

Family Fiction

July 2022

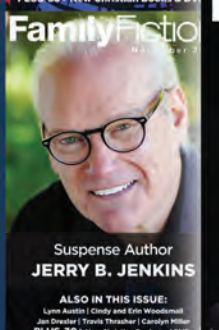
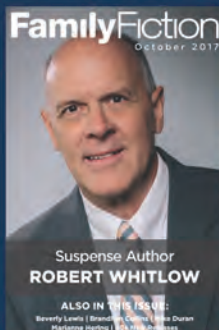


Sci-Fi Author **RONIE KENDIG**

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New Christian Fiction Book Releases



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Features



HISTORICAL ROMANCE

LAURAINE SNELLING

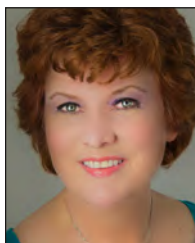
In this interview, she talks about her latest book, *A Time to Bloom*.



ROMANTIC SUSPENSE

NANCY MEHL

In this interview, she talks about the third book in her *The Quantico Files Series*, *Free Fall*.



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New Releases & Bestsellers

New Christian fiction books from **James R. Hannibal**, **Lynn Austin**, **Ronie Kendig**, **Nancy Mehl**, **Susan May Warren**, **Angela Hunt**, **Janette Oke**, **Becky Wade**, **Rachel Hauck**, **Mesu Andrews** and more!

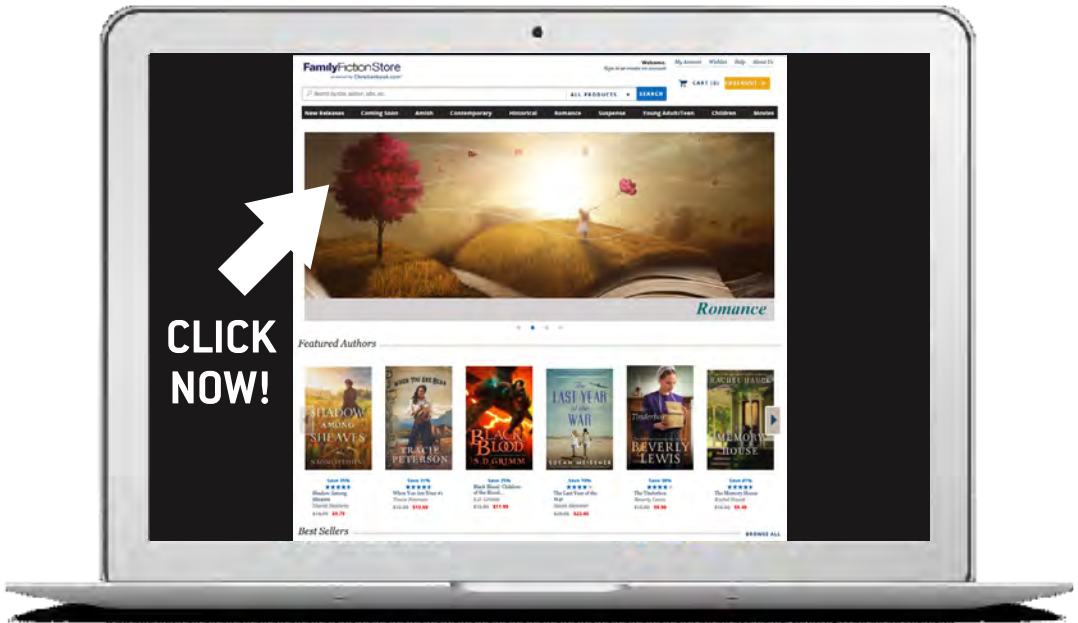
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SCI-FI

Ronie Kendig

Shadow of Honor

Ronie Kendig is a bestselling, award-winning author of over thirty books. She grew up an Army brat, and now she and her Army-veteran husband have returned to their beloved Texas after a ten-year stint in the Northeast. They survive on Sonic & Starbucks runs, barbecue, and peach cobbler that they share—sometimes—with Benning the Stealth Golden. Ronie's degree in psychology has helped her pen novels of intense, raw characters.

