

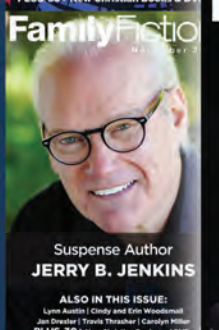
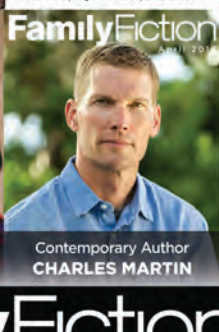
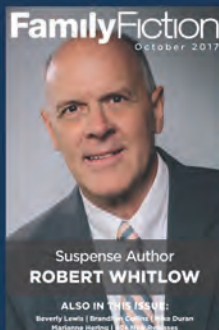
FamilyFiction

March 2021



Amish Author
**SUZANNE WOODS
FISHER**

Amanda Wen | Elizabeth Camden | Jocelyn Green
Courtney Walsh | J. J. Fischer | Cynthia Ruchti
New Christian Fiction Book Releases



FamilyFiction.com

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN FICTION BOOKS & AUTHORS

#JesusToldStories

Features



AMISH, ROMANCE
SUZANNE WOODS FISHER
The Moonlight School



ROMANCE
AMANDA WEN
Roots of Wood and Stone



HISTORICAL, ROMANCE
ELIZABETH CAMDEN
Prince of Spies
Hope and Glory #3



HISTORICAL, ROMANCE
JOCELYN GREEN
Shadows of the White City
The Windy City Saga #2



CONTEMPORARY, ROMANCE
COURTNEY WALSH
Is It Any Wonder
A Nantucket Love Story

FamilyFiction is owned and published by FamilyFiction Publishing in partnership with Salem Publishing & Salem Media Group

Publisher/GM/Editor
Ross Cluver
Ross@FamilyFiction.com

Proofreader
Michele Thompson

Design & Digital Production
Ross Cluver

National Account Executive
Salem Media Group
DeDe Donatelli-Tarrant
805.987.5072
DeDe@salempublishing.com

Web Ad Traffic Coordinator
Web & Social Media Support
Brandon Woolum
BWoolum@salempublishing.com

**DOWNLOAD THE
FAMILYFICTION
MEDIA KIT...**

CLICK HERE

FIND US ONLINE

FamilyFiction.com
[Twitter.com/FamilyFiction](https://twitter.com/FamilyFiction)
[YouTube.com/user/FamilyFiction](https://www.youtube.com/user/FamilyFiction)

FamilyFiction

Features



HISTORICAL FANTASY

J. J. FISCHER

The Sword in His Hand

The Darcentaria Duology #1



YA/TEEN, DYSTOPIAN, ROMANCE

JESS CORBAN

A Gentle Tyranny

Nede Rising Series #1



ROMANCE, CONTEMPORARY

CYNTHIA RUCHTI

Facing the Dawn



FEATURE AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT:

FANTASY, SUPERNATURAL

Gary Pattillo

Stone of Gabriel

Angel Stones #1



New Releases & Bestsellers

Check out all of these new Christian fiction book releases!

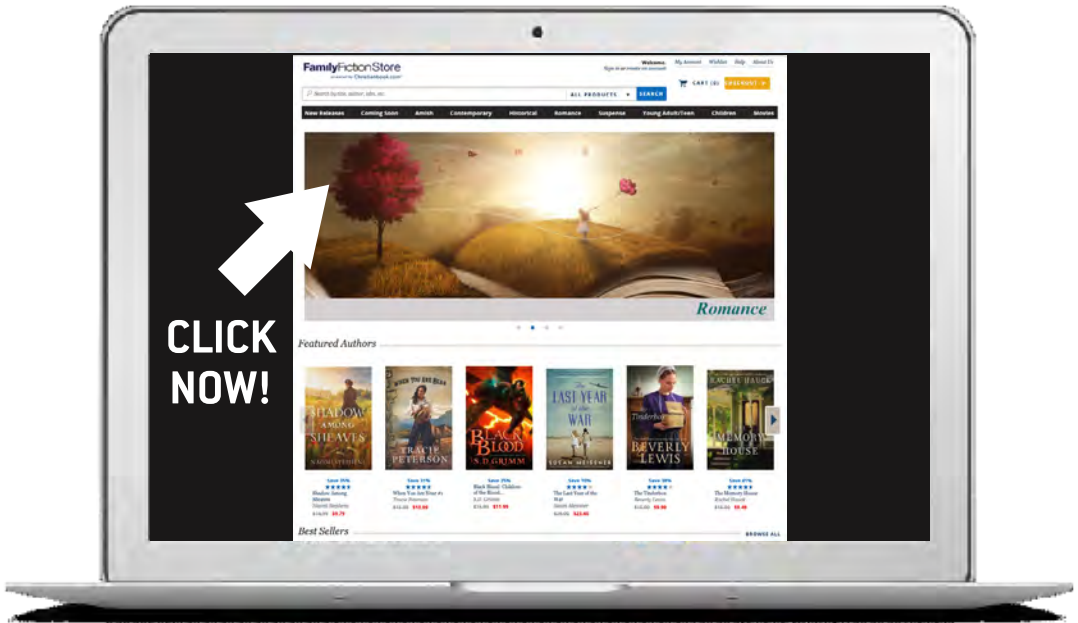
Amish
Contemporary
Historical
Romance

Sci-Fi/Fantasy
Suspense
Children's
YA/Teens

Middle Grade Kids
Comics/Animation
Movies/DVDs
Christmas



Find ALL of Your Favorite Christian Fiction & Authors on the NEW www.FamilyFictionStore.com



ALL Your Christian Products in 1 Simple Site

Shop by Your Favorite Genre:

- Amish Fiction
- Contemporary Fiction
- Historical Fiction
- Romance Fiction
- Fantasy & Science Fiction
- End Times Fiction
- Suspense Fiction
- Children's Books
- Young Adult Fiction

Shop by Your Favorite Author:

Terri Blackstock, Wanda E. Brunstetter, Melody Carlson, Ted Dekker, Lynette Eason, Chris Fabry, Suzanne Woods Fisher, Karen Kingsbury, Beverly Lewis, C.S. Lewis, Charles Martin, DiAnn Mills, Tracie Peterson, Dani Pettrey, Francine Rivers, Joel C. Rosenberg, Kim Vogel Sawyer, Lauraine Snelling, Cindy Woodsmall & 100s more!

Shop Other Christian Products:

- Bibles & Bible Accessories
- Bible Studies & Curriculum
- Clothing & Accessories
- DVDs
- Gift & Home
- Homeschool
- Music
- Sunday School
- VBS



GENRE: SUZANNE WOODS FISHER

The Moonlight School

Christian fiction author **Suzanne Woods Fisher** is an award-winning, bestselling author of more than two dozen novels, including novels in the *Amish Beginnings Series*, *The Bishop's Family Series*, and *The Inn at Eagle Hill Series*, as well as nonfiction books about the Amish. She lives in California. Her latest book, ***The Moonlight School***, was inspired by the true events of the Moonlight Schools. Suzanne brings to life the story that shocked the nation into taking adult literacy seriously. You'll finish the last page of this enthralling story with deep gratitude for the gift of reading.

FF: Can you please provide a brief description of your new book, *The Moonlight School*?

Haunted by her sister's mysterious disappearance, Lucy Wilson arrives in Rowan County, Kentucky, in the spring of 1911 to work for Cora Wilson Stewart, superintendent of education. When Cora sends Lucy into the hills to act as scribe for the mountain people, she is repelled by the primitive conditions and intellectual poverty she encounters. Few adults can read and write. Born in those hills, Cora knows the plague of illiteracy. So does Brother Wyatt, a singing schoolmaster who travels through the hills. Involving Lucy and Wyatt, Cora hatches a plan to open the schoolhouses to adults on moonlit nights. The best way to combat poverty, she believes, is to eliminate illiteracy. But will the people come?

As Lucy emerges from a life in the shadows, she finds purpose; or maybe purpose finds her. With purpose comes answers to her questions, and something else she hadn't expected: love.

FF: Your novel is based upon a true account that occurred during the early 1900s. Please provide more information on the Moonlight School.

Cora Wilson Stewart was the first female superintendent for Rowan County, Kentucky, and came up with an idea: to open the rural schoolhouses on moonlit nights to adults who were illiterate or semi-illiterate. On that first moonlit night, September 5, 1911, Stewart hoped for 150 people to come to the schools. Over 1,200 men and women arrived, eager to learn to read and write. Within two years, adult illiteracy was wiped out in Rowan County. Stewart declared September 5 as the greatest moonlit night the world has ever known.

FF: Although the Moonlight School had an amazing effect on the residents of Rowan County, Kentucky, it also impacted a movement across the nation. Can you explain how this school's influence changed the entire country?

The result of Stewart's efforts was the creation of the Moonlight Schools, a grassroots movement dedicating to eliminating adult illiteracy. The movement caught on quickly. Within a few years, several states adopted similar literacy programs. They were inexpensive and promised immediate results.

FF: Cora Wilson Stewart, superintendent of education for Kentucky, felt that the best way to eradicate poverty was to eliminate illiteracy. Do you feel this statement is accurate?

Cora Wilson Stewart was well aware that many rural Kentuckians could neither read nor write, but in her role as superintendent of education, she discovered that few participated in public life. They took no part in local politics, and their ability to transact the business of everyday life suffered as well. She

became convinced that radical change began with education.

FF: Why did you decide to write about the topic of literacy?

There's a moment in my book, a conversation Cora is having with Lucy, that best answers this: "It takes an effort of the imagination to put oneself in the place of the illiterate. To picture what life is like for one who must get all his information by ear. If a man cannot read or write or vote, he cannot speak. He is mute. He is forgotten. You might think it's a pity they cannot read, but the real tragedy is they cannot speak. . . . That, Lucy, is the real tragedy of the twentieth century."

FF: What type of research was required to accurately portray the details of the *Moonlight School*?

First, I studied the time period of eastern Kentucky, Rowan County, life in Appalachia, and then I focused on Cora Wilson Stewart—her life and legacy. I read her biographies and interviewed academics at the University of Morehead where her work began.

FF: When Lucy Wilson, one of the female protagonists in *The Moonlight School*, first arrived in Rowan County, Kentucky, she was struggling to find purpose. How did her experience in these mountains help her to emerge from a life in the shadows?

Fear, even repulsion, were Lucy's first reactions to seeing the effects of poverty up close and personal. She hadn't come to Morehead with a sense of calling, but little by little, a calling found her. I'm confident Lucy would say that the best thing she did was to not give up on Rowan County, or on her cousin Cora. By the final page, I can imagine her lifting her hands to say, "Look at all I would have missed!"



FF: Is adult illiteracy still a problem in the United States?

Surprisingly so. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), 21 percent of adults in the United States (about 43 million) are illiterate or semi-illiterate. Adult illiteracy impacts children in profound ways, from lack of employment to not having children's books in the home. Patterns set in early. It's called generational literacy.

And then there's the prison population. The Literacy Project Foundation found that three out of five prisoners can't read. These statistics are grim, but they also provide hope. One recent study found that providing education to prisoners reduced recidivism by 7 percent. Literacy can be powerful.

FF: *The Moonlight School* released during National Literacy Week. How can this book continue to encourage literacy?

Literacy has made great strides over the two centuries. In 1820, only 12 percent of the global population could read, while in

2020, only 12 percent can't read. But there is still much that can be done to eliminate illiteracy. Cora Wilson Stewart and her Moonlight Schools crusade showed us that it's possible.

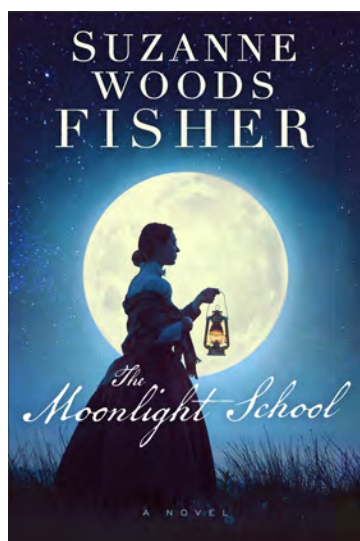
FF: Do you have any additional comments you wish to share with readers?

