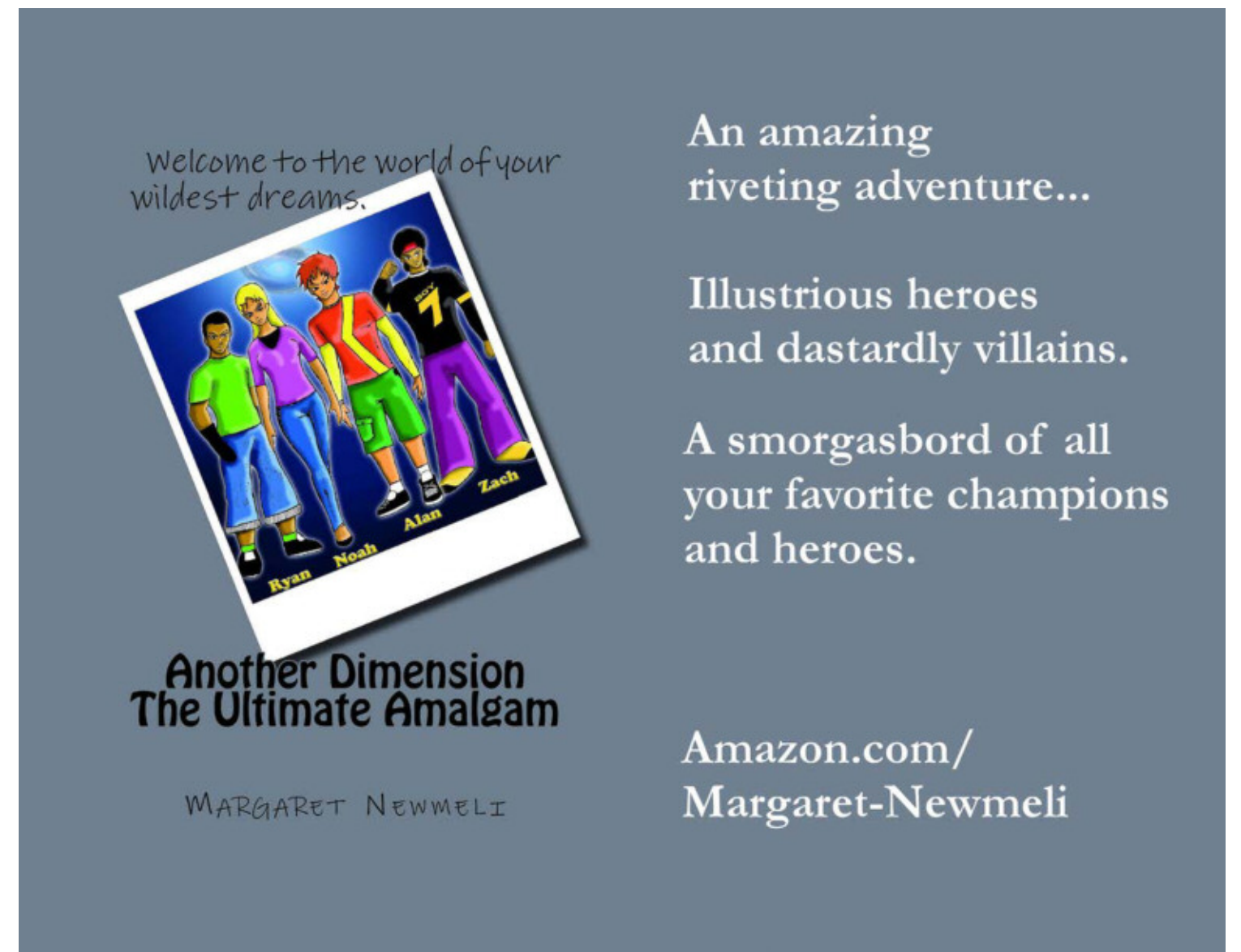
They pulled a search under the name I've used/chosen for the books I want. I chose *I Was Just a Radioman*. It's a biography based on the memoirs of a WWII, Pearl Harbor survivor, and decorated war veteran.

It only has 13,000 words and I felt it was a good start for my audio book endeavor.

I had to go back to the copy of the book. They needed to know the word count and I needed two or three pages to upload for the narrators to read for an audition.

That's correct. They audition for the author. I wasn't searching for a particular person, just a particular tone and voice. There was a choice to search for a particular person or listen to multiple samples. They did give that option.

I chose to have them audition for me. The biggest reason was because, with the description of the book, if the narrator finds the description interesting, he was going to want to nar-



rate it. He may be more inclined to enjoy what he was reading. If he enjoyed what he was reading then it'd be a win-win all around.

I'm not afraid to ask for help. I asked a few authors who've done audio books for guidance.

Once I decided whose voice I'd fallen in love with, I needed to move onward to the contract.

The worst part of listening to auditions was sketchy internet connection. We have a satellite company which has not, in any way shape or form, made our lives easier. It took forever to download anything, the audio auditions felt like they were taking longer than it would've to read the book.

I wanted to give up.

It just wasn't worth the twitching and irritation of waiting ten minutes for two or three mgs of audio.

The choices were difficult. I had received thirteen auditions in less than twenty-four hours. The gentlemen all had excellent voices, enunciation, inflection, tone, and obvious experience.

Everything I was looking and hoping for had been sent to me. I had other people listening to the narrations. It would've been nice if they had made it easy to choose, but, I'm glad it

wasn't. I'm grateful for the opportunity to hear them and appreciate them putting themselves out there for the audio book.

I listened with my eyes closed and chose three. Waiting a few hours, I decided on two of them and proceeded to go back and forth with both gentlemen. It was a very difficult decision.

After listening to both narrations several times each, my husband recommended that I flip a coin. Isn't his sense of humor wonderful?

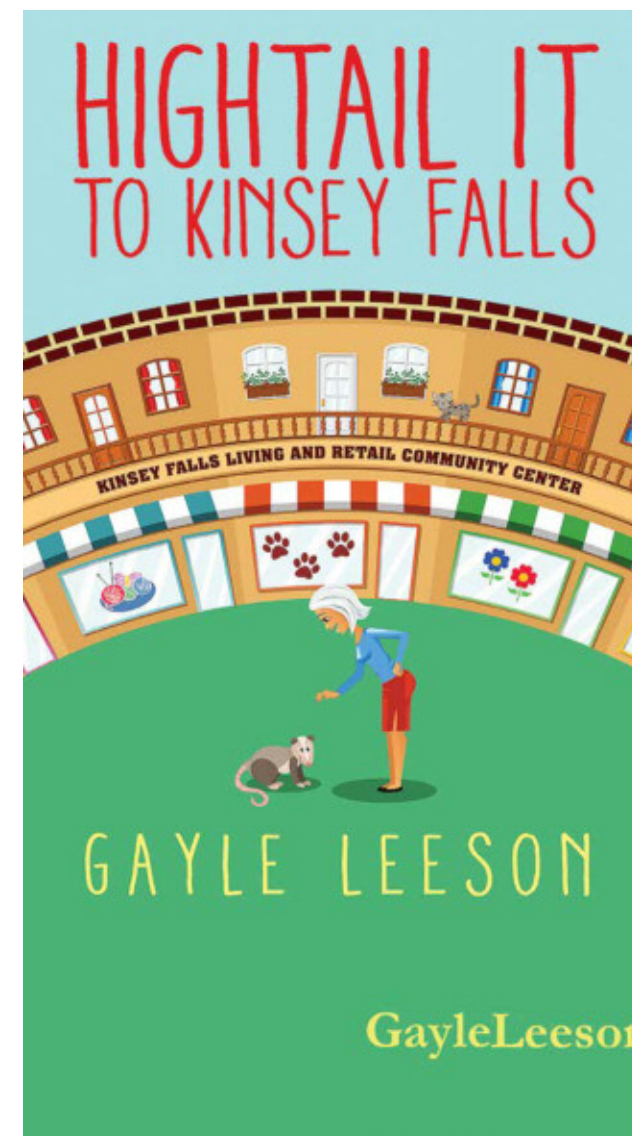
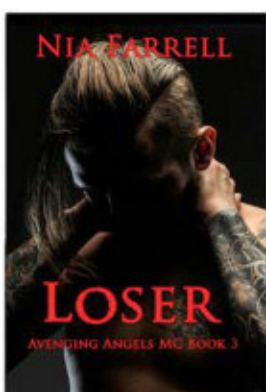
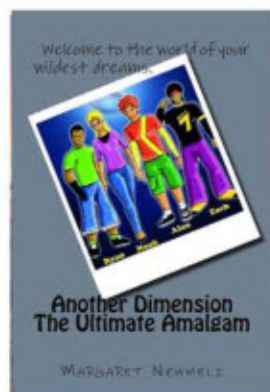
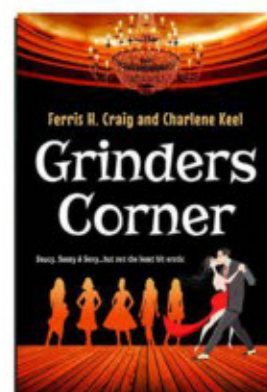
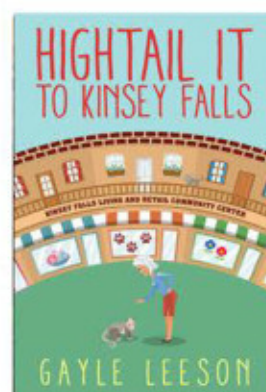
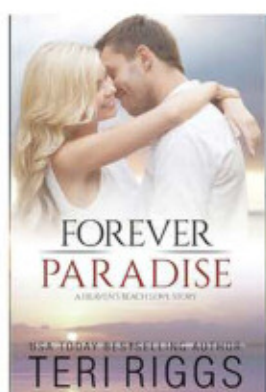
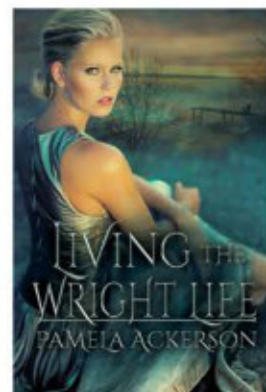
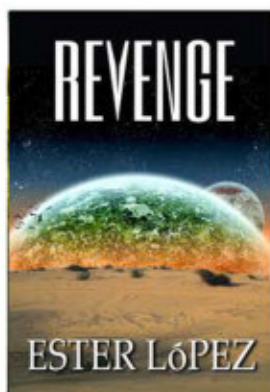
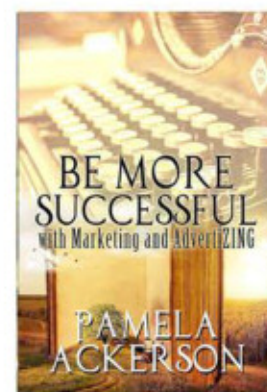
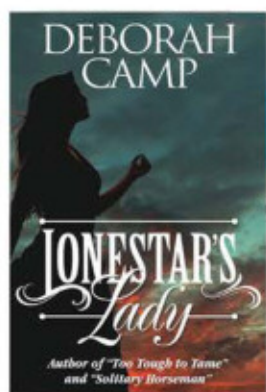
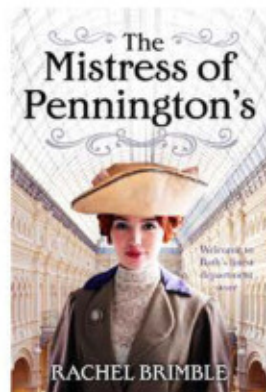
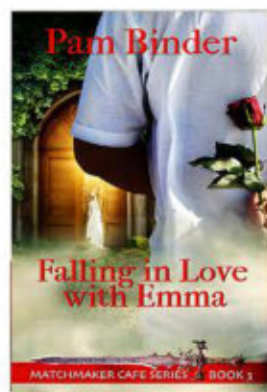
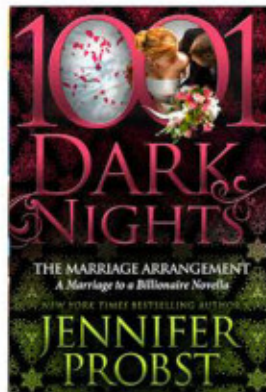
I kept wondering if I was over-thinking it.