In this interview, Ronie talks about the latest book in her *The Droseran Saga*, ***Shadow of Honor***.

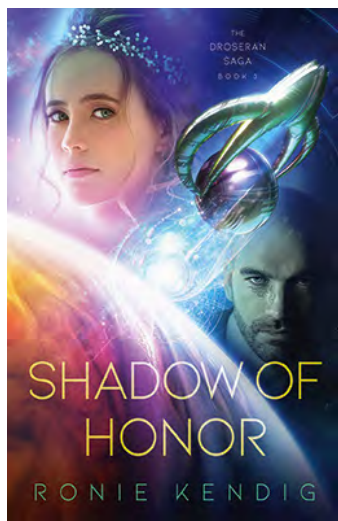
FF: What inspired the story in your book?

The series was a fusion of my love for *Dune* by Frank Herbert and the TV show, *Firefly*. One day in November 2005, I sat down to start writing some scenes I'd seen in my head, and 28 days later, I had 90,000 words. The story remained with me and the hero, Marco Dusan, tormented my wakings and sleepings until it was time for his story to find the ink of publication with Enclave Publishing.

FF: Tell us about the main characters in your book.

Marco Dusan is a bounty hunter gifted with the ability to literally smell fear—or any emotion, detecting the expulsion of pheromones in the air. He is intense and focused on living for honor. Kersei Dragoumis is the daughter of a clan chief on a planet that has eschewed technology, but she is unwittingly drawn up into a battle for the skies and her planet in an intergalactic war that will culminate in four books.

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FF: Which character surprised you the most?

An unexpected character named Eija Zacdari leapt onto the screen in book 2, *Dawn of Vengeance*, as if she were fully formed from inception. It has been fascinating to watch her arc develop, as I am a “Gardener” type, a seat-of-the-pants writer and experience the story unfold with the characters. There are incredible revelations about Eija in *Shadow* that were both enlightening and shocking.

FF: Why do you think storytelling is such a powerful way to share truth?

Story is the penultimate form for communicating with people. Readers come to a story largely for enjoyment, and when a story is crafted well enough, they fall down the proverbial rabbit hole with the characters where their hearts and minds are opened, challenged, and even affirmed. It’s an exhilarating means to engaging people, especially for an introvert like myself.

FF: What can readers expect from the rest of this series?

Shadow of Honor is book 3 in *The Droseran Saga* and it will take some surprising twists and turns as well as navigate dark corridors of mistakes and tragedy, but also some beautifully poignant moments that will propel readers through to the end. Summer 2023 will see the conclusion of this story-of-my-heart series, and as the author who has long envisioned this ending, to get to write it's conclusion is a thrill!

FF: How do you get into the right frame of mind to write for your genre/audience?

First, I gather some snacks and a drink or two, then I don my noise-canceling headphones. I cannot write without the headphones as there is too much happening in a house with three guys who are gamers and two dogs, one an eager-to-please Golden Retriever and a hardhitting, intense Shepinois (GSD/Belgian Malinois mix) retired military working dog. For each book I write, I also choose new or select soundtrack-style albums from groups like Audiomachine and Brand X Music.

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

In all my thirty-plus books, I have had one goal: to remind readers that, even in the bleakest, darkest hour, there is always hope. With *The Droseran Saga*, some themes include: moving on after shattered dreams, choosing your path amidst betrayal, love defying circumstances, and resilience in the hardest of times.

FF: What are the biggest challenges for you as an author writing in your specific genre?