Pew Research Center found in 2019 that 27 percent of US adults said they had either not read or completed a single book in the previous year. Please read, and keep on reading, and encourage others to read! It makes a difference. **FF**

Visit Suzanne's author page HERE:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/suzanne-woods-fisher>

<https://familyfiction.christianbook.com/the-moonlight-school-suzanne-fisher/9780800735012/pd/735018?event=ESRCG>



The Moonlight School

Suzanne Woods Fisher
Revell

Genres: Amish, Romance

Release date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now

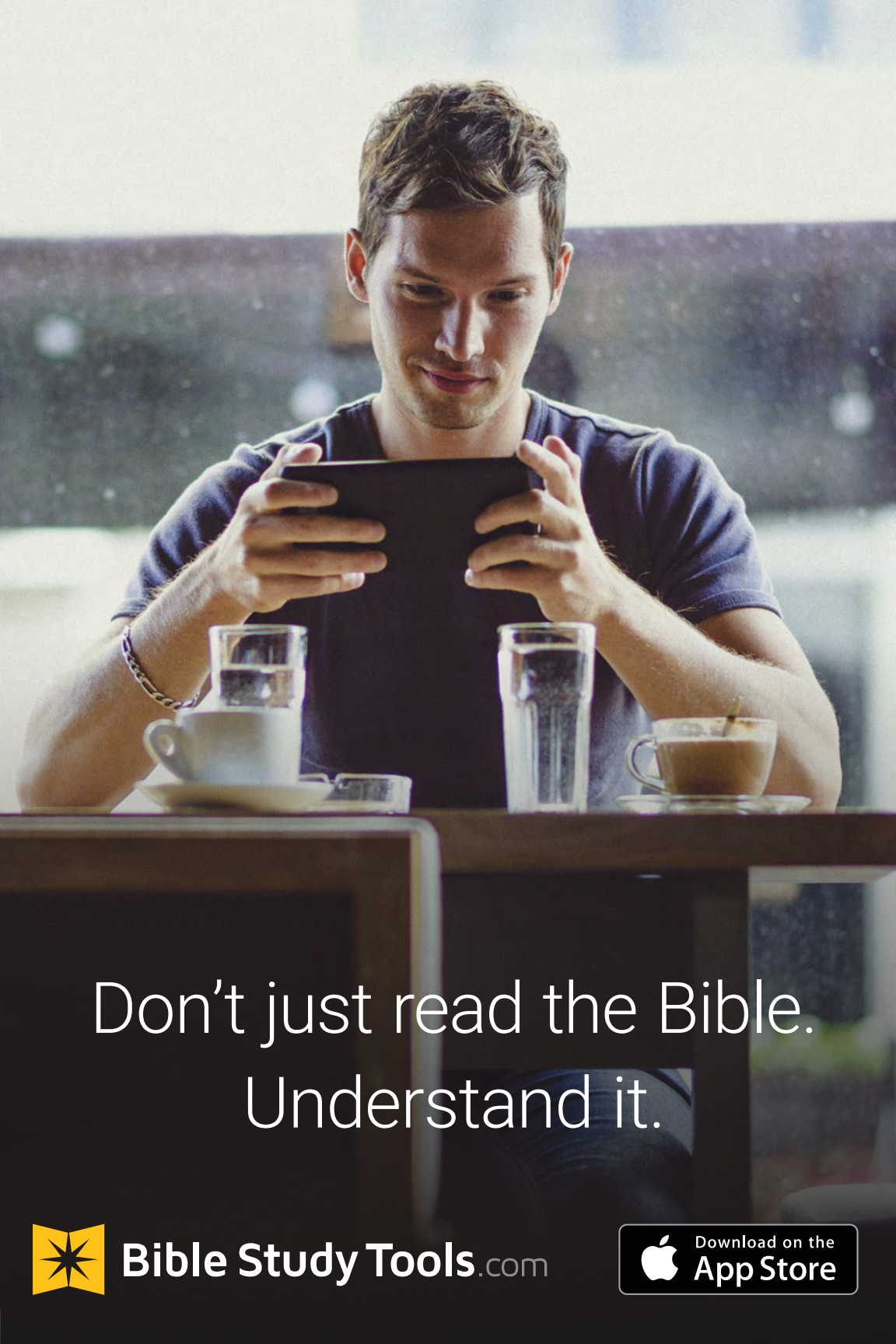


Book Summary:

Haunted by her sister's mysterious disappearance, Lucy Wilson arrives in Rowan County, Kentucky, in the spring of 1911 to work for Cora Wilson Stewart, superintendent of education. When Cora sends Lucy into the hills to act as scribe for the mountain people, she is repelled by the primitive conditions and intellectual poverty she encounters. Few adults can read and write.

Born in those hills, Cora knows the plague of illiteracy. So does Brother Wyatt, a singing schoolmaster who travels through the hills. Involving Lucy and Wyatt, Cora hatches a plan to open the schoolhouses to adults on moonlit nights. The best way to combat poverty, she believes, is to eliminate illiteracy. But will the people come?

As Lucy emerges from a life in the shadows, she finds purpose; or maybe purpose finds her. With purpose comes answers to her questions, and something else she hadn't expected: love.



Don't just read the Bible.
Understand it.



Bible Study Tools.com



Download on the
App Store



ROMANCE: AMANDA WEN

Roots of Wood and Stone

Christian fiction author **Amanda Wen** is an award-winning writer of inspirational romance and split-time women's fiction. She has placed first in multiple contests, including the 2017 Indiana Golden Opportunity Contest, the 2017 Phoenix Rattler Contest, and the 2016 ACFW First Impressions Contest. She was also a 2018 ACFW Genesis Contest finalist.

For readers who can't decide if they would like to pick up something historical or contemporary for their next read, debut author Amanda offers them the best of both worlds in her new release. ***Roots of Wood and Stone*** (Kregel Publications) is a warm, delightfully written split-time novel that will resonate with readers looking for stories that reveal the beauty of God's plan for our lives, and how our actions ripple for generations.

FF: What drew you to the split-time genre? What unique challenges does writing in two time periods present?

I've always loved reading both historical and contemporary books, and I've long been a fan of TV shows that hop from era to era. From the '80s sci-fi show *Quantum Leap* and the 2000s crime drama *Cold Case* to the new hit *This Is Us*, series like these illustrate in dramatic fashion just how deeply the past impacts the present. Split-time novels do the same thing: characters' past decisions have ripple effects, both good and bad, for generations to come.

In addition, one of my favorite things about split time is watching the contemporary characters dig into the past. My mother is a genealogist who's been tracing our family history since

before I was born, and her passion for uncovering our family's stories has been an important backdrop my entire life. Her research has given me an appreciation for those who came before and a desire to pass along this appreciation to my own kids. Given all this, I think the split-time genre is a natural fit for me!

However, split time doesn't come without its challenges. Instead of writing one story, I'm writing two, and they have to weave together in an organic way. If you can lift one story line out of the book without hurting the other one, then it's not integrated well enough. With two stories come two heroes, two heroines, and two plotlines, all of which must be correctly paced and equally interesting to the reader.

FF: How does the historical story connect with the contemporary story?

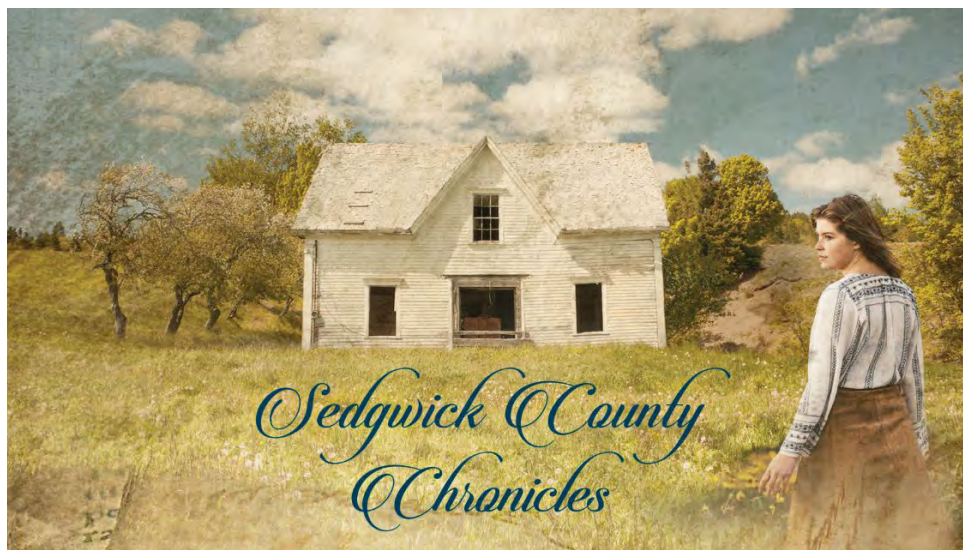
Roots of Wood and Stone revolves around an 1890s farmhouse that is the home of contemporary hero Garrett Anderson's grandmother, Rosie Spencer. In cleaning out the house, he finds an old satchel which he brings to the local historical museum in hopes that they might have some use for it. The curator, Sloane Kelley, is initially unimpressed with the satchel . . . until she opens it and finds a nineteenth-century diary inside. That diary, written by past heroine Annabelle Collins, links the past time line with the present. As Sloane digs into the diary, she wants to find out more, so she ends up going to the farmhouse to help Garrett and his sister, Lauren, declutter.

Subsequent diaries found in the house shine a light on Annabelle's life as an early settler to Sedgwick County: the love she finds, the losses she suffers, and the God who is faithful to carry her through it all. In addition, these diaries draw Sloane and Garrett together in ways neither could imagine and form the crux of the conflict that arises between the two. Exploring the past has a direct impact on the present for both Sloane and Garrett.

FF: *Roots of Wood and Stone* was inspired by your own family history. Can you tell us a little bit about your family's story and what parts made their way into your book?

The seed of inspiration for *Roots of Wood and Stone* is an 1890s farmhouse not far from where I grew up (and where I now live) which belonged to my great-great-grandfather, Francis Thomas Little. He immigrated to the United States from Ireland as a child and became one of the earliest settlers of Maize, Kansas. Grandpa Little, as he's known in my family, wrote a memoir, *A Kansas Farmer*, which was an invaluable resource during my research process.

Francis Little married Mattie Stevens, daughter of another early settler, William Fletcher Stevens, who lost his first wife and infant son shortly after arriving in Sedgwick County in 1870. (In fact, my great-great-great-grandfather would go on to bury a second wife and eight of his fourteen children.) I wondered how someone would cope with such a tragic loss and emerge with his faith intact, and it's this first early loss that forms the crux of the spiritual journey for my past hero, Jack Brennan.



My past heroine, Annabelle Collins, is very loosely based on a paternal ancestor, Antoinette Patrick Peterson, who as a young child was left with an aunt and uncle after the death of her mother. She moved to Kansas with her aunt and uncle, who raised her to adulthood, and I grew curious about the impact of such a decision on a child. The rest of Antoinette's life was no less interesting and colorful, but I decided to save it for a future book.

FF: Sloane was abandoned at birth, so she never had a connection to her biological family or their history.

How did she compensate for that in her professional life?

Abandoned at birth and adopted by strangers, Sloane differs from her adoptive parents in every way—appearance, personality, talents, and interests. She struggles with knowing they love her, and they don't fully understand her. She feels like plan B: someone her birth parents didn't want, who her adoptive parents settled for after not being able to conceive biologically.

This feeling haunts her formative years.

As an adult, Sloane discovers historical research, the filling in of gaps in her own knowledge and the sharing of information she uncovers with others. Though incomplete, the satisfaction she receives from helping people connect with and appreciate the history of the Wichita area is enough to propel her forward in her career as a museum curator. “I guess that’s why I’m so passionate about history,” she tells Garrett in one scene. “If I can’t know my own, at least I can help everyone else know theirs.”

FF: Tell us about Garrett. Where does his sense of responsibility come from?

A type-A overachiever since childhood, Garrett Anderson has been thrust into a difficult situation with the weight of the world on his shoulders. In recent years, he’s lost his mother to cancer, his father to a hasty remarriage and subsequent new life in Florida, and his grandfather to a sudden heart attack. As a result, the burden of care for his Alzheimer’s-afflicted grandmother, Rosie, has fallen to him and his sister, Lauren. The siblings are close but very different in personality, and they have not been able to reach an agreement as to what’s best for their grandmother.

In caring for Rosie, Garrett has also learned what can happen when people fail to plan. Due to a family whose approach to life has always been “ready-fire-aim,” as he describes it, he now realizes his grandmother is in dire financial straits. This impacts him personally and professionally, since, as a certified financial planner, his career revolves around helping other people avoid the sort of situation his grandmother has found herself in. He believes that all of life’s problems can be avoided, or at the

very least mitigated, if one just comes up with—and follows through on—the perfect plan.

FF: How about the historical characters—do they carry the missing pieces of their family with them as well?

Like Sloane, Annabelle Collins was raised by people other than her birth parents, although unlike Sloane, Annabelle had a relationship with her birth family. A child of eight when her mother died of a sudden illness, Annabelle is left with a father and two older brothers, all of whom feel called to fight for the Union in the Civil War. Before they enlist, Annabelle's father leaves her with his sister, Katherine, and her husband, Stephen, who've always longed for a child of their own. As Annabelle grows up under her aunt and uncle's roof, she feels loved, cared for, and wanted, but she also suffers the wounds of her father's abandonment, particularly when she learns that he has remarried and started a new family: one that has no room for her.