The decision finally made, I contacted the narrator with the website's e-mail contact form, and we came up with an agreement on payment. You also need to ask how long it will take for them to complete the full manuscript. Please keep in mind that when they're doing the audio, it's a production and they have to correct some errors and redo portions so that it'll be the best audio book they can give.

Depending on how large the book is, depends on how long it will take. I requested a timeline, a total of three weeks from time of acceptance of the contract.

Signing back into the ACX website, I clicked on the make-offer to Jesse Dornan. ACX guides the author very well and makes it much easier to get the audio books started.

Look What You Can Find on AffairedeCoeur.com!



All work and no play
make Jade a dull girl.

Jade Burt can do without her grandmother's meddling in her love life. But when Millie finds an abandoned baby possum, it leads her to Caleb Young. Caleb would be perfect for Jade! When Jade meets Caleb, it's hard to argue with her grandmother's choice. Still, Jade is determined to push Caleb away, but his friendship with Millie concerns her. What if he's a slick con man trying to take advantage of a sweet old lady? Jade needs to figure Caleb out before he breaks her grandmother's heart...and Jade's too!

GayleLeeson.com @GayleTrent

If you make a mistake and hit any of the wrong links, or click on something you didn't want to click on, you have to start all over. There isn't room for any oopses.

Jesse accepted the offer and I proceeded to follow through with the ACX guides and directions. Almost all contact messaging was done through ACX. I filled out the audio information page and sent Jesse the PDF copy of *I Was Just a Radioman*.

This is just a quick suggestion for you. I sent messages to all the narrators who auditioned for me, thanking them for their time, and letting them know that I may consider them for my next project.

You, as an author, understand more than anyone else how it feels to not hear a response from a query. It's not time consuming. Create a simple and short thank you note. If you are going

to say anything more, be positive with your feedback. Just because they didn't fit your book right now, doesn't mean they won't be a good fit for a future audio book.

While waiting for Jesse to work his magic I went to the next step, creating the cover art for the audio book.

Audio book covers are square. I needed to own the image rights in order to be able to use it for my books. If you don't own the image rights, then either permission to use the image is needed or create/find an image that could be used for the audio cover.

I owned the image so there was no problem there.

They give all the information needed to create the cover.

I was extremely happy with Jesse. He sent his required fifteen-minute sample within a few hours. I sent back a couple of suggestions.

I forgot there were Narragansett Indian words in there and, of course, Newporters (Newport, Rhode Island) pronounce some words quite differently from the rest of the world. For example, Thames St. is not pronounced *Tems* Street. It's pronounced like *Thaymes* with a hard a.

The waiting wasn't too bad. Even though I knew it'd take a while, after about a week, I was looking for emails every other day. However, I didn't email or pester Jesse. I let him do it at his speed. Something I felt was necessary for him to give me his best.

He sent the full audio in sections and I listened to them twice. I wrote down the chapter, the time, and the correction. A couple of times I wrote what he said and what it was supposed to be.

Continued on page 19

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Spotlight Interview

Her Royal Hotness, Sabrina York, is the New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of hot, humorous stories for smart and sexy readers. With over forty-five titles, her books range from sweet & snarky to scorching romance.



plished you are, there is always work to do. It wasn't until I accepted that and seriously began to work at writing that I saw the results I wanted.

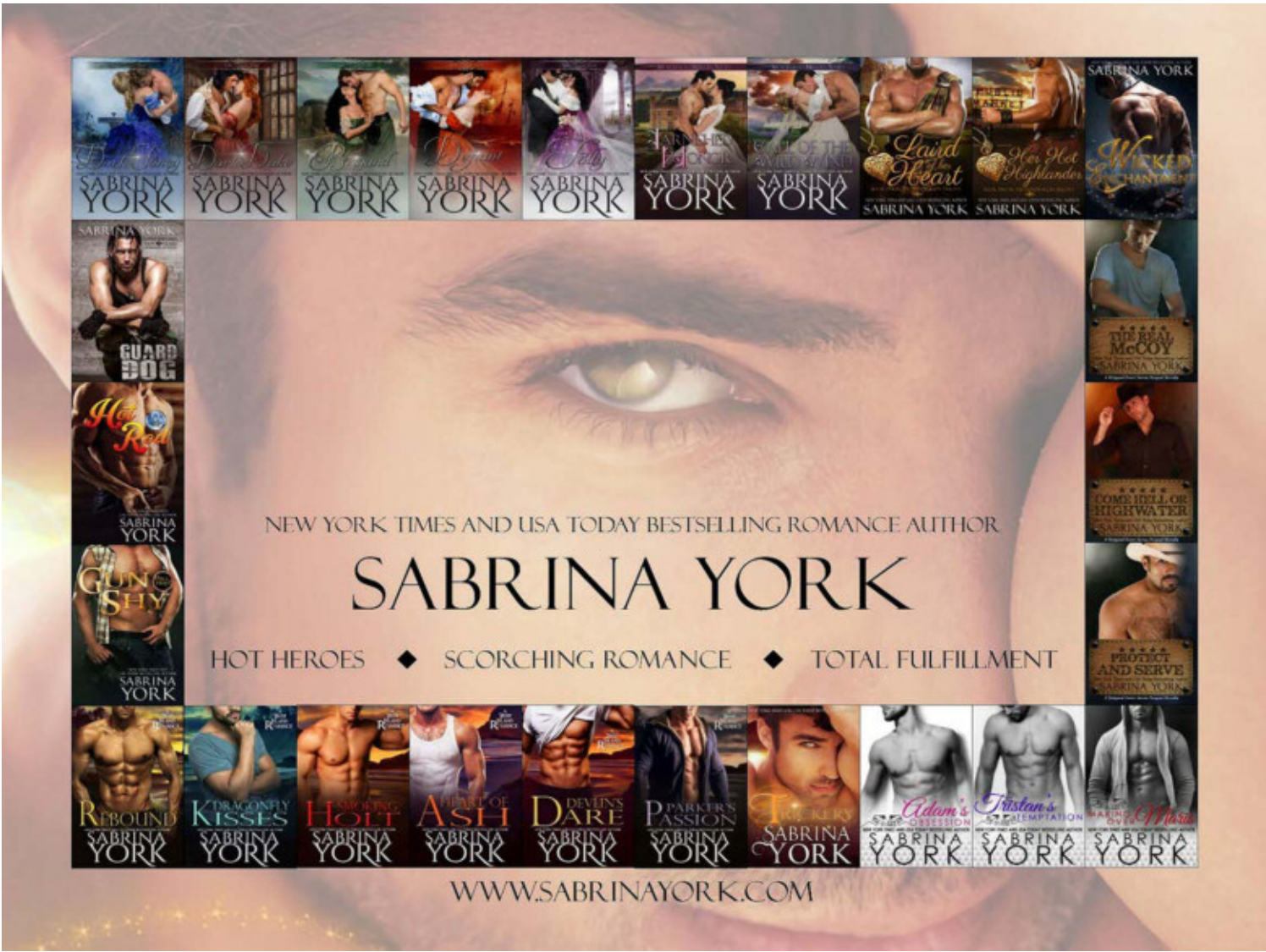
Another critical lesson is this: Not everyone will like your work, and that's OK. One of the hardest lessons to really



Her Hotness, Sabrina York

AdC: *When did you start writing?*
SY: Oh, holy moly! I've been writing as long as I can remember! As a kid, I drew picture books and told stories to my sisters. Then, in 6th grade, I won an essay contest. I know! Pretty cool. They gave me the award in an assembly in front of the whole school. I don't want to brag, but the prize was (get this!) a \$25 savings bond. I know. I was hooked!

AdC: *What have you learned about writing since you started?*
SY: This is tough to answer, because there have been so many lessons. I think the most important is to check my ego at the door. Since I was an award-winning writer since the 6th grade and all, I thought I was hot snot. There is, however, a difference between confidence and hubris. I thought, since I was obviously gifted, I didn't need to practice or enhance my craft. WRONG! No matter who you are, or how accom-



learn, but the one that will keep you sane if you embrace it.

AdC: *Tell us about your new book or series.*
SY: Right now, for the first time in 5 years, I am in between books! I am working on a proposal for a publisher so everything is on the back burner. But here's some info on my existing series:

“Noble Passions” Series - Hot Regency Humor - Follow the decadent exploits of friends and enemies as they find love and passion in the glittering world of the Regency—and its dark underbelly. All books are stand-alone titles. 5 titles

“Wired” Series - Super Sexy Contemporary - When brothers Tristan and Adam started a tech company with their college friend Jack, they made one firm, unbreakable rule: thou shalt not fish in the company pond. What a pity all three men find themselves entangled with women they cannot resist! 3 titles

“Stripped Down Cowboys” - Sexy Contemporary - Just south of Fort Worth, Texas, you'll find a little ranch where the hot, toned cowboys are ready and eager to take it all off and make your naughtiest fantasies come true. 6 titles

“Tryst Island” Series - Fall in love on Tryst Island. When a group of friends share a vacation house, wild hijinks, unexpected hook-ups and steamy encounters ensue. And true love. Did I mention they all find true love? 6 titles

“Untamed Highlanders” - Hot Scottish Highlanders - Bold, dominating and irresistible, these alpha Highlanders will not be denied. What they want, they take. What they desire, is theirs. No one and nothing stands in their way... until they meet their match. Their mate. The woman who can devastate them with a smile. Join the adventure as three lovely lasses take up the challenge to tame these hot, hard, wild Scots. Whatever it takes. Passion has never burned so bright. 5 titles

AdC: *What is your idea of a perfect writing day?*
SY: A perfect writing day to me is a day where I write. That may seem a little obvious, but it's more complicated than it sounds. There is always something else to do, espe-

continued on the next page



cially when you self-publish, like I do. Even though I have contracts with multiple New York publishers, I love the freedom of self-publishing, but it's like running your own business on top of just creating. Discipline is the key. Too bad I don't have a lot of it!

AdC: *How/where do you get your plot ideas?*

SY: I get ideas all the time. More than I can develop into stories, unfortunately! So, I keep a series of notebooks with the thoughts I have. It's fun to go through them when I am stuck!

AdC: *What is the most difficult thing about creating and developing characters?*

SY: The hardest thing is when I have a book all plotted out (I do that before I begin writing!) and then the characters want to change something. I'm like, REALLY? Why didn't you tell me while I was plotting? But that's the way they are sometimes. And you gotta go with them, or they will fight you. On the plus side, strong characters make more interesting books, don't you think?

AdC: *What is your favorite thing about being an author?*

SY: I absolutely LOVE the fact that there is someone out there reading and enjoying my work. There's nothing

better!