For some reason, within the Christian market, Science Fiction

is a hard sell as readers might have concerns about honoring God within that type of story, which is a concern I understand, but it is also ill-founded. There are incredible and beautiful allegories, parallels to biblical truths, as well as entire systems that mirror characters, stories, or even the entire Bible. There is a vast audience out there for science fiction in the mainstream market, and it's a path I see that enables me to reach hearts and minds for the Kingdom.

FF: What authors or books have inspired you as an author?

A few years ago when I lived in New Jersey, I got to visit a mobile museum for one of my favorite authors, J.R.R. Tolkien. It was incredible to see his methods of creating his world and systems. In that, I found an incredible affirmation of my own methods and styles for developing my worlds, characters, and stories. More contemporary influences include Brandon Sanderson, Frank Herbert, Brian Herbert, Kathy Tyers, John Olson, Marissa Meyer, and Jack Campbell.

FF: How has your faith or world view impacted the way you tell stories?

Through research on a class on writing the male POV, I learned that our age, sex, beliefs, background (culture, location, etc.) all inform our writing and its style. So, it is not surprising that my ardent belief in God is indelibly infused into my stories. However, not all my books contain an overt faith thread; some are more subtle. Ultimately, I write whatever to the story, whatever the arcs and/or characters need for their journey. **FF**

Visit Ronie Kendig's author page here:

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Shadow of Honor

The Droseran Saga #3

Ronie Kendig

Enclave Publishing

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Book Summary:

The war he fears may be the very one he's been called to start.

Held captive, tortured by monsters of a nightmarish alien race, Marco Dusan clings to a final goal: keep these beasts from the Quadrants, even if it means orchestrating his own death. But his dreams betray that singular design. In them his 'bonded' one calls to him from across lightyears. Does he leave her to fight Symmachia alone, or risk bringing an unwinnable war to every planet in the Quadrants?

On board the alien dreadnought, Eija Zacdari flounders, torn amidst military machinations, prophecies, and an inexplicable bond with one of the fearsome creatures who have imprisoned her friends. Only by uncovering the truth about an ancient conflict now shrouded in deception will she find her place.

Faced with her true identity, Eija sees her purpose snap into focus, and she realizes the war Marco fears may be the very one he has been called to start.



ROMANTIC SUSPENSE

Susan May Warren

Sunburst

Susan May Warren is the USA Today bestselling author of nearly 90 novels with more than 1.5 million books sold, including the *Global Search and Rescue Series* and the *Montana Rescue Series*, as well as *Sunrise* and *Sunburst*. Winner of a RITA Award and multiple Christy and Carol Awards, as well as the HOLT Medallion and numerous Readers' Choice Awards, Susan makes her home in Minnesota.

In this interview, Susan talks with us about book number two in her *Sky King Ranch Series*, ***Sunburst***.

FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your new novel, *Sunburst*?

Sunburst is a twist on the marriage of convenience trope. It's set in beautiful Nigeria and is about a former Navy SEAL who is sent in to rescue his brother from the Boko Haram. He discovers, among the captives held with his brother, the woman he never stopped loving...but can't have. That is, until they find themselves on the run in Nigeria and the only way to protect her is to marry her. But when the dust settles and they're safe, can he let her go? It's book 2 in the epic *Sky King Ranch* trilogy.

FF: *Sunburst* is the second novel in your *Sky King Ranch Series*. What is the connecting factor for all three books in this series?

Sky King Ranch is the home of the Kingston brothers, who went their separate ways ten years ago after an epic family fight. They all entered different branches of the military and



are now all separated from that life, for different reasons. They find themselves returning home to the ranch only to discover that there is trouble afoot that's bigger than the ranch, bigger than Alaska, and something only they can stop. This all starts with a mysterious woman who arrives in Alaska in book 1. So the connecting tissue is more than the family and the ranch; it's the suspense thread that thickens with each story.

FF: *Sunburst* is set in Nigeria. Can you please tell readers why you selected this location?