Jack Brennan, meanwhile, is reeling from the tragic loss of his wife and infant son, along with his wife's sister and her husband, who made the journey to Sedgwick County with Jack. In fact, the only other survivor of the journey is Jack's young nephew, Oliver, who he's taken in as his own. Jack's love for his nephew is one of the first things Annabelle notices, and it's a key part of their blossoming relationship.

FF: What role does faith play in the lives of your characters?

All my characters are people of faith, but all of them have run up against some struggles. For Sloane, the wound of her childhood abandonment is the lens through which she sees everything. Feeling unwanted and unloved by her birth parents extends to her relationship with God. Is she plan B to him

too? Garrett, meanwhile, has grown up in the church and has a fairly strong faith, but he hasn't truly grasped the concept of trusting God rather than leaning on his own understanding (Proverbs 3:5–6). A highly intelligent and motivated individual, Garrett believes that life will be infinitely easier if he just comes up with and follows through on the perfect plan. But when his perfect plan runs up against obstacles he can't overcome, he struggles to let go and allow God to enact the ultimate plan.

Trust is also a theme for Annabelle Collins, the heroine of the past time line. She suffers some losses both early and later in her life, and she struggles with the holes those losses leave in her heart. Can she learn to trust God to provide not necessarily everything she wants but everything she needs? Meanwhile, past hero Jack reels from loss as well, and he struggles to understand why—if he's being obedient to God's call on his life, as he thought he was—his life involves so much suffering. Throughout the book, Jack learns that just because life is difficult doesn't mean he's on the wrong path. Sometimes, one needs to stay the course.

FF: What did God teach you through the writing of *Roots of Wood and Stone*? What do you hope your readers take away from the book?

Roots of Wood and Stone was my first attempt at split time, and I depended on God for the wisdom to know how to weave the two time lines and stories together. It was an intimidating undertaking, and one possible only through Him. Also, trusting God has always been a challenge for me. Like Garrett, I'm a type-A uber planner, one who needs a plan A, plan B, and plan C to feel fully on top of things. While writing this book, I quickly discovered that I could control very little. My characters had

their own ideas of how the plot should progress, and the story was frequently better if I let go and trusted them.

The publishing journey was no different. Through the very lengthy (and also agonizing) submission process, I had to trust every day that the God who gave me the idea for the story and enabled me to put it on paper would do with it what He chose in the timing that was very best, not only for me but for all who will read the book.

As for those readers, I hope they come away with a renewed and restored faith. Though I would never in a million years have chosen to release my debut novel during a global pandemic, I think the message of the book—that God will take all your loose ends and broken pieces and weave them into something more beautiful than you can imagine—is especially timely for such a difficult period in our world. Many of us have been forced to alter the vast majority of our plans this past year, including plans for things—church, work, school, family get-togethers—that we never thought we’d have to alter. But God is still in control. This pandemic has not changed, nor will it change, his good and perfect plan.

FF: Which character in *Roots of Wood and Stone* was easiest for you to write and why? Which character presented the biggest challenge?

The most challenging character was probably Sloane. An introvert by nature, and one who’s been dealt some serious wounds, she doesn’t trust easily. In fact, that included me when I was first getting to know her. I’m a seat-of-the-pants writer, so the only way I get to know characters is by writing them, which doesn’t work well when a character isn’t quite ready to talk.

We spun our wheels for a bit, but I finally decided to put a little of my own love for music into the book and gave Sloane a musical hobby. That, it seemed, gave us enough common ground for her to feel comfortable opening up to me.

By contrast, Jack Brennan was the easiest character for me to write. Inspired by (but not based on) Jack Pearson from *This Is Us*, Jack sprang into my head fully formed and quickly stole all his scenes in the best possible way. He wears his heart on his sleeve and was thus very easy for me to get to know and love.

FF: How did you start writing? How do you balance writing with being a mom and a professional musician?

I've been writing stories since I could hold a pencil, but it wasn't until 2008 that the writing bug bit me and refused to let go. This sounds cheesy, but a story idea came to me in a dream one night, and I couldn't get it out of my head. I wanted to know what happened next, so I did the only thing I could think to do: write the story so I could read it and find out!

Over the next few years—interspersed with the births of my three kids—I dabbled in story writing in a couple different genres. In 2014, after my youngest was a year old, I got serious about writing for publication and shared my work with my best friend, who is a multi-published author in the general market. She took me under her wing and corrected all my newbie writing errors, but she also encouraged me and inspired me to write better and better stories.

As for how I balance writing with my other life as a professional cellist (playing a lot of freelance gigs, including weddings and the occasional orchestra concert) and pianist (as a

choral accompanist for a local middle school and high school), I've learned the fine art of prioritizing. During busy music seasons, my writing usually gets put on the back burner. Similarly, when I'm deep in drafting mode or on deadline with revisions, I don't take on quite so much on the music side. And sometimes I make an intentional choice to take a week or two off from all professional pursuits and focus on my family.

Both music and writing feed my soul—as well as feed each other—and they're both wired so deeply into my DNA that I can't not do them, so I pray for a lot of wisdom in how to manage my schedule and trust that God will give me the time I need to do what he's called me to do.

FF: What's next from you? Can readers hope for more stories from Sedgwick County?

I am working on a sequel to *Roots of Wood and Stone* that features with two secondary characters from that book: Garrett's sister, Lauren, and his grandmother, Rosie. After a tailspin in her late teens, Lauren's life is finally on track. Her food blog is successful, her photography studio bustling, and her battle with bulimia seems to be under control. But an unexpected wrinkle appears in the form of Carter Douglas, the summer fling whose rejection launched her downward spiral. When old feelings reappear with new strength, can Lauren risk her heart to love a man who already broke it once?

TV meteorologist Carter Douglas has a job he never thought he'd take in a city where he never planned to live . . . and comes face-to-face with a woman he never thought he'd see again. He's determined to make the most of this second chance with

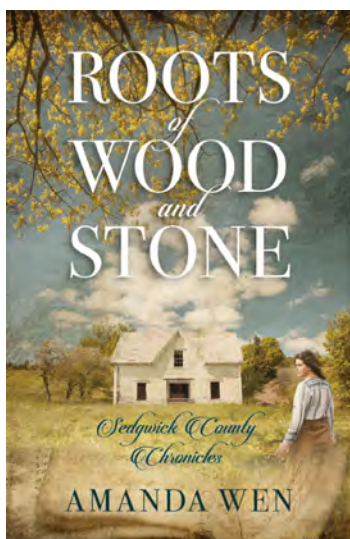
Lauren, but when circumstances force the same decision he made as a teenager, will he have the courage to make a different choice?

When Lauren's elderly grandmother calls out a name from the depths of dementia, the name of a man her family has never heard of, Lauren and her family seek the truth. Who was this man? Who was he to her grandmother? Their journey takes them to the 1950s, when a gently blossoming love attempts to withstand a storm of racial prejudice and separation. As stories are told and secrets revealed, Lauren and Carter embark on a journey of forgiveness and second chances that will change their lives forever. **FF**

Visit Amanda Wen's author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/author/amanda-wen>

<https://familyfiction.christianbook.com/roots-of-wood-and-stone-1/amanda-wen/9780825446689/pd/5446689?event=ESRCG>



Roots of Wood and Stone

Amanda Wen

Kregel

Genres: Romance





HISTORICAL ROMANCE:

ELIZABETH CAMDEN

The Prince of Spies

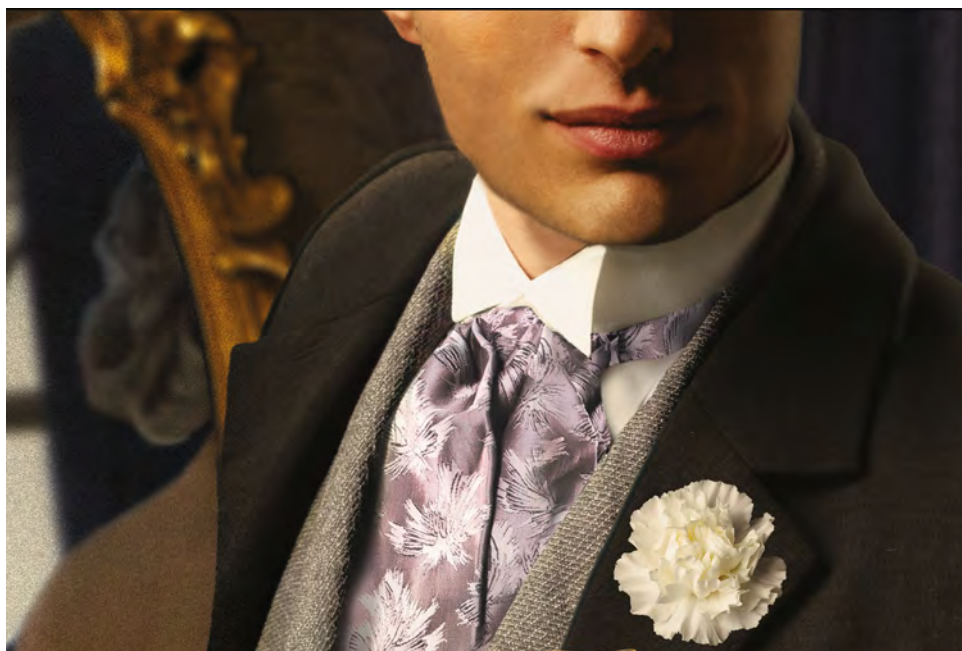
Christian fiction author **Elizabeth Camden** is best known for her historical novels set in Gilded Age America featuring clever heroines and richly layered story lines. In this interview, she shares her thoughts and inspirations behind the characters and the inspiration behind her latest novel, ***The Prince of Spies***, the third book in her *Hope and Glory Trilogy*. Her novels have won the **RITA** and **Christy Awards** and have appeared on the **CBA bestsellers** list. She lives in Orlando, Florida, with her husband, who graciously tolerates her intimidating stockpile of books.

FF: Can you describe the plot of *The Prince of Spies*?

The novel is set in 1902 among the political high society of Washington, D.C. It deals with two people who fall in love despite three generations of family conflict standing between them. Luke and Marianne initially decide family loyalty must take precedence over their feelings for each other and try to resist their attraction, because the stakes have never been higher. Marianne's father is a congressman on the verge of important legislation that will affect the food industry for the entire nation, while Luke is equally determined to scuttle it.

FF: How does *The Prince of Spies* fit into the *Hope and Glory Trilogy*?

This is the last book of the trilogy, but it can easily be read as a stand-alone novel. The trilogy features three siblings, and each novel focuses on an important but little-known facet of American history. The first book, *The Spice King*, focuses on the Department of Agriculture and its role helping diversify



crops, spices, and imported food. The second novel, *A Gilded Lady*, features the final year of the McKinley administration and internal drama at the White House following the president's assassination. *The Prince of Spies* deals with the decades-long effort to pass the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906.

FF: What are some of the selling points of this novel?

This book delves into the little-known and fascinating history of the Poison Squad, a group of daring young men who risked their lives to test the safety of drugs and preservatives in the early 20th century.

It features a classic Romeo and Juliet type of conflict in which two people fall in love despite generations of family rivalry. It is far and away the most romantic novel I've ever written.

The Prince of Spies is the final book of a trilogy, and it features Luke Delacroix, the character readers have been intrigued with since he appeared in the first book. I have fielded more questions and requests about Luke Delacroix and his fate than all my previous characters combined!

FF: You are known for writing heroines with interesting professions. How did you accomplish this in *The Prince of Spies*?

Marianne is a photographer who works for the Department of the Interior. The U.S. government has a long history of employing women in professional capacities, and Marianne's job is to document the changing physical landscape of the city as old government buildings are torn down in favor of the grand, classical monuments we see today. The novel also addresses the challenges presented by the creation of the National Mall, which required numerous government buildings and a major railroad to be removed to make way for the mall as we know it today.

FF: What role do spiritual themes play in this novel?

The novel focuses on a long-running family feud, which is still being fought among the older generation. As such, the younger characters must wrestle with the biblical commandment of honoring their mother and father while trying to hold true to their own values. Family dynamics play a major role in the book, leading into topics such as forgiveness, faithfulness, mercy, and love.

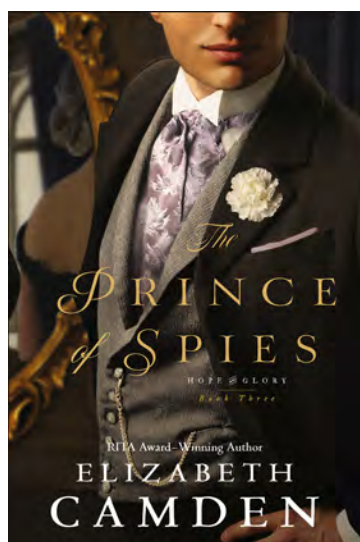
FF: What is the takeaway message you'd like readers to have from this novel?