AdC: *How many books do you currently have out on the market and what genres do they fall into?*

SY: I have about forty-five romances ranging from steamy to rather sweet (mostly steamy!). They all have some element of humor in them. I write contemporary, historical and a little fantasy. Believe it or not, I also have a sci-fi space opera under another pen name, too!

AdC: *Will you be attending any book signings or conventions?*

SY: I will be at the Emerald City Passport to Romance in October. Anyone in the Seattle area is welcome to attend. This is not a book fair (there will be nothing for sale). It's just a party for readers with freebies and giveaways. I am also planning to be at the 2019 Book Lovers Con in New Orleans!

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

SY: Please, keep working on your craft! I was rejected hundreds of times—and ready to quit—when I sold my first book. Remember what I said above. Not everyone will like your work, but when you find someone who does, it's magical!

Sabrina York's contact information:

Visit her webpage at www.sabrinayork.com to check out her books, excerpts and contests.

Newsletter and free book: <http://sabrinayork.com/gift/>

Amazon Author Page: <http://www.amazon.com/author/sabrinayork>

Facebook Author Page <https://www.facebook.com/SabrinaYorkBooks>

Twitter @sabrina_york https://twitter.com/sabrina_york

Facebook VIP Chat Room: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/SabrinaYorkChatAndContests/>



Farewell, RT!



I wouldn't describe the relationship between *Affaire de Coeur* (AdC) and *Romantic Times* (RT) as antagonistic. I wouldn't call it friendly, either. I have never met Katherine Falk, founder of *Romantic Times*; Barbara Keenan did, but that was before my time with AdC. According to Barbara, the two magazines started at about the same time in

the mid 1970's which coincided with the formation of the Romance Writers of America, spearheaded by Vivian Stephens. The demand for a tabloid that focused on everything romance was great and big enough to support both magazines.

RT stationed itself in New York (New Jersey) while Barbara and her partner Beth established AdC on the West Coast in California. There was a distinct advantage to being in New York. Most of the publishers were there, making it easier for RT to establish more of a personal relationship with them. That was invaluable when it came to getting galleys for review. It also gave them access to the all-important advertisers. Consequently, AdC never had the number of reviews as RT. AdC was more like the Little Engine That Could, struggling for survival. With the advent of the new romance genre,

readers couldn't wait to see what books were coming out soon, which books reviewers deemed good or bad. The two magazines served that need with each monthly issue which contained numerous reviews of books coming out, interviews with authors, and articles pertaining to the romance genre.

It was not long before some readers established the practice of waiting until they read the reviews in RT and AdC before purchasing their books for the month. Intentionally or unintentionally, this gave both magazines power. Authors recognized how influential the magazines could be and eagerly sought out any publicity they could: interviews, book signings, photo ops and, most importantly, ads. It was often said that RT could and did make or break an author's career. Some even said authors were afraid of RT's influence and often bought ads with them because of

Continued on page 29



CENTRAL FLORIDA AUTHOR & BOOK EXPO

Free Admission

Saturday, December 8, 2018

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m

90+ Authors in Attendance

Eisenhower Recreation Center

3560 Buena Vista Blvd

The Villages, FL

Debra Parmley Presents: The Cover Model's Corner featuring Billy Freda

Recently I caught up with Billy Freda for a Cover Model Corner interview and I'm excited to introduce him to our readers today.

DP: Billy, let's start off with your start as a cover model. What was the first cover you appeared on and how did this come about?
BF: The first cover I was on was 15 years ago. I was only 18 when I did the cover (wink, wink). It came about because I was one of the winners of the national cover model competition AKA Mr. Romance.



DP: You started young! And Mr. Romance! How exciting! I'll bet your career has taken you to exciting places. If you could do a photo shoot anywhere in the world for a cover, where would you most want to go? What sort of shoot would it be?
BF: I've never been to the Greek Islands, so I'd like to do a shoot there.

As for the type of shoot, it would include LOTS of female Greek models .

DP: Oh, that would be lovely. I was in Greece just for a short time and it is like no other place on earth. The setting, the music, the food and the people are wonderful. I hope you get that cover shoot! Now I know you've been super busy. Beyond romance novel cover shots, what are the other projects or jobs that keep you busy?
BF: Well, even though I've been on almost 250 book covers, and 5 magazines, this is actually a very small aspect of my career. I do comedy; I'm a TV host, film and TV actor, print & commercial, as well as voice over work and audio books. I even have two producer credits and I'm beginning writing my first screenplay starting next month.

DP: Wow. I'm thinking you're more than busy! What's one question you wish an interviewer would ask you?
BF: Any question that sets up a good joke. Lol
DP: Now I'm wishing I was funnier. Lol If you wrote a book, what would it be about?
BF: Given that I'm under NDA for my screenplay, I can't answer that, sorry.

DP: Ooh, mysterious. We'll just have to wait until your screenplay hits the screen. This question is almost always asked in interviews because your fitness level is beyond the average persons. What is your exercise routine and what sort of nutrition plan do you follow to achieve and maintain your level of fitness?
BF: I average 4-5 days a week. (4.3 to be exact, lol) It includes 3



weight training days and 1-2 cardio days per week. I usually play basketball or some other high intensity sport for my cardio. Nutrition-wise, LOTS of protein and low in fat intake.

DP: If you could share three simple fitness tips the average romance reader could do every day to stay healthy, what would they be?
BF: 1) Ounces are lost at the gym, pounds are lost at the table; diet is the most important thing.
2) Workout or do something active every day.
3) Try not to eat late in the evening.

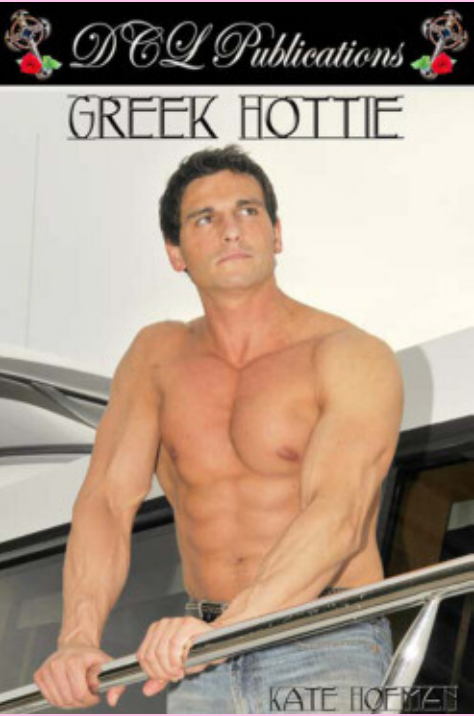
DP: Such great advice to remember. Thank you! Now, it's your birthday dinner and the calories don't count. What's on the menu and what are you drinking?
BF: Sushi, sushi, & sushi! I'm drinking a New Zealand Sav Blanc.

DP: Describe the perfect romantic evening.
BF: As a romance cover model,



I've answered this so many times, that I swore once before I'm never answering this AGAIN! And I'm not.

DP: Lol, I'll bet you have! You know if I didn't ask, readers would ask why I didn't! Lol
Please share one unusual fact about you or your life:
BF: I have an engineering degree from Rutgers University!



“In loving memory of author
Kate Hofman”

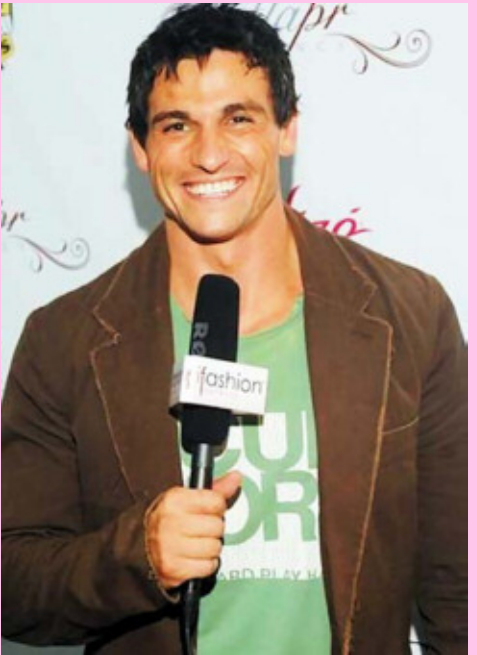
DP: Impressive! Now Eight Quickie questions:
DP: Watching the sunrise or watching the sunset and stars?
BF: Sunset and the stars.

DP: The beach or the mountains?
BF: The beach.

DP: Primitive camping or luxury hotel?
BF: Luxury hotel.

DP: Snow skiing or water skiing?
BF: Water skiing.

DP: Favorite movie:
BF: That's like trying to pick a favorite child!



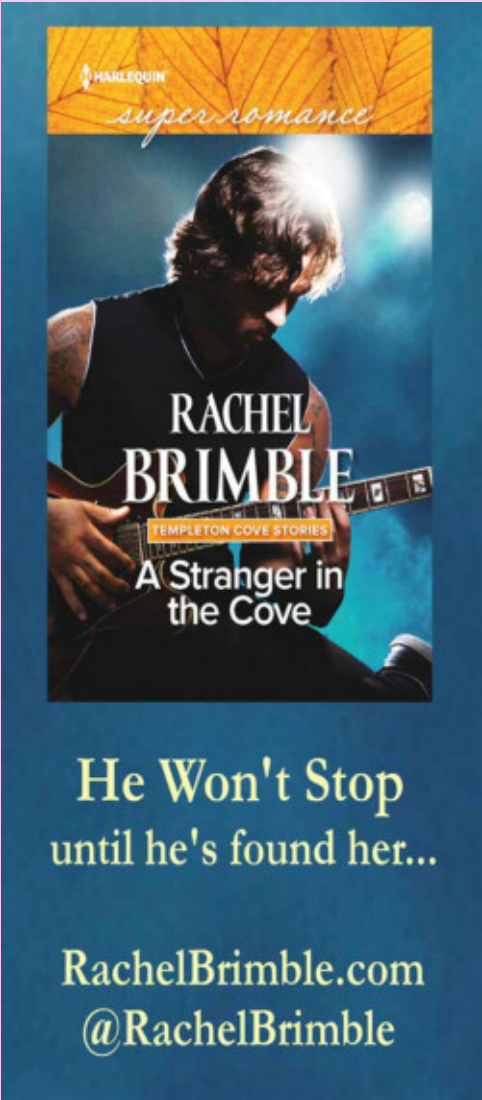
DP: Best book you ever read:
BF: My Time in Heaven

DP: Fav. Sport to play:
BF: Basketball

DP: Fav. Sport to watch:
BF: Baseball

Billy, thank you for visiting with me today. It's been fun getting to know you. Before we say goodbye, how

can fans stay up to date on your latest news?
Website: billfreda.com (currently under reconstruction)
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/billy.freda.3>
IMDB: http://www.imdb.com/name/nm4792489/?ref_=nv_sr_1



AdC L♥VES

Conferences

Highlighting...The Space Coast Booklovers Conference

A wonderful weekend chock full of fun, games, prizes, and seventy-plus authors all getting together in sunny Florida. The multi-genre book event was held May 31st to June 3rd. There was no entrance fee to attend the book signing event. Next year, keep your eyes open. They'll be holding the event from June 27th to June 30th, 2019.



Meet and Greet--Authors get to know each other



Shandi Boyes and husband Chris



Heather Hildenbrand



Susan Hayes



Teri Dees Edney



Grace Miller

Let us know when you plan your conference. We will

- * Mention it in the *Affaire de Coeur* Newsletter for free
- * Invite us. We may be able to come and convey your conference
- * We will feature your conference the issue following

Rocket City

Rocket City Author Event was held July 21st in Huntsville, Alabama. With over fifty multi-genre authors, there was more than enough choices to go around. This was a first time event held by Shelby Reeves. Everyone had fun! Here's to looking forward to more events hosted by Shelby!