During the pandemic my son married a darling woman from Nigeria named Precious. They were married in Italy. My husband and I were unable to attend, and she wasn't able to return to her home, which was a big deal. Nigerian weddings are something to behold, and I hated that she missed out on that special event. So, when I was outlining my next book I thought, what if Presh and I planned a fictional wedding for my heroine, and thus, she at least got to take part in planning a beautiful Nigerian wedding. Plus, it gave me a chance to

experience her culture through research and deepened our relationship through our many hours spent together on Zoom. Someday I hope to visit Nigeria—and attend her wedding event. (Yes, even though they are already married!)

FF: Although your two main characters, Ranger Kingston and Noemi Sutton, reconnect in Nigeria, they have met before. Can you provide a little information on their backstory?

Ranger and Noemi met in one of my favorite places—Key West. I set their meeting before the hurricane damaged the Bahama Mama resort in *The Heart of a Hero*, so it was fun to revisit that location. They met while Ranger was training for a free-diving certification and Noemi and her father were ashore to fix their sailboat. As for the rest...well, you'll just have to read the book!

FF: In an effort to save themselves and the rest of the hostages, Ranger and Noemi come up with a plan. Can you give a hint to what this plan involves?

Well, the trope sort of gives it away, but they are inadvertently mistaken for a married couple, which plays into their game plan until they meet Noemi's uncle, who is the Ovie of the area (aka the king). He's not so happy that they married without his permission, so everything goes off the rails!

FF: NGO worker Noemi Sutton is in Nigeria attempting to return a young girl to her family in Boko Haram territory. What type of research was required to accurately portray the intense danger that this undertaking would entail?

Aside from reading news reports and watching terrible videos, I read a number of books by survivors who had been kidnapped by the Boko Haram. One was a fantastic book titled *Under the*

Tamarind Tree. That's where I got my idea for the massive Kuka tree in chapter 1. I also read a number of memoirs by former missionaries to the area to get their take on the life from a foreign point of view.

FF: Do you have a favorite character or one that you can really relate to?

I think I really love Auntie Precious. She immediately takes my heroine, Noemi, into her heart. I'd like to be like her.

FF: *Sunburst* is packed with suspense, romance, and international intrigue. What is the secret to being able to masterfully blend all three of these elements?

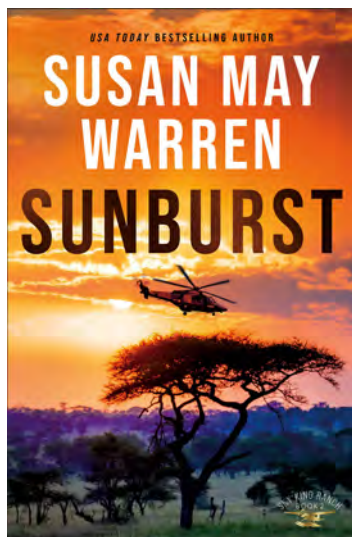
Each step of the story in one area creates a problem in one of the other areas—so everything is connected. The romance isn't just tacked on and the suspense isn't just "stuff that happens." When I plot, I start with the international problem, and then I make it personal by giving the characters a trigger, or ignition, into the plot. This in turn triggers the romance, which causes them to do something about that situation, adding to the suspense. Then it all twines into the international plot. Going back and forth like this keeps the story from being episodic and instead builds on each story thread.

FF: What do you hope readers will experience when reading *Sunburst*?

I hope they sense the peace that comes with trusting God, even when he seems far away. He is closer than we think, and sometimes it just takes opening our eyes to see him. **FF**

Visit Susan May Warren's author page here:

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Sunburst

Sky King Ranch Series #2

Susan May Warren

Revell



Book Summary:

When former Navy SEAL and lifelong bachelor Ranger Kingston is called upon to take part in a rescue mission to save his brother Colt, who has been kidnapped by terrorists in Nigeria, he is shocked to find among the hostages a woman he knows and could never forget.