With all my novels, I hope the reader feels like they've learned something about history while enjoying a complex and thrilling love story. In this novel I also address some of the joys and heartaches of family life. The takeaway message is about how to savor the blessings we have been given, while learning to stride through the darker times with fortitude and grace. **FF**

Visit Elizabeth Camden's author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/elizabeth-camden>

<https://familyfiction.christianbook.com/the-prince-of-spies-3/elizabeth-camden/9780764232138/pd/4232138?event=ESRCG>



Prince of Spies

Hope and Glory #3

Elizabeth Camden

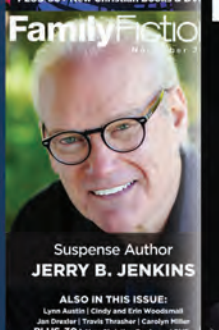
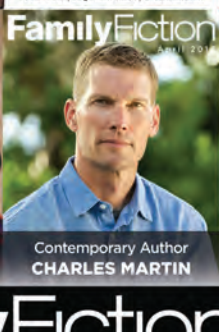
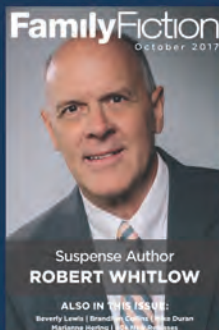
Bethany House

Genres: Historical, Romance

Release Date: February 16, 2021

Buy Now





FamilyFiction.com

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF CHRISTIAN FICTION BOOKS & AUTHORS

#JesusToldStories



HISTORICAL ROMANCE: JOCELYN GREEN

Shadows of the White City

Historical romance author **Jocelyn Green** inspires faith and courage as the award-winning and bestselling author of numerous fiction and nonfiction books, including *The Mark of the King*, and *Wedded to War*. Her latest novel, ***Shadows of the White City*** is the second book in her *The Windy City Saga* series.

FF: *Shadows of the White City* takes place in Chicago during the World's Fair of 1893. What is so special about this setting?

The World's Fair itself was spectacular. With my heroine, Sylvie Townsend, acting as a part-time tour guide, readers get an inside look into many aspects of the Fair. Part of what made it such an amazing place was that, in addition to six hundred acres of the world's most impressive accomplishments and inventions, people from all over the world connected in one place. The Midway, especially, played host to cultures from across the globe, opening people's eyes to other perspectives they'd never considered before. Now add to all of this the fact that, outside the dazzling fairgrounds, Chicago and the entire nation were in the midst of a financial depression. The juxtaposition of splendor and hardship is always a poignant one.

FF: What kind of research went into this book?

So much. There is a ton of information available on the World's Fair. Aside from reading every book and article that seemed relevant for my story (and then some), I toured Chicago with a guide who designed a tour based specifically on what I wanted to know and see before I started writing the novel. On the same trip, I spent time in the Chicago Historical Society's archives and the Newberry Library, reading primary source



material. A second trip to Chicago gave my daughter and me a chance to experience other aspects important to the novel, such as a concert with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, a visit to the Art Institute, and a stop at the Palmer House hotel.

FF: In what ways do you relate to the character of Sylvie Townsend?

Sylvie is a book-loving introvert who doesn't like crowds but enjoys public speaking when the topic interests her. That's me, completely. On a deeper level, I understand Sylvie's tendency to keep a tight rein on her daughter, Rose. As a parent of a teenager, I identify with that struggle to find the right balance of letting my daughter make her own decisions and mistakes as part of growing up and wanting to protect her from them.

As Sylvie finds out in the novel, that desire to protect can lead to both a grasping for control and the realization of how very little we do control. I relate to all of this.

FF: This is your second novel in *The Windy City Saga* series. We've gotten to know sisters Meg and Sylvie pretty well by now. Who will be the focus of the third book?

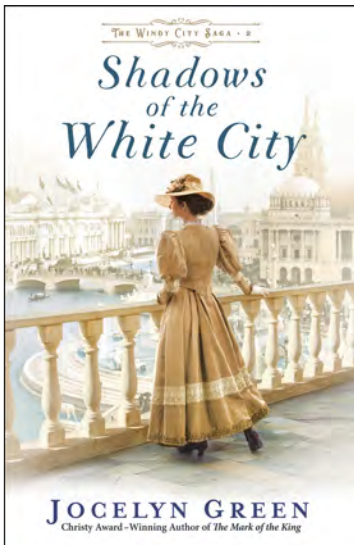
Book 3 in the series will pick up with Meg's adult daughter Olive in 1915, which is when the Eastland Disaster took place in the Chicago River. You'll meet Olive as a child in *Shadows of the White City*, and she'll be twenty-nine when we focus on her story. Each book in this series explores a seminal part of Chicago's history and how the Townsend family overcomes in the face of change and trials.

FF: Are the novels in this series classified as mysteries?

Readers will discover that these novels have an element of mystery to them, but they remain firmly in the historical fiction genre. The main priority of the story, as ever, is given to the developing characters and the history-in-the-making around them. **FF**

Visit Jocelyn Green's author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/jocelyn-green>



Shadows of the White City

The Windy City Saga #2

Jocelyn Green

Bethany House

Genres: Historical, Romance

Release Date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now

Book Summary:

The one thing Sylvie Townsend wants most is what she feared she was destined never to have—a family of her own. But taking in

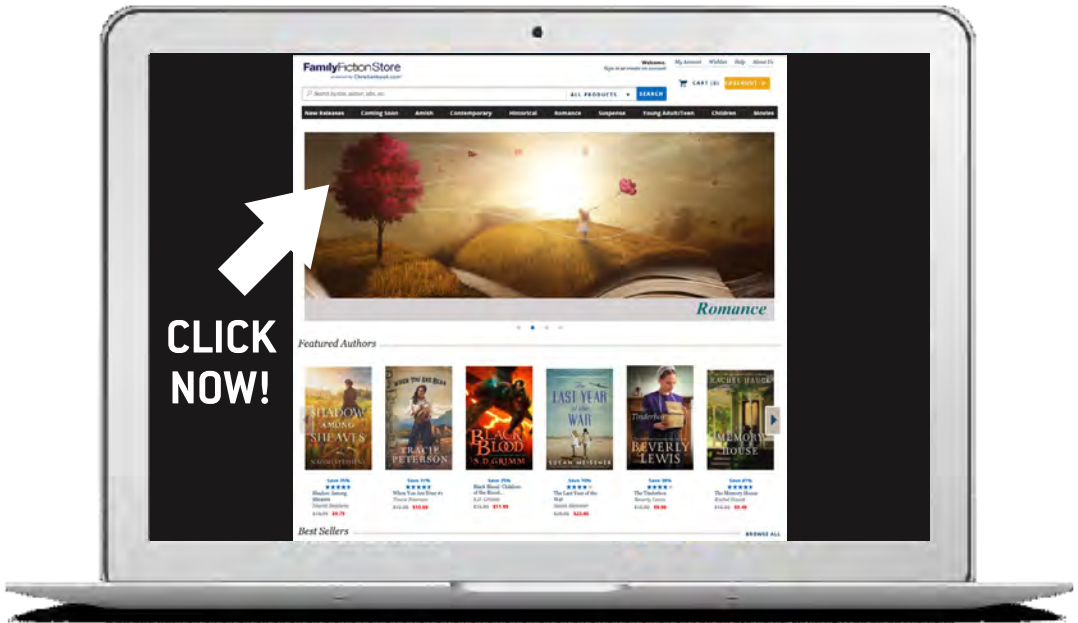
Polish immigrant Rose Dabrowski to raise and love quells those fears—until seventeen-year-old Rose goes missing at the World's Fair, and Sylvie's world unravels.

Brushed off by the authorities, Sylvie turns to her boarder, Kristof Bartok, for help. He is Rose's violin instructor and the concertmaster for the Columbian Exposition Orchestra, and his language skills are vital to helping Sylvie navigate the immigrant communities where their search leads.

From the glittering architecture of the fair to the dark houses of Chicago's poorest neighborhoods, they're taken on a search that points to Rose's long-lost family. Is Sylvie willing to let the girl go? And as Kristof and Sylvie grow closer, can she reconcile her craving for control with her yearning to belong?



Find ALL of Your Favorite Christian Fiction & Authors on the NEW www.FamilyFictionStore.com



ALL Your Christian Products in 1 Simple Site

Shop by Your Favorite Genre:

- Amish Fiction
- Contemporary Fiction
- Historical Fiction
- Romance Fiction
- Fantasy & Science Fiction
- End Times Fiction
- Suspense Fiction
- Children's Books
- Young Adult Fiction

Shop by Your Favorite Author:

Terri Blackstock, Wanda E. Brunstetter, Melody Carlson, Ted Dekker, Lynette Eason, Chris Fabry, Suzanne Woods Fisher, Karen Kingsbury, Beverly Lewis, C.S. Lewis, Charles Martin, DiAnn Mills, Tracie Peterson, Dani Pettrey, Francine Rivers, Joel C. Rosenberg, Kim Vogel Sawyer, Lauraine Snelling, Cindy Woodsmall & 100s more!

Shop Other Christian Products:

- Bibles & Bible Accessories
- Bible Studies & Curriculum
- Clothing & Accessories
- DVDs
- Gift & Home
- Homeschool
- Music
- Sunday School
- VBS



ROMANCE: COURTNEY WALSH

Is It Any Wonder

Christian romance author, **Courtney Walsh**, is the author of more than ten contemporary romance books. Her debut novel, *A Sweethaven Summer*, was a *New York Times* and *USA Today* e-book bestseller and a *Carol Award* finalist in the debut author category. In this interview, Courtney talks about her latest novel, *Is It Any Wonder*.

FF: What inspired you to write *Is It Any Wonder*?

I'm such a sucker for a romance about a couple who grew up together. The shared history, the potential for conflict in their backstory, the deep connection—I think these are my favorite relationships to explore, so it started there for me.

FF: This story centers on the couple's shared golden birthday—why did you choose to make this concept a key piece of the story?

I don't really believe in fate, but I do love that there's a bit of that feeling of something being "meant to be" if two people are connected by a golden birthday. It has a tiny bit of a magical element to it, which I think lends itself so well to romance stories.

FF: What do you love about the Nantucket setting?

Can I say everything? I've been to Nantucket twice, and both times I was just completely smitten by how charming everything is. It's like everything you imagine when you think of an idyllic island setting. The beaches, the ocean, the cobblestone, the brick, the cottages, the history—it's just perfection!



FF: This romance is a first love revisited—how was writing this love story different from others you have written?

I think you have the ability to go deeper with characters who have a past. These relationships have instant “meat” to them because, as an author, I get to unravel that past and maybe heal some old wounds. Truth be told, if I could write exclusively second-chance romances I totally would!

FF: Was there a character in this novel that you especially enjoyed crafting?

I always love writing older, wiser, feistier characters, so Maggie was definitely fun to write in this story. But I really enjoyed writing Louisa. I think writing a character who is a little quirker than my other heroines was particularly fun.

FF: This book deals with difficult family history. What did you learn about family relationships and how they affect romantic relationships from writing this story?

I think it's interesting as an adult to explore family relationships, because no matter how old you get, the impact of your family is still really, really evident. Family secrets and hurts and trauma changes and shapes us into who we are. I was listening to a speaker recently and she said, "What you don't deal with in your late twenties will come back to haunt you in your fifties." And I think that's true. If you don't unpack your childhood, it'll keep coming back—and because we care so much what our families think, it definitely informs who we choose to love.

FF: Were any characters or events in the story inspired by people in your life or experiences you have had?

Honestly, no. This one was all fiction. Ha!

FF: What role does faith play in this story?

I think faith comes into play in every story I write, whether it's overt or more subtle. I tend to really lean in to the theme of forgiveness because I've had to learn over and over how crucial it is—to forgive others, to forgive ourselves, to not grow bitter when someone hurts or wrongs us, or even to not foster anger with God when life doesn't go as planned. These are all things both Cody and Louisa are learning and wrestling with. I feel like these are the kinds of universal things we can all relate to because for whatever reason, no matter how much we know we need to forgive, it's never easy to do.

FF: In your view, why do we love stories of second chances so much?

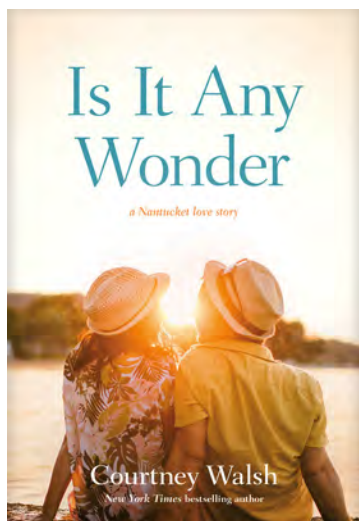
There's something about two people who were always meant to be together finding their way back to each other when life or circumstances have thrown them off course. We're instantly cheering for them.

FF: What do you hope readers will be inspired by in this novel?