Host, Author Shelby Reeves



JJ Nite and Stephanie Taylor



Kristen Strassel



Nancee Cain and Marie Savage

Author Event



Renee Regent



Sheri Lynn



Kimbra Swain



Author Group Photo

Spotlight Interview

USA Today Bestselling Author Kate Angell lives in beautiful Naples on the Gulf of Mexico, Florida. She loves warm weather, the beach and boating. She's also an animal lover, avid reader, and sports fan. Bookstores are her second home. She takes coffee breaks at Starbucks, and adds a jumbo red velvet cupcake to her order. She isn't much of a cook, but has take-out and delivery deli services programmed on her iPhone.

AdC: *When did you start writing?*

K.A.: From as early as I can remember. I've always written 'something'—a poem or short story. When I was young, I loved to illustrate too. I've been seriously writing for thirty years.

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

K.A.: Be patient and pace yourself. Find time to write each day. Make it a priority.

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

K.A.: I'm continuing my contemporary sports romances featuring the Richmond Rogues. Beach, boardwalk, baseball, and romance. *No Kissing Under the Boardwalk* features Zane Cates, the fifth sibling in the Cates family. He comes to the story having retired from the Air Force and having been a hurricane hunter. It's a second chance at love book, as he tries to win back his high school sweetheart Tori Rollins.

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



K.A.: I love mornings. I'm an early riser. Coffee and a Danish at my desk, and I'm ready to go. I write from seven a.m. to noon, with hourly breaks, taking the dogs to the yard. The afternoon, I edit what I've written earlier. Editing can take as long as initial writing.

AdC: *How/where do you get your plot ideas?*

K.A.: From life in general. I'll see or read something, and an off-shoot plot develops in my mind. I'm always thinking 'what if'.

AdC: *What is the most difficult thing about creating and developing characters?*

K.A.: Keeping them 'real'. No author wants cookie cutter characters. Same old. I try to bring my hero/heroine to life, so readers identify with them.

AdC: *What is your favorite thing about being an author?*

K.A.: Being creative. I love creating a fictitious town and characters. It's a great escape!

AdC: *How many books do you currently have out on the market and what genres do they fall into?*

K.A.: I've written 12 single titles and participated in 10 anthologies. All contemporary.

AdC: *Will you be attending any book signings or conventions?*

K.A.: No signings at this time.

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

K.A.: Never stop believing in yourself. Writing a book is hard work.



Dedication is key.

Kate Angell's contact information:

Personal web page www.kate-angell.com

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/authorkateangell>

[Read Kate's Sneak Peek, an excerpt from her book *No Kissing Under the Boardwalk*, part of "The Barefoot William" series., on the next page!](#)

Audio Books, continued

I had my husband listen. He caught something I didn't. Good thing I had another set of ears. I highly recommend having someone else listen, too.

Jesse sent the corrections and, quicker than I expected, he sent the newer version back to me. I listened to it and also had another person listen, just in case I missed something again.

No problems.

Off I went to the website to accept the audio. I wasn't sure how to make payment. Not to worry, they had a link I could click on and I attempted to go there for the information. The link didn't work. So, a bit of searching was needed.

A few minutes later, I still hadn't found information on how to pay the man.

I clicked on the confirm payment, and it said it was sent. I was hoping it would send me to a payment page.

It did not.

It said payment confirmed. I wasn't sent to a page to make a payment.

Face-palm. Now what? Where will it go? How is he going to get paid? I wasn't sure what I was doing. This was the very first snag I had come across so far, and I didn't know why the link wasn't working.

In the meantime, I received an email from ACX stating that they received my confirmation of approval.

continued in the next issue



Sneak Peek

Barefoot William Beach, Fall 1999

“Oswald! That bikini top better have come from the lost and found at the lifeguard station.”

Zane Cates’s words reached Tori Rollins across a wide expanse of sugar sand. His tone was stern, concerned, and directed toward a Dalmatian pup. She cringed. Scrunched her nose. She followed astrology. Mercury was in retrograde. She blamed life’s screw- ups, impacts, and aftershocks on the planet. Mercury could be a prankster. She’d been puppy- pranked.

A playful Oswald had tugged and stolen her polka-dot swimsuit top. She presently lay face-down on a beach towel on the smooth expanse of white sand. It was October, and the snowbirds had yet to flock south. She’d located a secluded spot and untied her top, not wanting tan lines. She hadn’t planned on falling asleep, but she had. Attending high school, then working the night shift at Zinotti’s Pizza, ate up her time, exhausting her. Saturday afternoon, and the warmth of the sun soothed. Had lulled her. One unexpected pull on her top from Ozzie, and it slid beneath her breasts before she could grab it. Gone.

Escaping puppy paws kicked sand on her Hawaiian Tropic–oiled arm. The roly-poly Dalmatian scampered off, with her top in tow. Tripping over the white on black polka-dot cups. Tumbling forward, nose in the sand, quickly recovering, then picking up speed.

Oswald. Zane’s sneaky pup. Spotted chaos. Notorious for his antics. Cute and conniving, Oz stole whatever he could wrap his little mouth around. Zane had yet to break him of the habit. Beachgoers lost Frisbees, flip-flops, paperback books, water bottles, whistles, and sunglasses to the scamp. Items Zane then apologetically returned to the owners. The Dalmatian had now gotten the best

of Tori. Great, just great.

She desperately needed to cover herself. She hadn’t worn a T-shirt over her bikini top. So, she grabbed a pair of cutoff shorts, white-seamed and fringed. She pressed them to her chest. Rolling onto her hip, she sat up. Wishing she’d come to the beach better prepared, she called after the pup, “Not funny, Ozzie. Stop!”

There was no stopping Oswald. The Dalmatian’s tail wagged as he scooted around the corner of the boardwalk. Disappearing. She sucked air. Set her jaw. Waited for Zane to appear. He did within seconds.

Zane Cates was a presence unto himself.

His reputation preceded him. A good-looking guy, clean-cut, smart, athletic, friendly, and outgoing. Whereas she was aloof. Always kept to herself. It was a protective measure, taken to hide the fact that she was an outsider. Always had been. Her parents had difficultly holding jobs, which forced the family to relocate each year. She’d abandoned friendships with every move. There’d be no future attachments in the resort town. She did alone just fine.

He walked toward her now. He was careful where he stepped. Rambunctious Oz ran circles around his feet, nipping at his ankles. She took him in. A solid six-foot, broad-shouldered, bared-chest, wearing black board shorts. He was mature for eighteen. Confident. He recognized his place in life. The Cates name was well-known. His ancestry, deep-rooted. His great-great-great grandfather had founded Barefoot William. Zane had three brothers and one sister. All equally popular.

He soon reached her. His toes touched the frayed, faded edges of her beach towel. He had big feet. He towered over her. Casting shade. He twirled one strap of her bikini top around his finger. “This belong to you?” he asked, knowing the answer.

“See anyone else topless?” Her tone was dry.

He glanced over her shoulder. “Only you. Dogs aren’t allowed on the boardwalk and beach. We were coming from the dog park when Ollie got rowdy and slipped his collar. He ran to you,

scored your top.” His sincerity was soon lost to his smile, which was broad and teasing. “Sorry, Tori.”

He knew her name. Surprising. They hadn’t been introduced. She eyed her bikini top. Held out her hand. “Mine. Give.”

“Yours in a sec.” He gazed at her, his dark eyes probing. “You’re new in town.”

Small talk? He had to be kidding. She responded, if only to get her top back. “I’ve been here six weeks.” Since the start of the school year.

He nodded. “Yeah, I’ve seen you around. You’re in my Honors English and World History classes.”

He’d noticed her. Unexpected. She’d given him the discreet side-eye. Not something she’d admit. Girls in the senior class were hot for him. He got a lot of attention. Her appreciation would mean little.

She wiggled her fingers. “My top.” He held back still. For whatever reason, he was prolonging her unease, taking advantage of her situation. “So, who’s Tori Rollins?”

She was far from special. She heaved a sigh. “What you see is what you get.”

He lowered his gaze to her chest. Gave her a hot look. “You’re more than a nip slip,” he teased.

A *nip slip*. She startled. Pale, hard-tipped, her right nipple peeked at him through the denim fringe. She didn’t embarrass easily. She hated the heat in her cheeks now. She quickly adjusted her cutoffs. Then eyed his board shorts. Stared at his groin. A substantial bulge. She was a virgin, but big was big. Her nipple turned him on.

“I like what I saw.” No shame whatsoever from Zane. Full smile and single dimple. He shook out his legs. Shifted his stance. Actually laughed at himself, deep and masculine. “Some things are harder to hide than others.”

Her throat had gone dry. Her palms were now sweaty. “My top,” she said insistently. More a demand than a request.

He released it. She caught it. “Privacy?” she asked. He didn’t move.



Fun in the water

Louise B. Snead

Across

- 2. One of these is worn on each foot to glide on the water.
- 4. Places where kids go to engage in multiple water activities including slides.
- 5. One person fits in this special boat and maneuvers with paddles/blades.
- 8. Water __ , a popular pool sport.
- 12. Activity that involves jumping off a springboard or platform.
- 13. Some water activities require this type of suit.
- 15. Played in a pool, it has two point shots.
- 18. Two types of swimming and open water and this one.
- 19. “Deadliest Catch” is a TV program that shows the dangers when catching this sea food.
- 21. Beach boys made it famous, but high waves are required for this activity.
- 24. Gergrute Ederle was the first to swim the 21 miles from Dover to France known as the ____ channel.
- 25. An extreme sport that combines a number of sports, uses a wind instrument (like the ones kids use), and powers across the water.
- 28. Native Americans got about by ____ .
- 29. An inflatable piece of equipment is used to navigate a disagreeable body of water.
- 30. This Great Lake is mostly in Canada.
- 32. This Great Lake is viewed from Chicago.
- 33. A sport that requires oars.
- 35. Most common swimming stroke.
- 36. Activity where a person is towed behind a boat while holding a parachute.
- 37. The saline lake in Utah.