Noemi Sutton was attempting to return a young girl to her family in Boko Haram territory when she and the girl found themselves taken hostage, along with several others.

And while Ranger Kingston may be able to get the hostages away from their captors, he'll need Noemi's help if he ever hopes to get out of Nigeria alive.

Her solution? Pose as husband and wife. But when her uncle discovers the union, he insists on a traditional Nigerian wedding—binding Noemi to a man destined to break her heart. Worse, she's discovered the real reason she was kidnapped, and anyone around her is bound to be caught in the cross fire. Including her so-called new husband.

She'll need to figure out a way to leave the man she loves if she wants to save his life.



SUSPENSE/THRILLER

James R. Hannibal

Elysium Tide

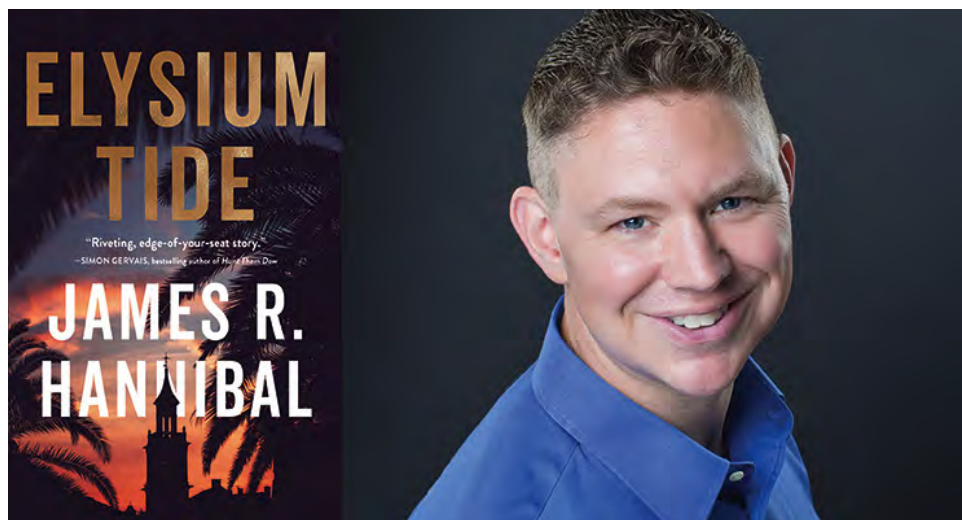
James R. Hannibal is no stranger to secrets and adventure. This former stealth pilot from Houston, Texas, has been shot at, locked up with surface-to-air missiles, and chased down a winding German road by an armed terrorist. He is a three-time **Silver Falchion Award** winner for his children's mysteries, and a **Carol and Selah Award** winner for *The Gryphon Heist* and *Chasing the White Lion*. James is a rare multisense synesthete, meaning all of his senses intersect. He sees and feels sounds and smells, and hears flashes of light. If he tells you the chocolate cake you offered smells blue and sticky, take it as a compliment.

In this interview, James talks about his latest thriller, ***Elysium Tide***.

FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your new novel, *Elysium Tide*?

When neurosurgeon Dr. Peter Chesterfield explodes on a colleague in the middle of a life-or-death operation, the Royal London Hospital administrator decides enough is enough. He sends workaholic Peter on a forced vacation to Maui. As he is walking the beach after midnight while coming to grips with his stress addiction, a young woman washes up at his feet. Despite all his medical knowledge and skill, she dies in his arms. Peter becomes obsessed with finding out why. He must bring her killer to justice.

Detective Lisa Kealoha has returned to Maui after a few years of putting in her dues in the LAPD. The department brings



her in to run Maui's new gang task force. The local cop who wanted the job is not happy about it and not ashamed to say so out loud. With her future in the Maui PD on the line, the last thing Lisa needs is a British know-it-all shoving his nose into her investigation. But Peter has an eye for things that are out of place. It's what he does. He finds that which is out of place and sets it right. The reluctant pair join forces to catch a killer, diving deep into Maui's evolving gang culture, and uncover a conspiracy with far-reaching consequences. Knowing too much is deadly, and the two must catch the killer before the killer catches them.