I always want my books to feel like an escape, especially from the realities of life these days. I want readers to feel uplifted and hopeful and whisked away to a stunning location where they can get lost in a love story. But deeper than that, I hope that readers are challenged to forgive. Not only anyone who might've wronged them, but themselves. I think oftentimes forgiving ourselves is much, much harder than forgiving someone else.

Visit Courtney Walsh's author page:

<https://www.familyfiction.com/authors/courtney-walsh>



Is It Any Wonder

A Nantucket Love Story

Courtney Walsh

Tyndale

Genres: Contemporary, Romance

Release Date: April 6, 2021

Buy Now



Book Summary:

Can a promise made as kids bring them back together as adults? In this Nantucket-set beach read, “master of the genre” (Midwest Book Review) Courtney Walsh delivers a sparkling inspirational romance about first love and second chances. Twelve years ago, Cody Boggs and Louisa Chambers made a pact that no matter where their lives took them, they’d return to Nantucket Island’s Brant Point Lighthouse on July 30, their shared golden birthday, and continue their tradition of exchanging birthday wishes. But that was before a tragic accident upended both of their lives, irrevocably pulling them apart.

Their worlds collide just months before that particular day when Louisa’s fledgling event planning company is hired by the local Coast Guard station, where she discovers Cody has recently returned to the island as the second in command. As they plan a regatta fundraiser, hoping to promote positive PR in the community, neither can deny the fireworks each encounter ignites. But working together also brings up memories of the day Cody’s father died, revealing secrets that have Cody and Louisa questioning everything they thought they knew and felt about their families and each other.



HISTORICAL FANTASY: J. J. FISCHER

The Sword in His Hand

Author **J. J. Fischer** began writing her first novel at age fourteen and completed her Bachelor degree in English Literature and Creative Writing in 2012. Also a qualified psychologist with undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in clinical psychology, Her dream is to write stories that weave together her love for Jesus, her passion for mental health, and her struggles with chronic illness.

In this interview, she talks with us about her latest book, ***The Sword in His Hand***, which is the first book in her new series, *The Darcentaria Duology*.

FF: How long have you been writing?

I've been writing forever, if you count my childhood scrawls and that amazing anthology of zoo animals I painstakingly wrote and illustrated during kindergarten, to rather limited acclaim. But I "officially" began writing in 2006, when I was fourteen, during a family holiday around Australia. On the west coast, in a place called Jurien Bay, I had a dream that became the opening scene of my debut novel. It contained pretty much every cliché known to man, and eventually found its way to the electronic trash can, but by that time I'd seriously caught the writing bug.

During high school, I wrote every chance I had; rather bizarrely, usually at night during thunderstorms, but I kept my book a secret from all but my immediate family. Seeing the film *Miss Potter*—about the life of author-illustrator Beatrix Potter—inspired me to take my writing more seriously. But, honestly, the first ten years' worth of writing is pretty dodgy. I hope those drafts never see the light of day.

FF: Why did you become a writer?

There's a wonderful saying: "Reading is like breathing in, writing is like breathing out" (Pam Allyn). I think every writer first falls in love with stories, so much that they reach a point where they just need to create stories of their own.

Stories do so much for us—they allow us to test out ideas, to teach and inspire and challenge, to work through our triumphs and our pains, and to explore what it is to be human. Fiction, in particular, does a wonderful job of reflecting truth. As a Christian, I also believe that all stories are a part of the ultimate Story—the redemption story God has been writing for us since the world began. Composing stories that reflect and honor this profound narrative is kind of like shining a light on a diamond. It only really illuminates one small part of a complex, multifaceted whole, but in that moment, you catch a glimpse of life-changing truth. And capturing that moment in a story—there's really nothing like it.

For me, writing is like a reflex. It's an instinct and a creative impulse and a way of making sense of what's happened to me. I wouldn't say I'm deliriously happy when I write, but it's definitely how I feel closest to God. It's also a huge part of how I worship Him.

As for writing fantasy in particular, that's a no-brainer for me. Having a job/pastime where I can create worlds—which are always rather paltry echoes of the world that God has created—reminds me of the fact that humans are made in the image of their Creator. Our God is a creative and inventive God, and human creativity is a reflection of divine creativity. And yet, the more I write, the more I'm convinced that I'm not really creating

but rearranging.

In that sense, world-building makes me feel terrifyingly small... and at the same time, connected to the God who didn't just plonk landmarks on a map and call them things like "The Forbidden Forest" and "The Dark Lands," but actually came up with all the building blocks in the first place. Incredible, right?

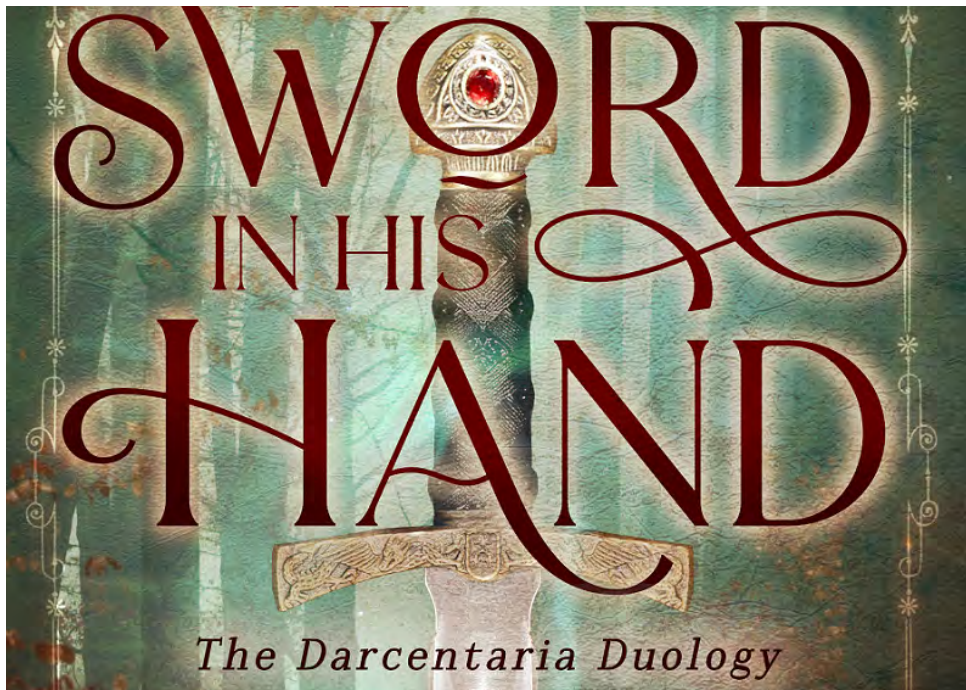
FF: How do you go about inventing a fantasy world?

It's really a simultaneous process. I usually see a character first, and that character determines certain things about the world—where did they come from? What climate do they live in? What is their profession? Do they have any special abilities?

At the same time, I start working on the map. It might be a sketchy outline at first, but as inspiration strikes, I'll start to fill in the blanks. Reality is always stranger than fiction, so history is a wonderful place to begin with. I didn't have Pinterest when I wrote my first duology, but now that I do... oh, it's amazing. I could waste a whole day collecting images for a new series.

FF: How do you try and weave in a Christian perspective?

This is honestly one of the most difficult parts of writing Christian fiction. As an author, I think you first have to decide on how explicitly Christian your story will be: is it allegory? Does it explicitly mention God, Jesus, and the Bible? Does it reflect Christian themes or focus on a particular aspect of the Gospel? Deciding on your target audience, I think, will influence what kind of book you write. For me, I wanted to write books that could be read by both Christians and non-Christians—books that were deep but not preachy.



All of my books reflect my Christian faith in different ways. My first series is basically portal fantasy, so it was necessary in the story to reference Christianity directly (though in the book, I refer to it by its first-century name, “The Way”). My second series is much more allegorical, in the tradition of C. S. Lewis’ *Narnia*. And my third series is also allegorical, but the parallels are much deeper and, I think, more complex. So while the Christian elements are always clear across all of my work, it’s sometimes more obvious or more subtle, depending on what the story calls for.

FF: What’s your favorite part of the writing process?

There’s this incredible part in the last quarter or so of finishing a book, where there’s no writer’s block or plot issues... just amazing flow. I turn into some kind of nutty professor who

forgets to drink water and take normal meals. I know how the story will end but I'm also writing it just to see what happens. That's definitely my favorite part.

FF: How does it feel to finish writing the characters you have poured yourself into?

Honestly, I miss them almost as soon as I type "The End." But it also feels as if once they're on the page, they become alive—a bit like imaginary friends. I know that sounds weird, but they do feel like real people. Hence why I always cry when one of them dies.

FF: What do you envision your characters doing now?

Look, considering what trauma I usually put them through, they're probably having a well-deserved cup of tea and plotting revolt.

FF: What are you currently working on?

Since finishing my first novel in 2018 (which took 12.5 years all up!), I've become a tad prolific. I'm currently working on my sixth novel, the middle installment of a fantasy series called *The Nightingale Trilogy*. It's set in a post-apocalyptic world where nostalgic memories are bought and sold as currency and people pay a price to selectively forget their past. I'm absolutely loving it so far and hope to share it with the world either in 2021 or 2022.

FF: What are some of your writing "must haves"? (Drinks, snacks, supplies, etc.)

Ooh, good question. I tend to eat rather mindlessly, so I try not to snack while I'm writing. But peppermint tea is a winner... actually, every tea is kind of a winner for me. Do you have T2 in

America? It's absolutely amazing. Other than that, my list of essentials is pretty short—just my trusty laptop and keeping my phone on silent so I don't get distracted and start doom scrolling on Facebook.

**FF: What is your favorite time period to write about?
Or read about?**

This is a bit strange coming from a fantasy writer, but I absolutely love to read historical fiction—Tamera Alexander and Joanna Davidson Politano are some of my all-time favorite authors. I love stories set in the American frontier or Regency England or pre-Industrial Revolution England... pirates and treasure are an all-time favorite (you can thank my childhood love of Enid Blyton for that). I also adore medieval fantasy. Honestly, probably the only thing I don't enjoy so much is contemporary fiction—but I can probably be swayed on that point too.

As for what I want to write—it's basically just fantasy, fantasy, fantasy. That being said, I'd love to write a romantic comedy one day, and I'm working on a couple of children's books at the moment.

FF: What Christian authors or fantasy writers have influenced your writing?

Fantasy wise, my favorite authors include the greats—C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien—and a rather wide variety of other authors: Robin McKinley, Kristin Cashore (I adored *Fire and Graceling*), Suzanne Collins (*The Hunger Games*), Neil Gaiman (*Stardust*), John White (*The Archives of Anthropos Series*) and William Goldman (*The Princess Bride*). It's not fantasy exactly, but I also love Markus Zusak (*The Book Thief*).

As for Christian authors, I adore the Mark of the Lion Trilogy by Francine Rivers—it's historical fiction, but it was and still is one of the best Christian fiction books I've ever read. And, of course, *Christy* by Catherine Marshall. Both these authors have shaped my writing in such incredible ways.

FF: What inspiration do you use to create your characters and world?

I'll probably get in trouble if I admit that I use the real world and people around me as inspiration... but in all honesty, I do draw a lot from my own life, particularly my battles with chronic illness, anxiety, grief, and depression. My heroes and heroines usually have a lot of me in them, but in different ways. There are also traces of my loved ones in all my stories—it might be as subtle as a reworking of their name on a map (who doesn't want to have an imaginary lake named after them??) or weaving some of their personality traits into a character.

Of course, if I'm going to use real people, I always try to make sure the comparison is complimentary

FF: How has becoming an author changed and formed you as a person?

It's definitely helped me to mature and process my own life. Writing is phenomenal therapy (I can say that because I'm a trained psychologist). It allows me to explore alternate points-of-view and to develop empathy with people whose shoes I wouldn't normally inhabit. It's really a tremendous way to grow as a person.

I must admit, however, that I'm a little worried at times at how much I enjoy writing villains.

FF: If you could spend a day with one fictional character, who would you pick and what would you do?

Look, I'm a big fan of Maximus from *Tangled*, but you probably mean a human character, right? Or humanoid? In that case, I'm moderately obsessed with Korg the rock monster from *Thor 3*. So I'd buy him lunch and ask him all about the revolution that failed because he didn't print enough pamphlets and only his Mum and her boyfriend turned up (whom he hates).

FF: What would you like readers to take away from your books?