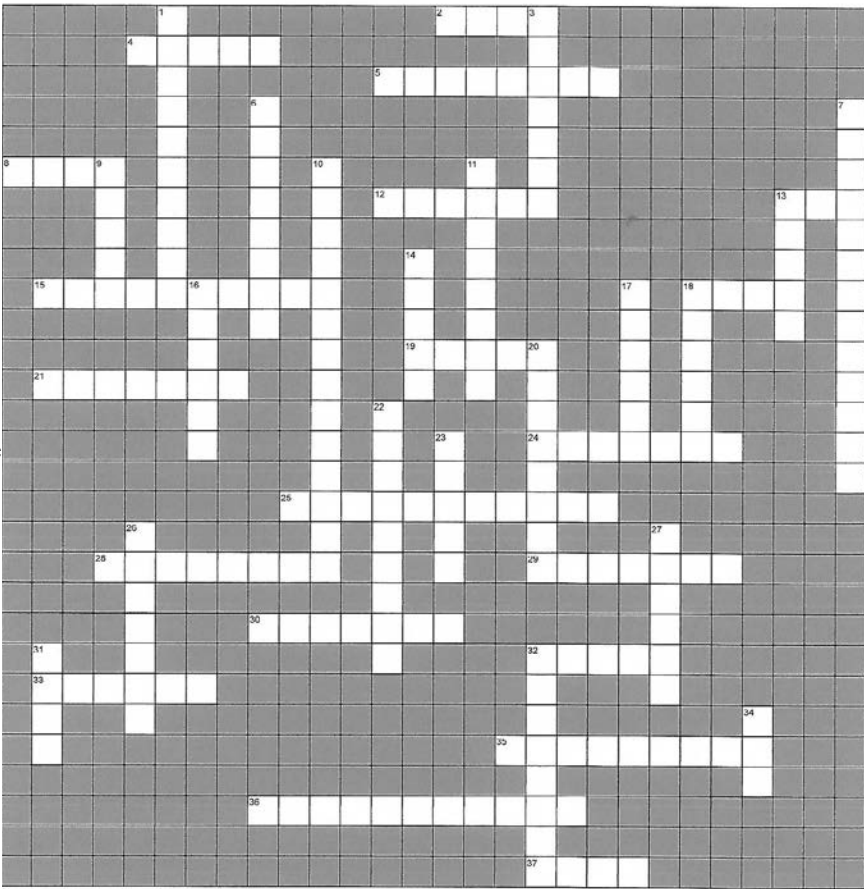
Down

- 1. Swimming technique where one’s face is toward the sky.
- 3. This activity requires a boat with cloth that catches the wind.
- 6. This Jacques was known for deep-sea diving.
- 7. Lake in Louisiana.
- 9. These killer mammals migrate from the North and go down to Mexico.
- 10. The participant in this activity stands, kneels, or lies on a flat instrument while using their arms to move.

- 11. This Great Lake has a state with the same name.
- 13. Watching involves looking for big water mammals.
- 14. These spheres are usually plastic and the largest of these toys.
- 16. Men’s swimming attire.
- 17. First African-American woman to win Olympic gold in swimming.
- 18. All-time winner for swimming gold.
- 20. The largest Great Lake.
- 22. A small board with shoe-like bindings that is used to go over the surface of a body of water.
- 23. Diving under water with special equipment.
- 26. The peaceful ocean.
- 27. What a sexy girl wears on the beach.(not nothing)
- 31. This lake goes to Niagra Falls.
- 32. Kids who can’t afford some sports play in fire ____.
- 34. Vehicles that ride on the water.

Fun in the water

Louise B. Snead





Adonis in Athens

Kat Mizera

Self-Published

E-book

B073YD66KD

★★★★

“We only have one life to live—why not have as many adventures as possible?”

Paige and Apollo have a magical weekend in Las Vegas; one that proves that love at first sight may just exist. Fast forward three years later, and Paige is determined to not settle for boring. She wants one last chance to have an adventure, so she flies to Greece to find Apollo.

The chemistry between them has not lessened over time, and as each day passes, Paige falls more and more in love with Apollo, but is she willing to give up her life, family and career in Las Vegas to move to Greece and experience the adventure of a lifetime?

Adonis in Athens by Kat Mizera is a fairy tale romance that would make the perfect beach or poolside read! Highly recommend!

Sharing what I love,
Veronica

Broken Promise (Sons of Broad -Book 3)

Tara Thomas

St. Martin’s Press

Mass Market

978-1250137982

★★★★

The first time Alyssa Adams saw Kipling Benedict she arrested him. So when he asks Alyssa to dance at his brother’s vow renewal ceremony, it’s a little awkward. not to mention the fact that the Benedict family has ties to several cases that she’s investigating. And yet somehow Alyssa finds herself in Kipling’s arms. And she loves it.

Meanwhile across the street, a young girl hides in the shadows watching the reception. Jade is the groom’s recently discovered half-sister. While she stands there longing for a connection she’s scared to reach for, Jade is kidnapped.

Kipling receives a phone call telling him that if he wants to see Jade alive, he’ll follow the instructions that will be relayed shortly. He calls Alyssa. She understands what he’s feeling. When Alyssa was fifteen, her sister Allison disappeared. She was found a week later. Her throat had been cut.

Evidence is beginning to indicate that the same person who killed Allison has kidnapped Jade. Alyssa and

Contemporaries

Kipling team up to rescue Jade and apprehend the kidnapper. Soon they’re being followed. While trying to stay one step ahead of the men with guns, they fall in love.

This is a continuation of a series. Reading the previous stories is imperative. It’s a good book. Bonus: the print version contains the third novella in this series.

Sheila Griffin

Cajun Persuasion

Sandra Hill

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062566539

★★★

Fleur Gaudet survived years of prostitution at the hands of human traffickers. Once she escaped that life, she devoted herself to the Church and the unique mission of the Sisters of Magdalene and the Street Apostles. Their intention is to save those trafficked girls who slip through the cracks. It is on one of these missions that she meets Aaron LeDeux.

Aaron is a pilot who is unwittingly thrown into these rescue missions. He is attracted to Fleur immediately, but her past has caused psychological wounds that leave her resistant to any kind of physical relationship. He has quite a job ahead of him to win her over.

Sandra Hill’s latest combines the light humor of her Cajun stories with the very real horror of human trafficking.

Fans of this series will find much to enjoy here.

Heather Nordahl Files

Deep Cover (Love Over Duty)

Scarlett Cole

St. Martin’s Press

Mass Market

978-1250128485

★★★★

FBI Agent Amy Murray was one of the best at what she did. And, at the moment, she was investigating several missing women. But that didn’t stop her from having to deal with sexual harassment on her job by her superior. When she refused to let it continue and turned him in, it went bad for her. She was vindicated at the trial, but for the six months that the trial took and the six months afterwards, she had to endure the looks, the nudges, the whispering of her fellow

agents when she passed by. So, she transferred to the San Diego office to continue her work without the stigma of being “that” woman.

Ex-Navy SEAL Cabe Moss was proud of Eagle Securities, the extremely efficient security business that he and his childhood friends, also ex-Navy SEALs, had started when they got out of the service. They were presently working on a money laundering case in conjunction with the FBI, ATF and a RICO Task Force of the San Diego Police Department. He had really just started to be his old self again, after losing his fiancée in Afghanistan, and he welcomed the work. Then, he met Agent Murray and all those feeling that he thought he had buried with the loss of Jess, came rushing back to the surface. But Cabe was a professional and he could not and would not let his feelings interfere with the job they had to do and Amy definitely refused to act on her feelings for fear of allegations. Can they overcome their obstacles to get the job done while not losing their feelings for each other?

Deep Cover is an adventure from the first page to the end. Cabe is a wounded hero dealing with the loss of his fiancée and Amy is wounded from having to deal with unfair allegations at her previous job location. Add into that a money laundering racket with possibly trafficked women thrown in the mix and you will be fascinated from start to finish. The writing is solid, the romance very real and the sex is hot. A very good read.

Lani Roberts

Fighter (DS Fight Club 0.5)

Josie Kerr

Hot Words and Cold Coffee, LLC

E-book

B01LE3Y8J0

★★★★ 1 / 2

“I don’t know what I’d do without you, Colin.”

I know exactly what you would do...you’d survive... you’d thrive and live the best life that you could. But know this...I’m here, and I’ll always be here, and I love you, Bailey. Know that. Believe that.”

Josie Kerr is a new author to me, and when I won a copy of this story, I was unsure what to expect. I’ve read other MMA stories and enjoyed them. So, I was really looking forward to diving into the pages of this one.

Wow! This is not your typical MMA fight club romance! Bailey’s and Colin’s heartfelt journey towards their HEA had this reader either reaching for Kleenex, fanning (‘cause, dang, that Colin is fine) or wanting to throw throat punches at certain individuals who were getting in the way of their happiness!

Fighter is a sweet contemporary sports romance with just enough heat and a swoon worthy ending! Highly recommend!
Sharing what I love,
Veronica

Grinder’s Corner

Ferris H. Craig & Charlene Keel

Red Sky Presents

E-book
B0725ZQ243
★★★★★



“If someone had told me I’d meet a charming guy, fall wildly in love with him and get my heart broken—in that order—all in a period of 6 months, and that this all-consuming love affair would take place in and around the environs of a dance hall, I would have thought they were putting me on. But that’s exactly what happened.”
Once upon a time there was a newly-divorced girl who answered an ad to be a dance hall girl. Given the nickname of Uptown, she’s befriended by two others who go by Mouse and Voluptua. These young women, known as The Terrible Trio, are doing what needs to be done to pay the bills. Somewhere along the way, Uptown finds love in the most unlikely of places.
Grinder’s Corner is a peek into the not-so-glamorous life of being a dance hall girl in the 60’s. Uptown’s story is full of wit, snark, cynicism, and, as with all other aspects of life, heartbreak.

Grinder is a wonderfully written story that this reader highly recommends! I honestly can’t remember when I laughed so hard while reading a book! So what are you waiting for? Go snag your copy and put on your red shoes and dance like nobody or maybe everybody (depending on your kink) is watching!
Sharing what I love,
Veronica

H.A.L.O. Undone: A Broken H.A.L.O. Novel
Jillian Neal

Realm Press

E-book
B07ByWBGZV
★★★★★



“I’d trade every possession I owned in this world to be able to swear to her that I’d figure out some way for us to be together forever.”
When a charity bachelor auction goes wrong, what’s a girl and her man to do? Why spend the week in Sin City

Contemporaries

being naughty and cracking a case of the Golden Girls Gone Wild, of course!
Hannah has had it with Griff keeping her at a distance out of fear of losing his best friend which happens to be her big brother. So she enlists help from one of Griff’s team and sets up a week in Vegas. She’s about to have her way with her smexxy Green Beret and make him see that love can conquer all. But what Hannah doesn’t know is Griff has been holding onto a secret about her father, the General, which could destroy all they hold dear.
Between the lies told, secrets kept, and a case of geriatric grannies stealing more than a kiss, Hannah and Griff have their work cut out for them. Will our broken hero finally get his HEA, or will the past come back to snatch it all away?
I loved this story so much, and wish I could rate it higher than 5 Stars! Griff has made it to my list of book boyfriends! Highly recommend this page-turning smexxy romance that will keep you up past your bedtime!!
Sharing what I love,
Veronica

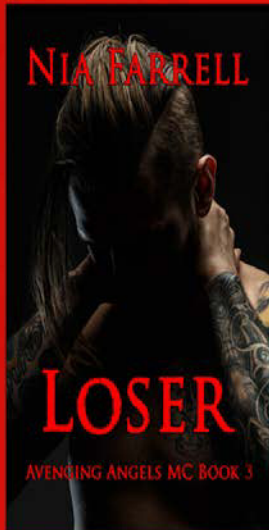
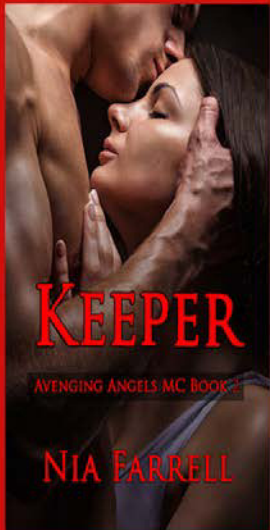
Her Fear
Shelley Shepard Gray
Avon Inspire
Trade Paperback
978-0062469212
★★★★★

Sadie Detweiler got pregnant out of wedlock, and the father of her child refuses to admit that he’s the father. Disgraced, Sadie is packed up and sent to the Amish community of Hart County, Kentucky, where she has family. She is Amish, too, but has never known the freedom she feels in her new home. However, that does not mean that she is happy and comfortable there.
When Amish EMT Noah Freeman comes to a home to attend to an ill woman, he can’t take his eyes off of Sadie. But how can he get close to her when her relatives are so secretive? They also resent and distrust him because the ill woman died. Sadie is more intrigued by him than distrustful, but she is positive that he will shun her once he learns of her pregnancy.
This inspirational Amish tale is part of a series, but it ably stands alone. Readers will be enchanted by both Sadie and Noah. The mystery subplot adds a pinch of danger to the story, and some scenes are gripping and stunning. Fans of this genre should not miss this!
Heather Nordahl Files

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN MC MEETS BDSM EROTIC ROMANCE?