FF: What sparked the idea for this novel?

My family took a vacation to Maui, and a resort representative gave us a tour of the place. She wanted to show us the shops, the pools, etc., but I took an interest in a series of conference rooms where presenters were speaking to mostly empty seats. When I asked about it, our guide described resort medical conferences. These boondoggle conferences benefit the

resorts with wealthy doctor clientele while serving as a write-off for hospitals and medical associations. It's a great deal for the docs, and I thought, "What if there was one stuffy British surgeon who just plain hates the idea of a hospital-sponsored vacation—or any vacation at all?" The character of Peter Chesterfield grew from there.

FF: As a former tactical deception officer and stealth pilot, have you experienced firsthand the high-stakes action that takes place in your novels?

I've had bullets fly past my cockpit. I've been chased on the ground by a gun-toting killer. I've compiled tons of evidence to hunt down drug dealers and terrorists. I did bring some of that energy into the story. But I've never operated on a child's brain. And I've never worn a badge. When I did detective-style work, I operated under a different set of rules. So, this story took a great deal more research than my spy thrillers.

FF: Can you explain how those real-life experiences have influenced the plotlines and characters that you write?

Once I dove into Peter's character, I realized a stress junky is a stress junky whether he's hunting terrorists, flying fighters, or digging a tumor out of a kid's brain. I also realized at times, in some of the darker parts of Peter's workaholicism, I was writing about myself. That alone created a major shift in my relationship with my family. Did my life influence the plotlines? Sure. But the plotlines (and really the character development) influenced my life far more.

FF: When did you decide to write your first novel?

I decided to write my first novel when I was four. It took a while, but I got there thirty-some-odd years later.

FF: What do you love most about writing suspense novels?

I love building new worlds and meeting new characters. I love what they tell me about myself.

FF: What do you hope readers will gain from reading your book?

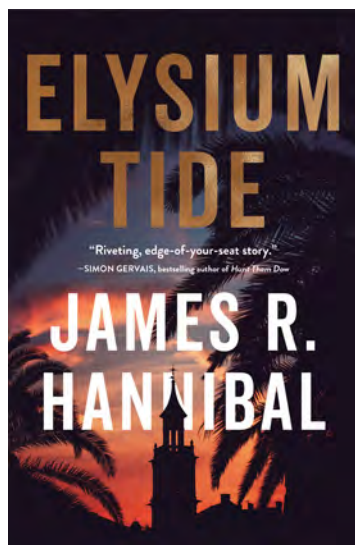
I hope a few stress junkies like me read this book. I hope they see themselves in Peter and find a way to make a change. Their lives and relationships depend on it. Don't believe me? As I write this, I'm sitting in a wheelchair because I pounded my feet to pieces working too hard last summer. It's temporary (I hope), but it's a great wake-up call. I also infused Peter with a god-complex atheism that meets its match when he can't save the murder victim. He's not in control. Not at all. I hope the way Peter comes to grips with God's sovereignty helps a reader—or helps a reader reach someone like him.

FF: What are you working on next?

The Realm of the Lightraiders is exploding. God is moving so fast I'm fighting to keep up. Stories, games, and Bible study adventures occupy all my working hours. But let's be clear—I've throttled those working hours back because of what I learned while writing this book. **FF**

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Elysium Tide

James R. Hannibal
Revell

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Book Summary:

Dr. Peter Chesterfield is one of the Royal London Hospital's top neurosurgeons. He is also a workaholic, ordered by his boss to take a week off to attend a medical symposium at the luxurious Elysium Grand on the island of Maui. While there, Peter pulls a woman with a skull fracture from the water. Though he is able to revive her in the ambulance, she eventually dies in his arms, leaving him with only one clue to what happened to her: the word "honu."