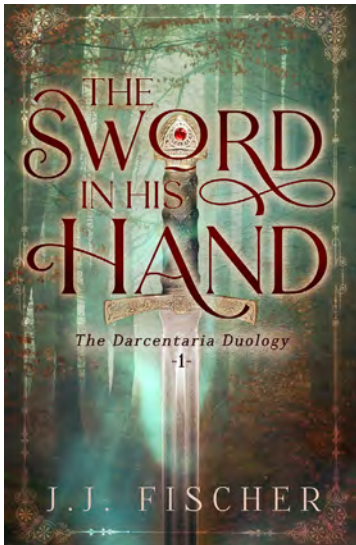
I think the best stories are the ones that change us. The ones where we close the book and walk away, but we cannot help but be irrevocably changed—transformed, even. I've read hundreds of books—maybe thousands—but I continually come back to the stories that provoke deep emotion from me. The stories that frustrate and inspire and challenge and encourage me, that maybe even rock the foundations of my comfortable world.

Perhaps it's too ambitious a goal, but I really hope that every one of my stories impacts my readers in some way. My faith is the cornerstone of my life—without it, I would not be the person I am today—and so faith is really what colors my stories. Many books indelibly imprint on the mind—and fewer still make their mark on the heart—but I also want to write fiction that feeds the soul. My books celebrate hope, courage, love, and perseverance in the midst of suffering, violence, oppression, and hatred. They feature characters who seek to triumph in the midst of adversity and struggle.

It has recently become fashionable to have a “life verse”—a Bible verse that speaks into a significant part of one’s life. In all honesty, my “life verse” has to be Psalm 42:7: “Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.” As a character in my second book muses—inspired by this very verse—the deep in us is only an echo of the depth of God. I could write my entire life and not uncover even a little corner of the richness of the Author of life. But to reflect that depth is my calling, and it is my honest delight to honor it. **FF**

Visit J. J. Fischer’s author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/j-j-fischer>



The Sword in His Hand

The Darcentaria Duology # 1

J. J. Fischer

Emerald House Group

Genres: Historical Fantasy

Release Date: February 8, 2021

Buy Now



Book Summary:

For hundreds of years, strange things have been washing up on the shores of Darcentaria. But when a young foreign woman named El is found unconscious on the beach amidst the burning wreckage of a strange metal craft, the villagers of Odessa are immediately suspicious—is she an agent of the Dalriadan Empire, their cruel oppressors for as long as they can remember? Or does she come from the Outside, the vast and legendary lands beyond their borders from which no man or woman alive has ever returned?

Torsten Eiseler, a talented young swordsman, has spent the last nine years of his life wrongfully imprisoned by his uncle, the Empire's ruler. Betrayed and deceived at every turn, Torsten has survived by keeping a firm grip on his sword—and by staying well away from anything to do with the Outside. But when his young sister is murdered, Torsten finds himself irrevocably drawn to El despite her Outsider heritage—and he begins to question everything he has been told about her world.

Intrigued by the existence of a powerful and dangerously advanced world within his reach, the Empire's ruler, Jurien Arminius, launches a hunt for El and the two Outsiders that arrived with her—the ones who could help him win his war against Torsten and the rebellion that threatens to topple his Empire.

Suddenly, Torsten is forced to choose between defeating his long-term enemy or saving the woman he has come to love.



YA/TEEN: JESS CORBAN

A Gentle Tyranny

Jess Corban has a degree in communications and, perhaps more instructive, thirteen stamps in her passport. After college, a chance interview at a small publisher for an even smaller position sparked a love for writing that turned into twelve nonfiction books. She lives with her family in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, where she finds inspiration in a sky full of stars and hiking the Canyon of the Kings. In this interview, she discusses her debut novel, ***A Gentle Tyranny***, a book that presents a new twist to the dystopian genre, delivering heart-pounding action, thought-provoking revelations, and a setting as lush as the jungles of Central America.

FF: What inspired the storyline, setting, and characters found in *A Gentle Tyranny*?

A Gentle Tyranny began with a question. I was feeling the weight of what seemed to be an endless string of worldwide news stories reporting heinous crimes against women, and in a quiet moment wondered, What if we could do something about it? Before I finished showering, the concept of the series was born.

The characters and setting were fleshed out as time went on. While I was deliberating over the location, I took a family trip to Belize. I've loved Central America since studying there in college, but traveling through the lush jungle and unique features again, I knew exactly where Nedé belonged.

FF: Who did you write this book for?

I wrote this series for YA (Young Adult) fans who wonder whether masculinity still has a place in this world, wish women didn't have to fear for their safety, or would like to believe men and

women can live in harmony. But mostly I wrote it for anyone who loves a good story.

FF: What kind of research did you do while writing this book?

All the best kinds! For this series, I sailed the Caribbean, explored jungles on horseback, kayaked through dark caves, learned archery, climbed ancient ruins, and gave myself permission to eat every tropical fruit I could get my hands on. Of course, there were countless hours of online research as well, but I'm a firm believer that the best descriptions are birthed from hands-on experience. That was my excuse, anyway.

FF: Tell us about the core themes of *A Gentle Tyranny*. How do you hope these themes will resonate with and challenge your readers?

I prefer to take a story-first approach and let any themes develop naturally. In other words, I didn't come to this story with an agenda. But as I wrestled the initial question onto the page, some very organic refrains began to surface—the corrupting nature of unchecked power, the unique strengths men and women each possess, the age-old debate over whether the ends justify the means, to name a few. I hope readers will be challenged by the questions raised—as I was!—even as they're immersed in the story.

FF: How is the perspective of your *Nedé Rising Series* unique compared to other novels in the dystopian YA fiction genre?

There's a reason YA dystopian is so popular, and I love it as much as anyone. But from the start I wanted my protagonist to be believable. I'm all about strong female characters, but I was also growing tired of the I'm-an-invincible-female-who-can-do-

everything-better-than-a-man trope. I've tried to strike a more realistic balance between strong and dependent, remarkable but still human.

Nedé itself is also unique because it's rooted in a blending of cultures and races from around the world, so you get this very inclusive, diverse sisterhood. Although prejudices unfold, they manifest a bit differently than the tensions we see today. And rather than take a futuristic dystopian approach, I think readers will find the more rural ambiance, combined with Latin flair and horses, fresh and inviting.

FF: How did you become a writer?

I got my "break" writing nonfiction (under a pseudonym). I was working for a small publishing company, and my boss allowed me to submit a proposal for a project they needed. She took a chance on me, for which I'll be forever indebted. I've been writing ever since, in various genres under various names.

**FF: What made you want to write young adult fiction?
What about the genre do you enjoy the most?**

The funny thing is I had no intention of writing YA—no intention of writing fiction at all—before the question which sparked this book wormed into my head. As a nonfiction author at the time, (if I can be honest) I found my fiction-writing friends a wee bit batty—talking about their characters like they were dear family members, frantically rewriting entire endings because the character "made them do it," getting hyped up on big ideas and too much caffeine. But that passion for a story, the characters that pop up unbidden or go unexpected places, the thrill of a twist you didn't see coming—that's exactly what I love about writing fiction now.

FF: How would you describe the role of religion in this book?

To my knowledge, every civilization in history has wrestled with questions about how we got here and where we go when we die—religion, if you will. Nedé is no different. The diverse ways Nedéans practice religion, or abstain from it, reflect the myriad cultures of the original foremothers. Although Reina wrestles with questions about the virtues and her mother's beliefs, religion isn't a main focus.

FF: You've chosen to donate a portion of the royalties from the *Nedé Rising Series* to help protect women from trafficking. Can you share some background about how you became passionate about this cause?

The statistics are startling, and what these women endure is horrific. I'm so grateful for the attention anti-trafficking organizations have received over the past decade, but there is still much work to do. As long as there are human beings kept and used against their will, they deserve our compassion and action. It's time to end it.

FF: Can you give us a sneak peek into book two? What are some of your other upcoming projects?

I can tell you this: *A Brutal Justice* delivers more romance, more twists, more luscious scenery, and leaves no question unanswered. I cannot wait for it to hit shelves! (And, thankfully, we won't have to wait long.) While I adore *A Gentle Tyranny*, I've saved the proverbial best for last. As for other projects, I'm still wrapped up in the world of Nedé. I'm currently developing another project based on this series, which has been a lot of fun. I can't share much now, but you can get updates by subscribing to my newsletter or any of the social media handles listed on my website. **FF**

Visit Jess Corban's author page HERE:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/jess-corban>

<https://familyfiction.christianbook.com/a-gentle-tyranny-hardcover-1/jess-corban/9781496448330/pd/448331?event=ESRCG>



A Gentle Tyranny

Nedé Rising Series #1

Jess Corban

Wander/Tyndale

Genres: YA/Teen, Dystopian,
Romance

Release Date: April 6, 2021

Buy Now



Book Summary:

What if women unraveled the evils of patriarchy? With men safely “gentled” in a worldwide Liberation,

the matriarchy of Nedé has risen from the ashes. Seventeen-year-old Reina Pierce has never given a thought to the Brutes of old. Itching to escape her mother’s finca and keeping her training for the Alexia and her forbidden friendship a secret, her greatest worry is which Destiny she’ll choose on her next birthday. But when she’s selected as a candidate for the Succession instead, competing to become Nedé’s ninth Matriarch, she discovers their Eden has come at a cost she’s not sure she’s willing to pay.



ROMANCE: CYNTHIA RUCHTI

Facing the Dawn

Christian romance author **Cynthia Ruchti** tells her stories through novels, nonfiction, devotionals, and at speaking events for women. Her books have received numerous awards, including the **Carol Award**, **Christian Retailing's BEST Award**, and **Inspirational Readers' Choice Award**, as well as being a finalist for the **Christy Awards** and **RT Reviews Inspirational Novel of the Year**. Cynthia serves as the professional relations liaison for **American Christian Fiction Writers**. Cynthia and her grade school sweetheart husband live in the heart of Wisconsin, not far from their children and grandchildren. In this interview, she shares her thoughts and inspirations behind her latest novel, ***Facing the Dawn***.

FF: Please tell our readers about *Facing the Dawn*.

In *Facing the Dawn*, I had the opportunity to explore some of life's toughest challenges and their effect on family, fragility, faith, and friendship. Through the pages, we watch the characters maneuver through the kinds of emotional jolts that shred us in an instant and the slowly growing traumas that fade us until we feel like a garment left too long in the sun. Exhausted by life, Mara Jacobs thought she had nothing left to lose. She was wrong. She also believed that a bleached-out life is devoid of hope. With the help of a curious crew of tenacious friends, she discovers what it really means to face the dawn.

FF: What inspired you to write this novel?

In its early stages, I thought the book would trace the path of a worn-out mom with a snarky sense of humor who works her way back to enjoying life. It became so much more than that.



It doesn't take more than a line or an overheard conversation to set my imagination racing. In the case of *Facing the Dawn*, it was a bumper sticker: "Proud Parent of a D Student." Funny and sad at the same time. Like life often is. But as I grew to know the characters, the plot both surprised and gripped me. I saw "Mara" in the women around me. I felt her—and their—distress. Part of the inspiration emerged from watching women deal with what seemed like crushing burdens, but they kept going, kept moving forward. How? The question pressed me to keep writing so I could discover the answer.

FF: *Facing the Dawn* tackles some tough emotional issues including depression, grief, and forgiveness. Was it difficult to write about these sensitive topics?

It's always a challenge to write about tough topics. My heart is to treat the subjects tenderly, not making assumptions but

listening careful to those who ache, to grow in compassion as I write, and to offer the hope that hems us when we unravel. Some of the scenes from *Facing the Dawn* crept too close to home during the writing. But the God of Hope grew closer too.

FF: Although *Facing the Dawn* discusses life's struggles, it is ultimately a book of hope. Can you explain how this book can be an encouragement to those who are suffering?

I wouldn't write novels like this if I didn't strongly believe that sometimes all we humans need as a handhold is to know we've been heard. Someone was listening. Someone cares. Someone wrote about how it really feels. When we see our own pain in the pages, it validates what we're going through. Or it gives us insight into what people we care about are experiencing. We watch the characters gain their footing, and so do we.

FF: What other lessons can be found in your book?

One of the strongest takeaways within *Facing the Dawn* is the power of friendship. Friends who endure. Friends who don't shy away when we're no fun to be around. Friends who find creative ways to gentle us back to spiritual, emotional, or relational health. While creating this story, I reconnected with a Forever Friend I hadn't seen in decades. Our bond remained firm despite the distance and the passage of time. She helped form some of the qualities readers will find in Mara's forever friend.

FF: Mara Jacobs, the female protagonist in *Facing the Dawn*, is battling the home front and trying to manage all areas of her life effectively. But she is starting to drown in all of her responsibilities. What can readers learn from Mara's situation?

How many of us would have to admit that we value putting on a brave face, toughing it out on our own, taking on more than

is healthy, trying to manufacture answers rather than reaching out and receiving help when it's offered? We mistakenly assume it's a badge of courage if we soldier on alone. But one soldier doesn't make a very good army. We need each other. The bravest thing we can do sometimes is ask for and accept help. Yes, we may have to face the dawn alone, in one sense. But help is always nearby, even if it takes us a while to notice.

FF: In addition to being an award-winning author, you have also worked a number of years in the inspirational publishing world. Can you please tell readers how your experiences have helped foster your writing ability?