AVENGING ANGELS MC

A SMOKING HOT NEW SERIES FROM AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR NIA FARRELL



Lock ‘N’ Load (Federal K-9 #1)

Tee O’Fallon

Entangled Publishing, LLC (Amara)

E-book
1640635742
★★★★★



“Sometimes life has a way of pointing us in the direction we were always meant to go, even if it wasn’t where we thought we’d wind up.”
Question: What do you get when you put a brainy CIA analyst together with a smexxy CIA K9 officer?
Answer: A slow simmering romance that escalates to a heart racing finish!
Lock ‘N’ Load is a great beginning to a series that’s full of mystery and intrigue as well as a sweet and sexy romance between Trista and Matt. I’d recommend to lovers of crime fiction and romantic suspense.
Sharing what I love,
Veronica



Historical Romance Reviews

The Duke with the Dragon Tattoo (Victorian Rebels #6)

Kerrigan Bryne

St. Martin’s Press

Mass Market

978-1250122562

★★★★★



Crippled as a child through an act of violence, Lorelei hasn’t lost the ability to love and care for those weaker than herself. A nurturer of broken and hurt animals, she sees no difference in the battered and broken body of a young man found on the side of the road. Grasping his hand, young Lorelei wills her strength into him—to fight and to live...for her.

With no memory of his past, Lorelei gives him a name—Ash. Young love blossoms, and there’s nothing that Ash won’t do for his angel, Lorelei. But young Ash has made up his mind that he must find his true identity if he is to be a man of worth for Lorelei. Leaving her is hard, but made even

more so when he doesn’t return...even after he promised...

“There are only two indisputable facts in this world: One, that the sun will set in the west. And two, that I’ll come for you. Always.”

Fast forward 20 years, and Lorelei is still wondering whatever became of her beloved Ash. Thrust into an unwanted marriage to save her families estate, Lorelei is on the receiving end of an unlikely hero. Could it be that her long lost Ash is now the bloodthirsty pirate known as The Rook? Will they be able to rekindle their young love, or has the evil done to her Ash over the years broken him beyond her repair?

Kerrigan Bryne has become my go to author for historical romances. I have devoured her Victorian Rebels series, and can’t recommend them enough! Although *The Duke with the Dragon Tattoo* is the 6th installment to the series, it can easily be read alone. But don’t take my word for it! Snag your own copy and get ready to set sail on a romantic journey that’ll live in your heart long after you turn the last page.

Sharing what I love,
Veronica

The Highlander’s Promise

Lynsay Sands

Avon

Mass Market

978-0062468994

★★★★

When Aulay Buchanan finds her, she is tied to a mast, lucky to be alive. He rescues her and takes her home, accepting the help of his brother, who is a healer. She suffers from severe wounds, and upon her awakening, he discovers that she has lost her memory. He calls her Jetta because of her black hair.

Jetta is frustrated by her lack of memory and weakness from her wounds. She assumes that Aulay is her husband, and he does not disabuse her of that notion. He does not want to delay her recovery by upsetting her with the truth. Besides, she is the first woman to not be repulsed by his facial scar. In fact, she is attracted to him, something he cannot resist.

In Lynsay Sands’ latest tale of the Buchanan family, her gentle heroine and wounded hero will captivate the reader. The mystery of Jetta’s identity will keep readers riveted until the end.

Heather Nordahl Files

How to Train Your Baron (What Happens in the Ballroom Series)

Diana Lloyd

Entangled Publishing, LLC

E-book

978-1640635968

★★★★1/2

Lady Elsinore Cosgrove wanted nothing more than to “escape” her family and have a true adventure. As the youngest of six children, she was always fighting to be heard, fighting to have her opinions matter and fighting just to be seen. Her four older sisters were all married and all she ever heard from them and her mother was that she needed to change her ways, act more like a lady and keep her mouth shut. Her father loved her dearly and, for the most part, gently ignored her shenanigans. But, after her latest “scandal” when he informed her that he had picked out her husband for her, and the sooner she was married the better, she panicked. While fleeing the boring Seasonal ball, she inadvertently found herself in a compromising position and her fate was sealed. But instead of an old boring duffer that her father had picked for her, Elsinore found herself committed to a handsome young Scotsman who had no intention of ever getting married again!

Lord Quin Graham, Baron of Lochwode, had just

Historicals

recently buried his parents, his baby son and his wife and was in London to find an investigator, not affiliated with any Scottish clans, to help him unravel the suspicious circumstances of their deaths. He was waiting to meet with his friend regarding the investigation, when he happened upon a young lady in rather dire circumstances. Since she was alone in the room, he figured she must have gotten herself into her present fix. But, being raised a gentleman by his English mother, Quin could not just walk away and leave her. The next thing he knew, he was on the floor, she was on top of him (but safe) and her father was standing in the doorway! There was only one thing to do to keep from having to fight a duel...ask for her hand in marriage, something he was loathe to do but knew was necessary. Could he trust her? Was this all a ruse? Did she know of his history?

How to Train Your Baron is a perfect Regency romance. It has humor, wit, mystery, suspense and tons of rules of etiquette that our poor lovers have to endure. Elsinore is quite a handful, but Quin is more than up to the task of dealing with her innocent inquisitiveness. Quin has a lot on his plate that he needs to sort through, but with Elsinore by his side, he discovers that the world can be beautiful again. I highly recommend this delightful read.

Lani Roberts

Mistress of Pennington’s

Rachel Brimble

Aria

E-book

B07C8FZK6C

★★★★

Elizabeth Pennington works at Pennington’s, a department store, in the exciting time of 1910. She wants more control over her department than her father will allow. She dreams of winning him over with her innovative ideas, but he does not like change, particularly anything that would give women more power.

Joseph Carter’s wife was murdered two years ago. He blames himself for her death and dreams of vengeance. He brings his glove designs to Pennington’s in hopes of seeing them sold in the store’s ladies’ department. Elizabeth stirs feelings he thought long dead. But her father wants Elizabeth to do his bidding and has no interest in her happiness.

Rachel Brimble’s latest utilizes its setting well, both time and place (Bath, England). Her characters are appealing, and her heroine’s father looms as an unpredictable villain.

Historicals

Readers will enjoy and appreciate this tale.
Heather Nordahl Files

Moonshine
G.D. Penman
JMS Books LLC
E-book
978-1634866361
★★★★

Take a step back in time to the days of prohibition... when bootleggers ruled and the coppers turned a blind eye. Detective Vergil Levard has been called out to investigate a body found on the docks. When he starts looking into the victim’s past, he’s forced to relive memories from his own past he thought were long buried.

Jimmy Hogan is the King of bootleggers in this town, and when one of his own is found dead, he’s going to issue out his own form of justice.

Vergil and Jimmy are an odd pairing, but they are drawn together to solve the mystery behind the murder...even if it may cost them their very lives.

This was such a fun short story to read! G.D. Penman was a new-to-me author, and I look forward to reading more!
Sharing what I love,
Veronica

One for the Rogue
Mandna Collins
St. Martin’s Press
Mass Market
978-1250109927
★★★★

Geologist Gemma Hastings is Lady’s Celeste’s sole unmarried heiress. Her goal is focused on a career in her field, and marriage is an obstacle. She’s crossed proverbial swords with Lord Cameron Lisle, a geologist with strong opinions about his field and what he wants in a bride. The pair is continually thrown into close proximity by his brother’s marriage to her sister, and their mutual hunt for a prized fossil.

As their hunt intensifies, so does their attraction, and their best laid plans to avoid romantic entanglements and marriage go the way of the dinosaurs.

The fourth book in Collins’ “Studies in Scandal” Regency historical romance series shines with wit and charm. Gemma is independent, passionate and determined, coupled with an inquisitive mind. Cameron is a very appealing hero—handsome, kind, protective, and he appreciates Gemma as her own person. Their relationship evolves very quickly, but their developing romance and feelings for each other are believable. The previous three couples show up to add to the enjoyment. Collins has a knack for writing enjoyable and sensual romances with characters who are impossible not to like and clever, humorous banter. *One for the Rogue* is a satisfying dénouement to this series.

Danielle Hill

Roundup The Brides
Barbara Dan
Create Space Independent Publishing
978-1541021402
★★★★

Stuart Braden is a recent transplant to America via London, England. He and his father had come to Wyoming in 1889 to search for gold and other prospects to invest in. The last thing he expected to invest was his heart in the cinnamon eyes of one Suzanne Gallagher, schoolteacher, and her home of Happy Valley. Can an Englishman help the good people closest to her and win her heart in the process? Or will certain members of the Cheyenne Executives’ Club get what they want no matter the cost?

Roundup The Brides is an historical Christian western romance that is the second in the series. However, it is not confusing to a new reader. Barbara Dan takes her readers to Happy Valley on the trail of love.

The Warrior of Clan Kincaid (Highland Warrior -Book 3)
Lily Blackwood
St. Martin’s Press
Mass Market
978-1250084842
★★★

Derryth is informed she must leave her sister, the Lady Kincaid, immediately and return home. Derryth is assured that nothing’s wrong. These assurances are lies.

The Wolf’s army, led by Cull, is nearing Castle Kincaid. The Wolf is Clan Kincaid’s worst enemy. He’s also Cull’s mentor. Derryth and her retinue are captured. Cull cannot risk the Kincaids learning that an attack is imminent. He promises to release the group unharmed after the battle.

Cull keeps Derryth in his tent, separate from the

Historicals

others in her party. He will protect Derryth from the soldiers who want to rape her. In the week that follows, Derryth discovers that Cull is not only handsome, he’s kind. She learns that all Cull has ever wanted is a home, a wife and a name to give to his children. During that same time, he discovers that Derryth is brave and loyal as well as beautiful. The two fall in love.

Derryth is horrified. How can she love a man who is planning on destroying her family? When Cull discovers that Derryth is the sister of the Lady Kincaid, he’s torn. Taking this castle is the first step in achieving his lifelong goals. But how can Cull destroy the family of the woman he loves?

This is a continuation of a series. It can be read alone. It’s a pretty good book.

Sheila Griffin

Farewell, RT (cont. from page 11)

that fear. Most of all, *RT* recognized it, expanding their role to include a yearly conference. Though I never attended one of their conferences, call me crazy, but I would have gone if I had felt welcomed. We heard about the physical fights that occurred at one or two of the conferences (names withheld). I didn’t want any part of that. However, my advertising director went to one of *RT*’s conferences in Dallas, and they immediately tried to hire her away from us. (I viewed that as not a bad move - just business.) Though it didn’t work, it was flattering. I had heard over the years a few negative comments one or two *RT* staff members had said about *AdC*, but I ignored it. (You see, I practiced Ms. Obama’s edict years before I ever heard her say it, “When they go low, we go high!”) It told me that they knew we existed; they seemed a little threatened by us. Later, they were able to spirit the late Nan Deporto, reviewer and romance historian *extraordinaire*, from us. She helped them with their conferences.