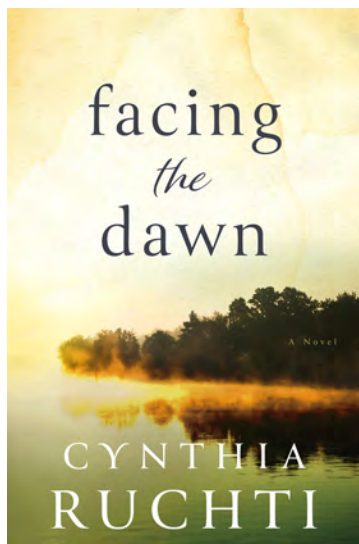
My positions with American Christian Fiction Writers and my role now as a literary agent have connected me heart-to-heart with retailers, libraries, book clubs, readers, media, and other authors. I have such respect for all aspects of the publishing and reading communities. And they truly are communities. It's been enlightening to glimpse behind the scenes, build enriching relationships, grow to understand the unique challenges on every level, and appreciate how we are bound by a common goal and related by our love of the power of story.

FF: What are you working on next?

More novels are always in the works. And because I write both fiction and nonfiction—forged from my years writing scripts for a radio broadcast—I usually have at least one of each in some phase of development. A novel that taps into the all-too-common description of life as “busy” is calling to me right now. Sounds like a simple concept, but the complex characters and enchanting setting won't leave me alone. **FF**

Visit Cynthia Ruchti's author page

<https://www.familyfiction.com/authors/cynthia-ruchti>



Facing the Dawn

Cynthia Ruchti

Revell

Genres: Romance, Contemporary

Release Date: March 2, 2021

Buy Now

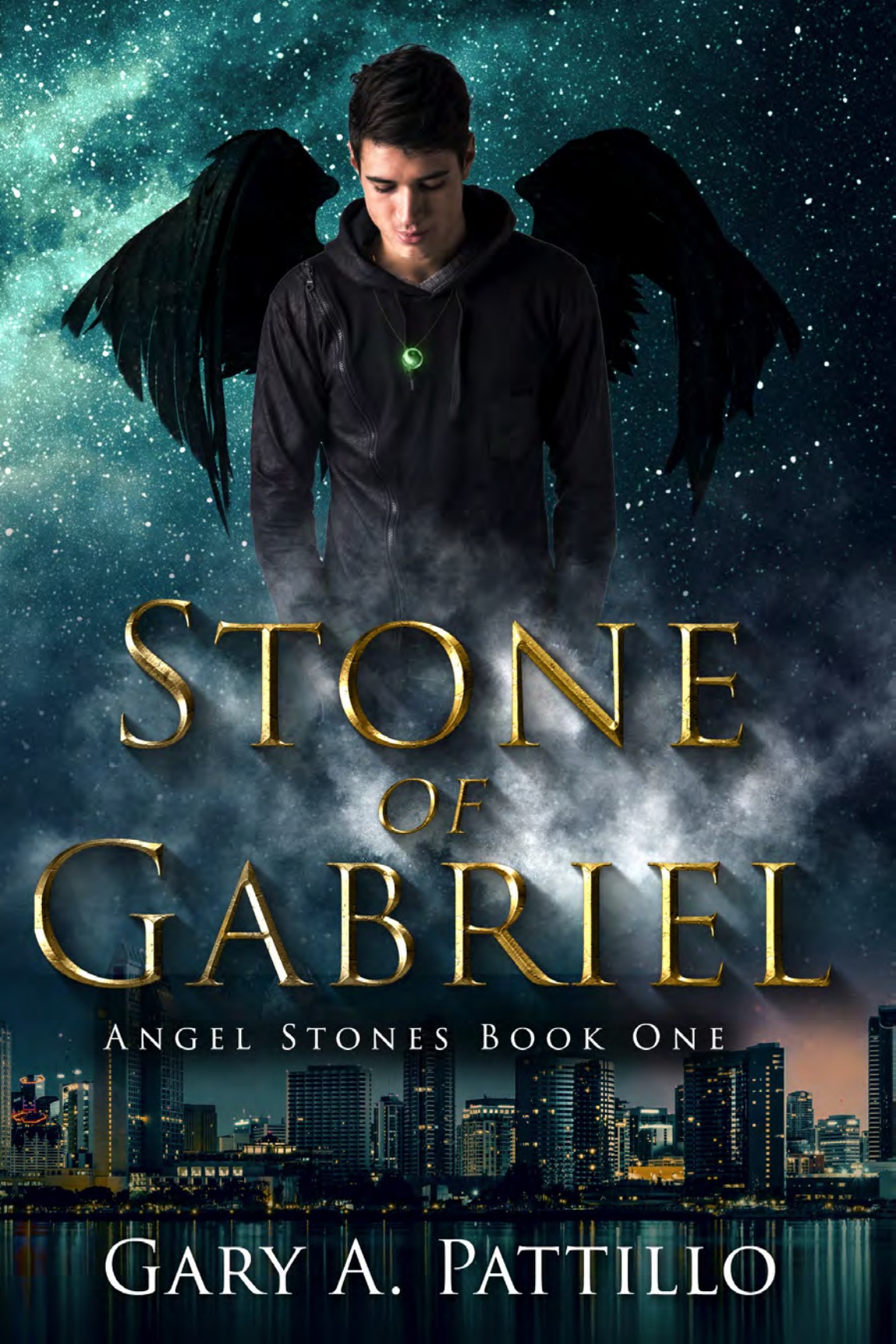


Book Summary:

Mara Jacobs has been struggling. While her humanitarian husband is digging wells in Africa and caring for widows and orphans, Mara has been battling the home front—

working a demanding yet unrewarding job, trying to manage three detention-prone kids, and suffering from exhaustion and depression. Even her own marriage is deteriorating after a three-year separation.

Then Liam's absence turns into something more, changing everything and plunging her into a sunless grief. As Mara leans on those around her to find her way to healing and renewed faith, she discovers that even when hope is tenuous and the future is unknown, we can be sure we are not forgotten . . . or unloved.



STONE OF GABRIEL

ANGEL STONES BOOK ONE

GARY A. PATTILLO

FANTASY: GARY PATTILLO

Stone of Gabriel

Thriller newcomer, **Gary Pattillo**, graduated from SDSU with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice Administration. After being a bit of a dilettante in careers ranging from convenience store manager to beer market specialist to insurance sales, Gary found his true talent writing crime fiction. In addition to writing fantasy urban thrillers, Gary's artistic pursuits include charcoal and pencil drawing. He lives in Southern California with his wife where together they have multiple children who fill his heart, and one (so far) grandchild in Canada. Being admitted into Mensa at the age of thirty-seven was one of his glowing milestones in life. He gives credit to God for everything he has, everything he is, and everything that he does. In this interview, Gary talks with us about his supernatural thriller, ***Stone of Gabriel***.

FF: What inspired the story in your novel?

For a couple of years before I started writing, I had a blog where I'd discuss various topics that interested me from the Bible. The more obscure, the more perspectives it could hold, the better. A friend and I would debate various aspects of these ideas until we could get a grasp on it, or until we needed to schedule a lunch with the pastor for further discussion.

These different concepts have sparked the ideas behind this book and the others I will be writing in succession. I sort of used the Stephen King approach in that I didn't have a full arc of the story in my mind when I began. I simply started with a stone, and how it came to be—this became my prologue which later was adapted to another form when I heard many people skip past the prologue.



After that, it was just a matter of who was going to find it, and what could it do. The rest I'll leave to the book and your adventure.

FF: What were your goals writing this novel?

Bringing to life some of the concepts mentioned in the Bible which may have a different interpretation than history predicated—things that give you an a-ha moment once you realize you've been coming at a problem from the wrong end.

Also, I wanted to add to the character and enjoyment of Christian reading as a whole. Couched in an easy to read story, I can explain some of my fun ideas or new takes on various interpretations.

Trying to reach a large audience, I incorporated characters from teen through adult. I also wanted to make the book family friendly so anyone could enjoy it. I would venture to guess teen and older would be the best demographic for this novel.

FF: What were your biggest challenges or surprises as you were writing this novel?

My biggest struggle was writing the downtime scenes. I found that I'm an action writer and like to keep things moving along. However, you cannot have a book written start to finish without a moment to take a breath here or there along the way.

Another challenge was to make sure not to assume that the reader was Christian. As much as I love my brothers and sisters in Christ, I hope my book also gets picked up by non-believers and it gives them an action-oriented story with points of Christian lore. We pick up a book like Percy Jackson without batting an eye, but when the theology is Christian in nature, the book gets pulled from the Science Fiction/Fantasy shelves and moved to a different category.

FF: What are the spiritual ideas or themes in this book?

It's a good versus evil plotline, but with Christian elements amplified throughout the novel. I wrote in a manner in which differing levels of understanding would get alternative bits of information. Granted, you could have never picked up a Bible and still enjoy the story. However, if you have some background, you will find it much more enjoyable.

FF: What characters, themes, or plot elements in this book come from real life?

This part was so much fun. I placed the majority of the storyline in my hometown of San Diego, California. Of course, I changed streets and store names, but locals will be able to pick out exactly where I'm talking about. In fact, the cityscape on the cover is San Diego Bay in the evening—my cover editor was nice enough to work that in.

Some of the law enforcement elements draw from my internship at the El Cajon Police Department when I was attending San Diego State University back in the 90s.

FF: What are the biggest challenges for you as an author writing Christian Fantasy?

As mentioned earlier, sometimes placement of a novel to reach the largest audience is difficult when writing in this category. For example: *Buddhist Monks from Outer Space*—perfect, put them in Science Fiction, *Percy McZeus Rides Again?*—No problem, put them in Sci-Fi or Fantasy. But, *Stone of Gabriel*? You say it has something to do with angels? Ok, let's put it over here on the OTHER SIDE of the store in Christian Fantasy, on the last four shelves after Bibles.

I had this problem at a retail bookseller until I was able to get it moved back to science fiction again. If Christian Fantasy were kept near the other Fantasy novels, I wouldn't have an issue.

FF: What do you hope readers take away after reading your book?

Not all technology, no matter how bright and shiny, is always a good idea. Some technology comes with a price.

Keep your eyes open, your mind active, and pay attention—the clues are out there. **FF**

Visit Gary Pattillo's author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/gary-pattillo>

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/173475852X/?tag=familyficti09-20>



Stone of Gabriel

Angel Stones #1

Gary Pattillo

Independent

Genres: Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Supernatural

Buy Now

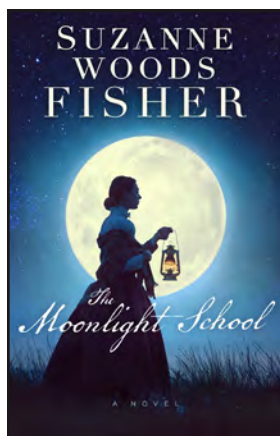
Book Summary:

Reaching for a curiously shaped stone in a southern California riverbed, Kurt, a motherless 13-year-old out on a father-son bonding camp trip, feels a pulsing tremor of energy. Confused, he shares this oddly colored rock with his two friends, both who touch it briefly and throw it away in cries of pain. Unsure what to do, the three boys agree to keep this strange phenomenon a secret.

After bringing the stone back home, Kurt senses he's being followed, possibly by a lone detective. To add to his unease, the city of San Diego is besieged by what seems like a disturbing and violent serial killer, one who leaves distinctive clues, as if he (or it) is itching to get caught.

When he finally makes contact with Steve Bailey, an unflinching detective with a disturbing past, Kurt uncovers his own startling heritage of power, danger and, ultimately, justice.

In this unnerving urban thriller, the creators have reunited with their demons, and humans with inherited, but unwieldy gifts, may be the only barrier between survival and celestial destruction.