The one thing *AdC* had to its advantage, readers learned, was that our reviews were honest, unaffected by ads or lack thereof. In fact, when our reviewers were given a galley to read, they were

not told whether there was an ad with it. And, while the reviews are opinions of the person who read the books, we had and still do have guidelines. To identify a few for example, (1) Books should be evaluated on characterization, plot, the realism, the author’s story-telling ability and many more aspects; (2) Tell nothing after the first half; (3) The narrative in the review should support the number of stars given; (4) Never attack an author or editor. Her work is the object of our scrutiny and evaluation; we must never get personal.

As with many other industries, the print industry was greatly affected by the presence of the internet. Some became internet-only issues publisher. Others closed their doors. *RT* and *AdC* were no exception. Self-proclaimed internet reviewers seemingly came out of the woodwork. For many authors it did not matter who reviewed their books as long as it got reviewed. The sheer numbers of galleys available for review dwindled significantly. How can one publish a magazine on book reviews if they are not getting the books to review? It appeared readers wanted to read from their Kindles or other tablets. The print issues became obsolete. (*AdC* does still publish a print issue.)

When *RT* stopped having conferences, I don’t know. I remember being surprised to hear that Katherine Falk resigned/retired from *RT*. Then I heard that *RT* had become an online-only magazine. I recall thinking that was probably a smart move because printing costs have become ridiculous!

Last month came the announcement to end all. On May 17, 2018, *RT* and all of its subsidiaries closed down. There was no explanation as to why, rather a brief thank you from Carol Stacy for the reader support throughout the years.

I wasn’t elated, I didn’t relish the fact that they had closed. I felt sad. *RT* was a business established by women who ultimately helped many other women. How they conducted their business was none of my business. For years, *RT* shaped the romance world and had an impact on many, many people. For that I say, “Kudos!” and “Thanks for the ride.”

Paranormal Romance Reviews



Autumn Magic (The Thorne Witches Book 2)

T.M. Cromer

TM Cromer Books

E-book

B07DV7MJMM

★★★★★



"If family lore was to be believed, once a Thorne found their one true love, their heart would never veer off the path of that love."

For nine years, Autumn Thorne has been harboring a hurt like no other. Not only has the love of her life, Keaton Carlyle, shunned her because of her magical abilities, he immediately jumped into bed with her would-be best friend. And if that wasn't enough, Autumn had to deal with the ultimate heartbreak—the loss of their child. Even with all her magic, she couldn't save what was lost, nor fix what was

broken.

Autumn draws her strength from the love she shares with her sisters and is determined to shield her heart from Keaton's attempts to woo her back. As an age-old family mystery continues to unfold, they are set on a journey to retrieve a magical stone. Autumn and Keaton have to get over their past to work together, and while sometimes it's difficult to let go, loving the right person can bless you with a forgiving heart. But, will Autumn and Keaton's forgiveness come too late? Only the Goddess knows...

Autumn Magic is a beautifully written second-chance romance this reader highly recommends!

Sharing what I love,

Veronica

Paranormals

Troubled Spirits (Spirit Voices #1)

Sandy Wolters

The Wild Rose Press, Inc.

E-book

B06XPRBH97

★★★★

Jody has been plagued with what some may call a gift, but she deems it a curse—she can see and speak with the dead. Doing her best to ignore her “gift,” Jody comes up against a ghost that will not be tuned out. Fiona is a ghost child who desperately wants to speak with her mommy, and won't take no for an answer. She haunts Jody night and day. Heartbroken for Fiona, Jody begins investigating and seeks the help of a private investigator, Jared. Together they work towards unraveling the mystery and in doing so, find themselves falling in love.

Troubled Spirits will both thrill and chill readers! Fans of the TV show *The Ghost Whisperer* will devour this tale! I look forward to the rest of the series and would recommend!

Sharing what I love,

Veronica

Vampire's Faith

Rebecca Zanetti

Lyrical Press

E-book

B078LJZ6YF

★★★★



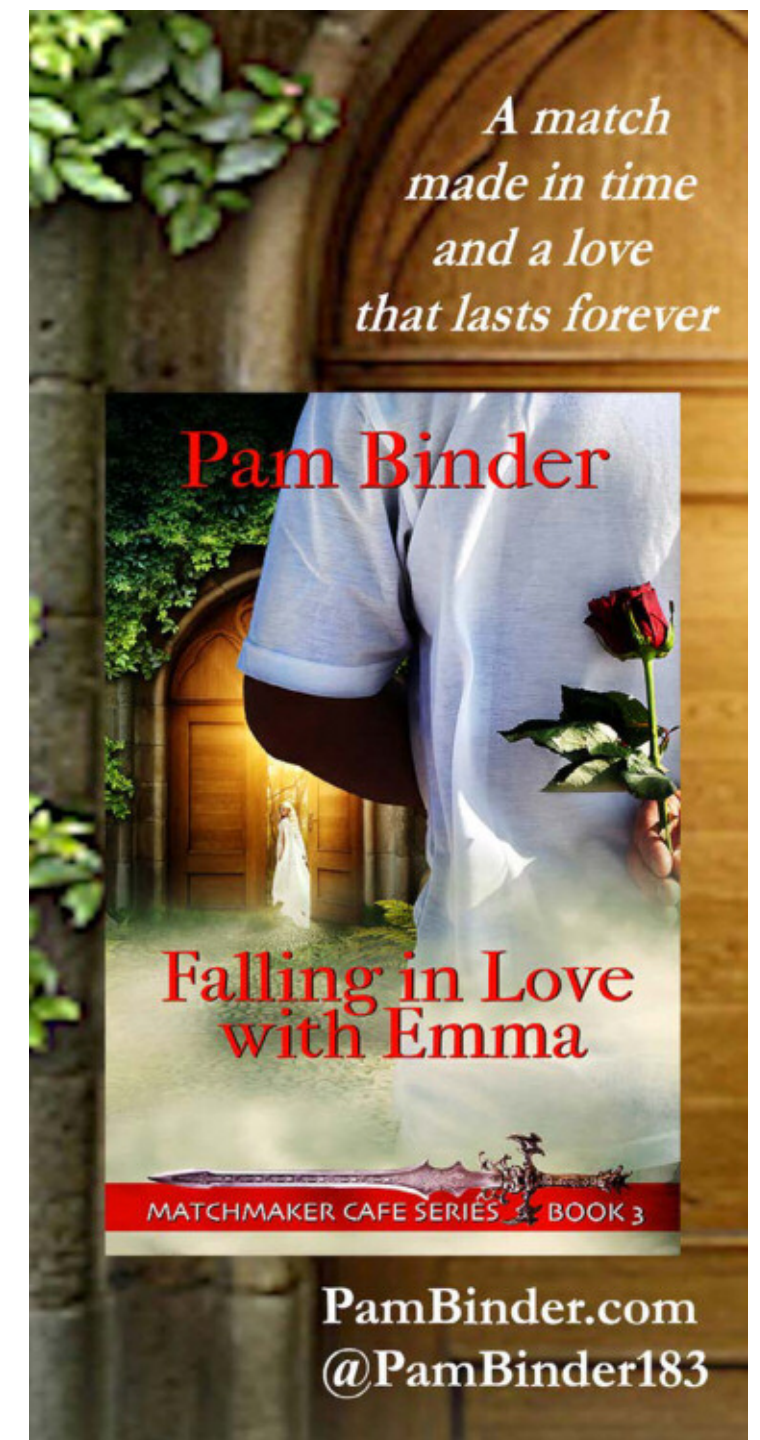
Neurologist Faith Cooper is a rational person. When her newest patient, an Adonis with fangs, wakes up from a coma and kidnaps her, her world view is tilted on its axis.

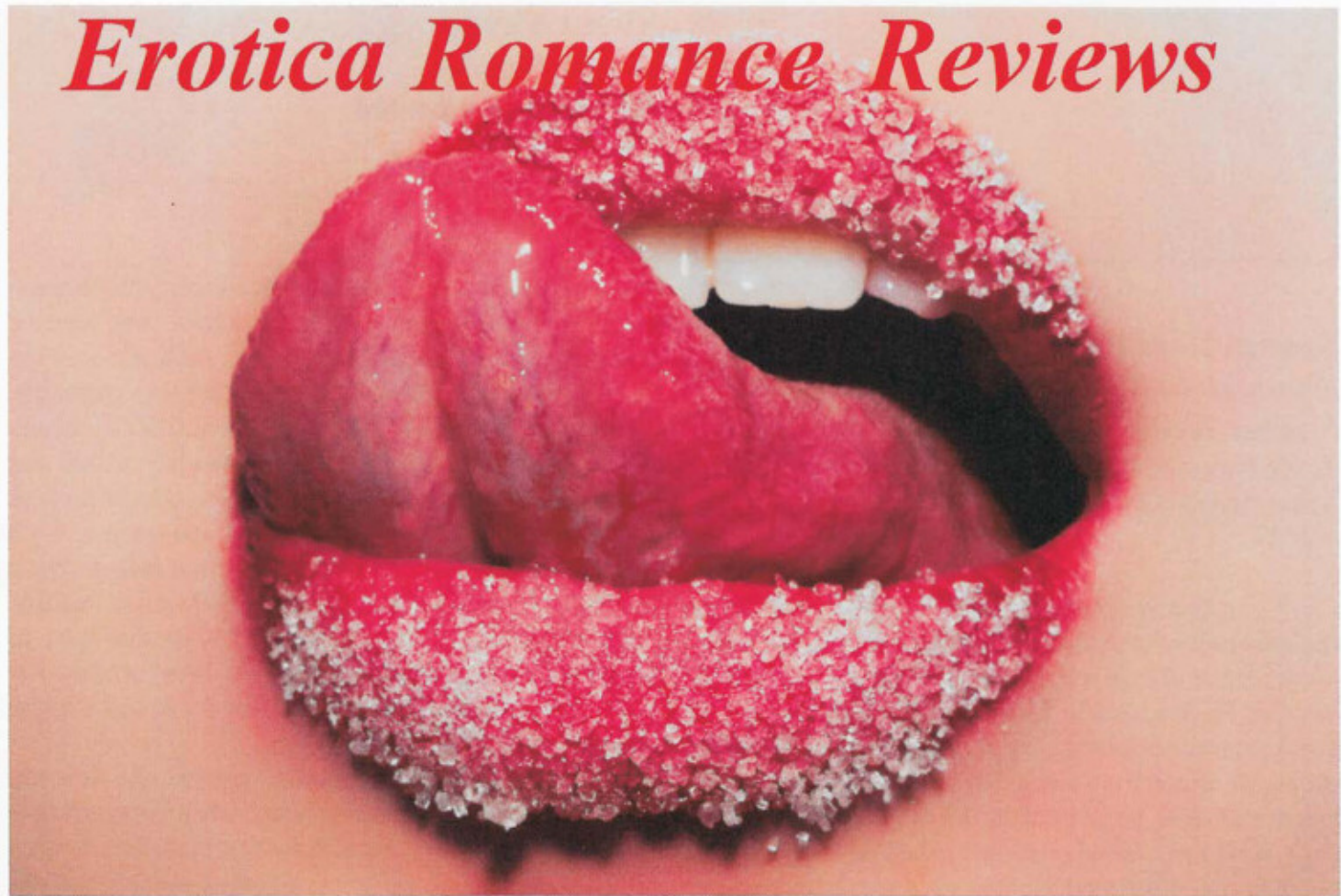
Ronan Kayrs is part of an ancient group of immortals who made a personal sacrifice to protect the world. The beautiful doctor he kidnapped is his long-awaited mate in need of protection from his enemies, a vicious, evil cadre with sinister motivations.