Moonlight School

Suzanne Woods Fisher
(Revell)

Genres: Romance, Amish

Release date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now 



Prince of Spies

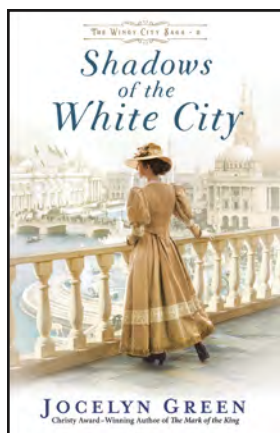
Hope and Glory # 3

Elizabeth Camden
(Bethany House)

Genres: Historical, Romance

Release Date: February 16, 2021

Buy Now 



Shadows of the White City

The Windy City Saga #2

Jocelyn Green
(Bethany House)

Genres: Historical, Romance

Release Date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now 

New Releases: March 2021



The Orchard House

Heidi Chiavaroli
(Tyndale House)

Genres: Historical, Romance

Release Date: February 16, 2021



The Sword in His Hand

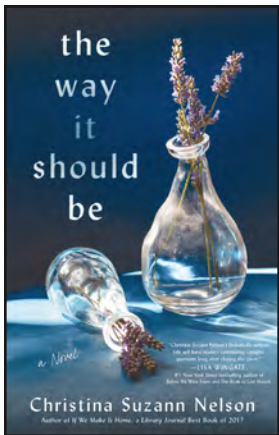
The Darcentaria Duology #1

J. J. Fischer

(Emerald House Group)

Genres: Historical Fantasy

Release Date: February 8, 2021



The Way It Should Be

Christina Suzann Nelson

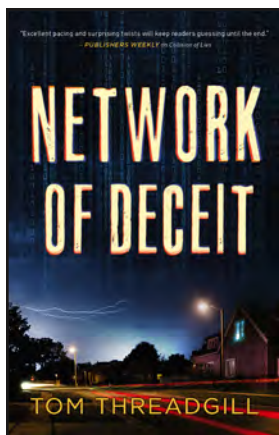
(Bethany House)

Genres: Contemporary

Release Date: February 2, 2021



New Releases: March 2021



Network of Deceit

(Amara Alvarez Series #2)

Tom Threadgill

(Revell)

Genres: Suspense

Release Date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now



When Twilight Breaks

Sarah Sundin

(Revell)

Genres: Historical, Romance

Release Date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now



'Til I Want No More

Robin W. Pearson

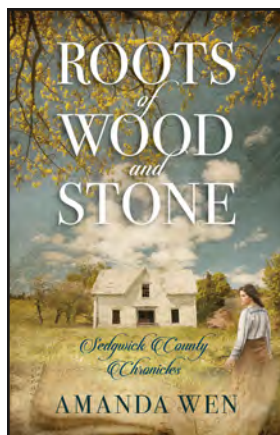
(Tyndale House)

Genres: Romance

Release Date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now





Roots of Wood and Stone

Sedgwick County Chronicles #1

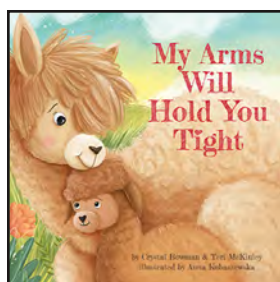
Amanda Wen

(Kregel Publications)

Genres: Romance, Split-Time

Release Date: February 2, 2021

Buy Now 



My Arms Will Hold You Tight

Crystal Bowman and Teri McKinley

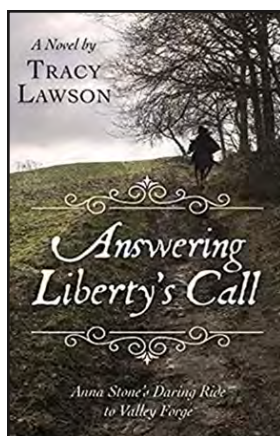
Anna Kubaszewska (Illustrator)

(Tyndale Kids)

Genres: Children's

Release Date: January 12, 2021

Buy Now 



Answering Liberty's Call

Anna Stone's Daring Ride to Valley Forge

Tracy Lawson

(Fidelis Publishing)

Genres: Historical

Release Date: January 27, 2021

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



A Perfect Amish Romance

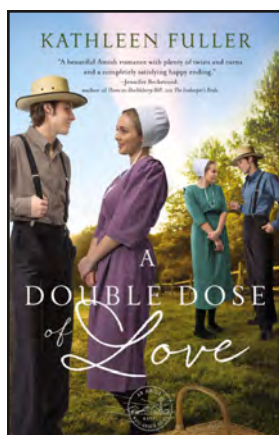
The Berlin Bookmobile #1

Shelley Shepard Gray

Gallery Books

Genres: Amish, Romance

Buy Now 



A Double Dose of Love

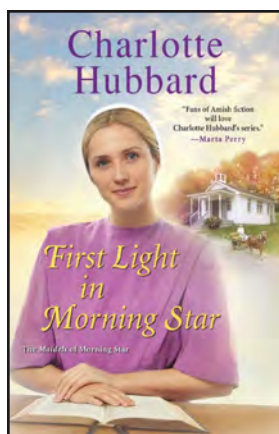
An Amish Mail Order Bride #1

Kathleen Fuller

Zondervan

Genres: Amish, Romance

Buy Now 



First Light in Morning Star

The Maidels of Morning Star #2

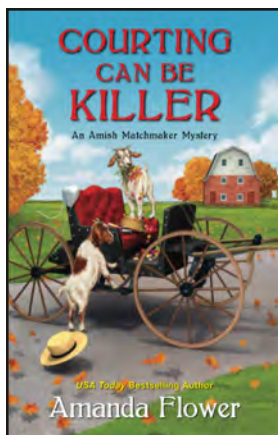
Charlotte Hubbard

Zebra

Genres: Amish, Romance

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



Courting Can Be Killer

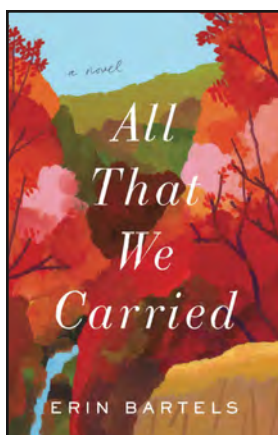
Amish Matchmaker Mystery #2

Amanda Flower

Kensington

Genres: Amish, Suspense, Romance

Buy Now 



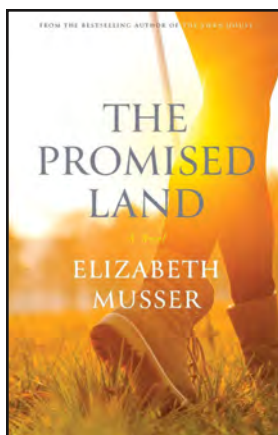
All That We Carried

Erin Bartels

Revell

Genres: Contemporary

Buy Now 



The Promised Land

The Swan House #1

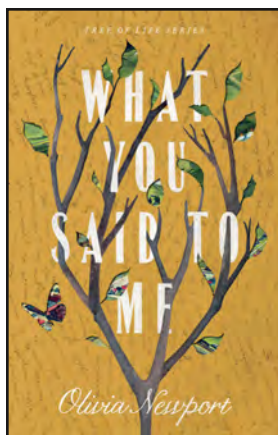
Elizabeth Musser

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Contemporary

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



What You Said to Me

Tree of Life #4

Olivia Newport

Shiloh Run Press

Genres: Contemporary, Historical

Buy Now 



Endless Mercy

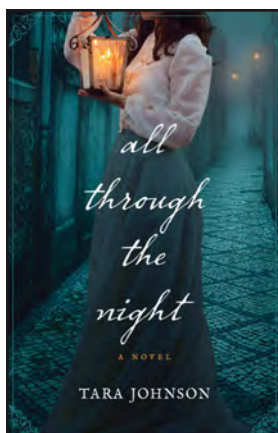
The Treasures of Nome #2

Tracie Peterson & Kimberley Woodhouse

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 



All Through the Night

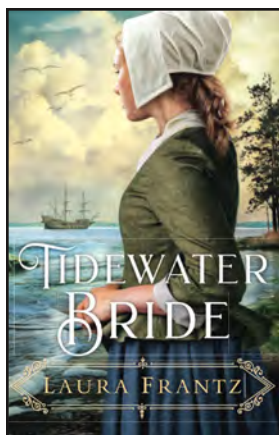
Tara Johnson

Tyndale

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



Tidewater Bride

Laura Frantz

Revell

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 



The Gold Digger

True Colors #9

Liz Tolsma

Barbour Books

Genres: Historical, Suspense, Romance

Buy Now 



The Thief of Blackfriars Lane

Michelle Griep

Shiloh Run Press

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



A Cowboy for Keeps

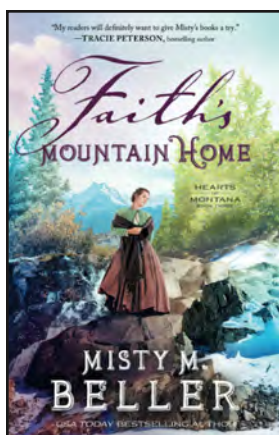
Colorado Cowboys #1

Jody Hedlund

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 



Faith's Mountain Home

Hearts of Montana #3

Misty M. Beller

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 



Beauty Among Ruins

J'Nell Ciesielski

Thomas Nelson

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



Night Bird Calling

Cathy Gohlke

Tyndale

Genres: Historical

Buy Now 



Courting Misfortune

The Joplin Chronicles #1

Regina Jennings

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 



Dreams of Savannah

Roseanna M. White

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Historical, Romance

Buy Now 

New Releases: January 2021



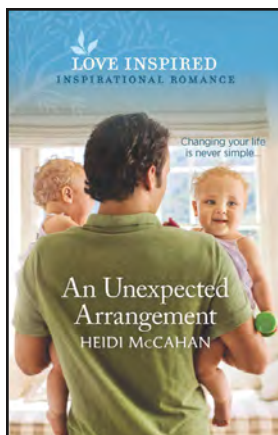
A Future for His Twins

Susanne Dietze

Love Inspired

Genres: Romance

Buy Now



An Unexpected Arrangement

Heidi McCahan

Love Inspired

Genres: Romance

Buy Now



Opening Her Heart

Deb Kastner

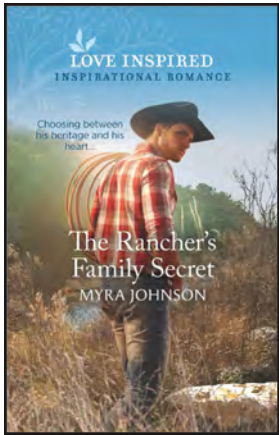
Love Inspired

Genres: Romance

Buy Now



New Releases: January 2021

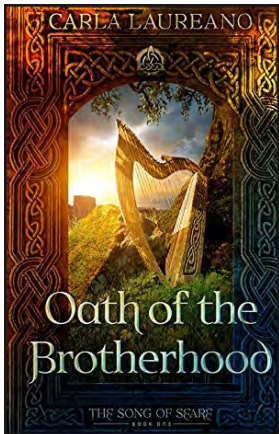


The Rancher's Family Secret

Myra Johnson

Love Inspired

Genres: Romance



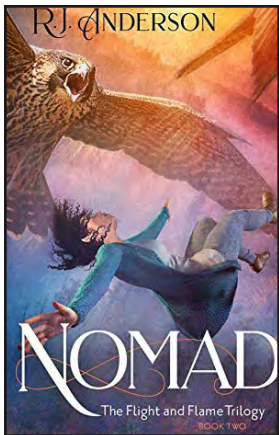
Oath of the Brotherhood

The Song of Seare #1

Carla Laureano

Enclave Publishing

Genres: Speculative



Nomad

Flight and Flame #2

R.J. Anderson

Enclave Escape

Genres: Speculative, YA/Teen



New Releases: January 2021



The Defiance

The Delusion #3

Laura Gallier

Wander

Genres: Speculative, YA/Teen

Buy Now 



Active Defense

Danger Never Sleeps # 3

Lynette Eason

Genres: Suspense, Romance

Buy Now 



Burden of Proof

Davis Bunn

Revell

Genres: Suspense, Romance,
Speculative

Buy Now 



Soul Raging

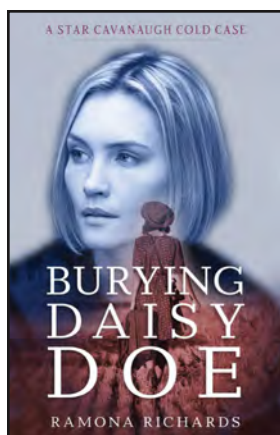
The Book of the Wars #3

Ronie Kendig

Bethany House Publishers

Genres: Suspense, Romance

Buy Now



Burying Daisy Doe

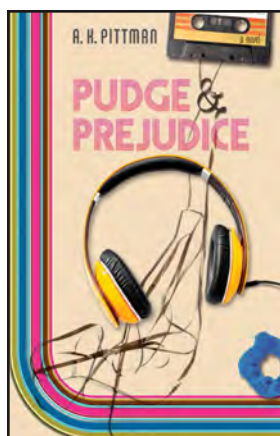
A Star Cavanaugh Cold Case

Ramona Richards

Kregel Publications

Genres: Suspense

Buy Now



Pudge and Prejudice

A.K. Pittman

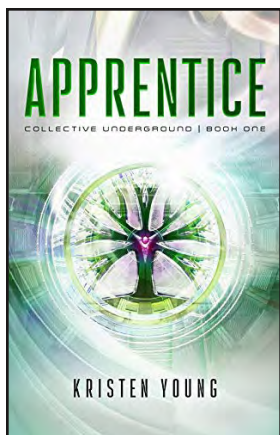
Wander

Genres: Romance, YA/Teen

Buy Now



New Releases: January 2021



Apprentice

Collective Underground #1

Kristen Young

Enclave Escape

Genres: Speculative, YA/Teen

Buy Now 