Vampire's Faith is an exciting, fast-moving paranormal romance with a unique, complex spin on the fated mates/immortal warrior brotherhood subgenre. Ronan is sexy and powerful, and his willingness to be emotionally open to Faith is extremely appealing. Faith is strong and determined,

a highly intelligent, independent woman whose focus has been on protecting her younger sister in a coma. Falling in love with a vampire who's lived for millennia claiming to be her mate by destiny is entirely surprising. Their chemistry sizzles with steamy love scenes that tantalize readers. Ronan's fellow warriors add significantly to the story, making readers eager for their own stories. The villains felt somewhat underdeveloped, and aspects of the world-building were unclear, but overall, *Vampire's Faith* is a must read for paranormal romance.

Danielle Hill





Billionaire Auction (The Billionaire Club #2)

Brynn Paulin & Tia Fanning

E-book

Supernova Indie Publishing Service LLC

B07DY26KMF

★★★★

“I want you. I have for a long time.”

“And you will obey me?”

“Yes, I’ll obey you.”

Moriah has had a crush on her father’s business associate, Kendrick, for as long as she can remember. When she hears that her father has been embezzling funds from Kendrick’s company, she begs for him not to send her father to prison. Kendrick is swayed by her tears and gives her father the opportunity to repay him. What Kendrick doesn’t realize is that Moriah’s father is as evil as they come and has planned to auction off her virginity to the highest bidder to repay his debt...a fate that Kendrick won’t allow... Moriah will belong to him and no other.

Authors Brynn Paulin and Tia Fanning have weaved a very sexy story that’ll keep your heart racing till the very last page!

Sharing what I love,

Veronica

Sub-Mission

T. S. McKinney

Painted Hearts Publishing

E-book

B07DL4QXLQ

★★★★1/2

“You’re beautiful, Baker...your submission is intoxicating. If I’m not very careful, you could become a drug to me—a habit I might never be able to overcome.”

Agent Seth Wilkinson has been assigned the task of going undercover to discover the identity of a murderer who is picking off Subs at the local BDSM club. Agent Wilkinson is an experienced Dom and when he is partnered with Agent Baker Daley, his first thought is this mission is doomed at the start—no way a straight Sub can fool this killer. But after one scene at the club, Baker is the “talk of the town”, and Seth is quickly losing his heart to the one man he knows he can never have.

T.S. McKinney has teased us with a mystery of a killer, but the real story here is the smoldering romance that builds between Baker and Seth. *Mission* is one smexxy hawt read that I highly recommend!

Sharing what I love,

Veronica

This book is a hoot...laugh out loud-able—Long and Short Reviews



Ferris H. Craig and Charlene Keel

Grinders Corner

Saucy, Sassy & Sexy...but not the least bit erotic



**Saucy, sassy and sexy
but not the least bit erotic.**

**Follow the adventures
of three young women
trying to survive in the
glitter palaces of
Los Angeles.**

Ferris H. Craig

Facebook.com/thecricketdance

Charlene Keel

Facebook.com/charlene.keel.1

www.RedSkyPresents.com

Sugar Boss (Sugar Daddies #2)

Charity Parkerson

Punk & Sissy Publications

E-book

B07C3112W4

★★★★★



“A person doesn’t need water to drown. I’ve been suffocating for so long I forgot what it felt like to breathe properly before I met you.”

Zander’s and Maverick’s characters are briefly introduced in *Sugar Fighter*; so I highly recommend you read that novella before starting *Sugar Boss*! Trust me on this!

Maverick has been MMA fighting in the casino circuit, never having enough faith in his abilities to move beyond the local matches. At each match, he feels eyes upon him, eyes that covet each move he makes. When he is approached by the owner of those gorgeous eyes, he feels an instant connection...one that sets sparks flying and kindles a hope that maybe this man could be the one.

“You make me weak,” Maverick said almost too quiet to hear. A smile touched Zander’s lips. “Funny. You make me strong.”

Zander Kapra is the owner of the hotels/casinos in which Maverick has been fighting his MMA matches. Zander believes he is beyond redemption for the sins of his past, but watching this young man, he feels alive again...he feels hope for a future. Never one to take “no” for an answer, Zander sets to woo Maverick to become his, but what he fails to realize until it’s too late is that Maverick holds the power in this relationship. When Zander’s secrets are revealed, he lashes out at the one person who loves him, leaving Maverick broken.

“Maybe we’ll find each other in the next life, and you won’t hate me there.”

This reader absolutely fell hard for Zander Kapra! Everyone deserves a second chance at happiness, and I was so thrilled that Zander and Maverick got their HEA! Charity Parkerson pulled no punches in this story! I am so ready for the next installment!

Highly recommend!

Sharing what I love,

Veronica



Confound It
Maggie Toussaint

Camel Books
Trade Paperback
978-1603815956
★★★★

Dreamwalker Baxley Powell is called to help the local sheriff investigate an explosion at the house of a woman who apparently was manufacturing meth. She quickly determines she was murdered and needs to find the culprit to keep the woman’s young son safe—and help catch a murderer who starts threatening Baxley’s own family. Working with fellow Dreamwalker, Deputy Sam Mayes not only enhances her abilities, he makes her feel emotions she hasn’t felt since her husband disappeared. Can Baxley stop the killer and handle the attraction with Mayes that she doesn’t feel free to pursue, since her husband might still be alive?

Confound It is a distinctive, well-written paranormal mystery set in rural Georgia. Baxley’s powerful ability to communicate with the Dead and to travel to the Other Side is a unique way for a detective to solve crimes. The reader will identify with Baxley’s familial and relational ties, grounding her as an everyday heroine, despite her otherworldly ability. The mystery is well-crafted, with a villain that will keep readers guessing. Even though breadcrumbs seem to point

obviously in one direction, the story takes a very unexpected turn. The infusion of spiritual and paranormal elements makes *Confound It* a multi-layered and intriguing read.

Danielle Hill

Pandora’s Boy
Lindsey Davis

Minotaur Books
Hardcover
978-1250152688
★★★★

First Century Roman inquiry agent Flavia Alba is recommended by none other than her new husband’s ex-wife, when feuding grandmothers want answers. Clodia Volumnia may have died from a love potion that she purchased from a local witch, Pandora, who has dangerous family connections. Flavia must navigate a young woman from a wealthy family who was found dead, and her divorcing parents and treacherous waters--Clodia’s family and friends. Unfortunately, she ends up right in the crosshairs of warring gangs in the process.

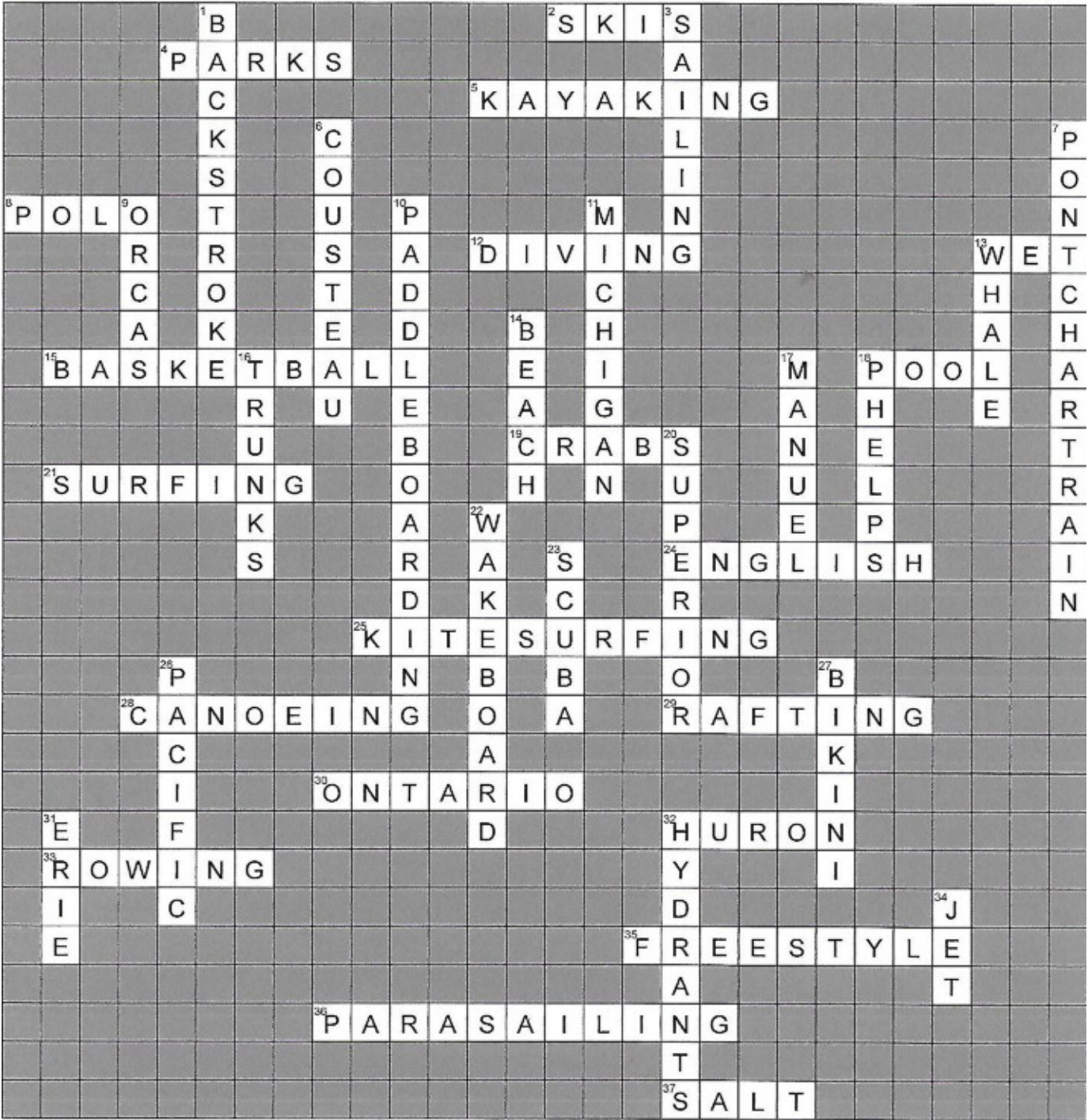
Pandora’s Boy is a clever, cerebral historical mystery with wry humor delivered in the droll point of view of its calm under pressure heroine. Davis keeps the reader

MYSTERIES

experiences have shaped her into a keen, competent inquiry agent. *Pandora’s Boy* is no casual read, but a fully immersive historical fiction that readers with an interest in this time period will appreciate.
Danielle Hill

immersed in the fascinating world of first century Rome, including insights into its complex pantheistic religions and dangerous political intrigue. This book focuses more on the lives of women in that time period, providing an interesting history lesson along the way. Readers are treated to the loving flirtations between Flavia and her new husband Tiberius, and insight into how her family life and

Fun in the water
Louise B. Snead





*Sometimes
being psychic is
murder.*

*Especially when you're
one of the psychics on the
killer's hit list.*

THROUGH HER TOUCH DEBORAH CAMP

#5 in the Mind's Eye Series

Available now on Amazon

Look for the final book in the series -- *Through Her Heart* -- this fall!