Increasingly obsessed with discovering the cause of his patient's death, Peter becomes entangled in an ongoing investigation of a brazen luxury auto theft. He also becomes a source of deep irritation to detective Lisa Kealoha, who has jurisdiction over the case.

But when the two join forces, they begin to uncover a destructive plot that runs far deeper than either of them could have imagined. And if they're not careful, they're both going to end up dead.



HISTORICAL ROMANCE

Janette Oke & Laurel Oke Logan

Unfailing Love

Bestselling author **Janette Oke** is celebrated for her significant contribution to the Christian book industry. Her novels have sold more than 30 million copies, and she is the recipient of the **ECPA President's Award**, the **CBA Life Impact Award**, the **Gold Medallion**, and the **Christy Award**. Janette and her husband, Edward, live in Alberta, Canada. **Laurel Oke Logan**, daughter of Edward and Janette Oke, is the author of several books, including *Janette Oke: A Heart for the Prairie*, *Dana's Valley*, and the *Return to the Canadian West Series*, cowritten with her mom. Laurel has six children and seven grandchildren and lives in Illinois.

In this interview, Janette and Laurel talk with us about their latest novel, ***Unfailing Love***.

FF: Provide a summary of your new novel, *Unfailing Love*.

Janette: Lillian Walsh and Grace Bennett have struggled to create a healthy and loving home for orphaned children in Father's house. But just as Father is returning from Wales, two of their charges disappear. The sisters are launched into a desperate search for the missing children and for answers while managing their own family situation.

For his part, Ben Waldin is looking for the missing children as well as the money that they've stolen from him. He discovers that his own family for whom he'd been searching have settled in a town not far from Brookfield. Ben is torn between his loyalties to them and to the sisters he's come to admire.



FF: Without giving away spoilers, what do readers have to look forward to in this book? Are there any threads that run throughout the series that will be wrapped up?

Janette: Readers who have followed these characters through their various ups and downs in previous books will finally get answers as to the ultimate outcome of each individual. Specifically, readers have expressed a deep fondness for the character of Lemuel, and his heartbreaking story continues in this book with his characteristic determination and quiet resolve to do the right thing no matter what.

Additionally, other threads that come into play in this novel are Ben's search for a family to call his own, Lillian's coming to terms with her father's decisions, and the future of the orphanage.

FF: What compelled you two to write this companion series together?

Laurel: After the wonderful success of the television series *When Calls the Heart* on the Hallmark Channel, a spin-off show was created in 2014 titled *When Hope Calls*. Because we'd already written companion books for the first show, film producer Brad Krevoy contacted my mom about writing a trilogy for this new show as well. They had already invented the main characters: Lillian Walsh and her sister, Grace Bennett.

So, we began with the character sketches they provided and the photographs of their two actresses, Morgan Kohan and Jocelyn Hudon. We tried to keep the girls consistent with the show even while exploring new twists of plot and adding our own setting and cast of characters.

Janette: The theme of adoption is also near and dear to our Oke family. Two of our ancestors came to Canada as Home Children, and several of our family members joined us through adoption, including two of Laurel's children. As part of this process, Laurel did research into the history of adoption in Canada, discovering many interesting facts about the Home Children who were sent from England during this era.

FF: What have you learned from your experiences writing as a mother-daughter team?

Laurel: *Dana's Valley* was the first novel that we wrote together; however, we also worked very closely when mom's publisher, Bethany House, requested that I write her biography in 1992. This first project, more than any of the others that followed, taught me a great deal about my mom. I'd heard many of the family stories, but this was the narrative of Mom's life strung together in sequence. It was a fascinating and eye-opening adventure.

We also discovered that our writing styles are quite compatible—sometimes it's difficult to recall which scenes were originally written by which of us. However, our writing habits and procedures are very different. I like to refer to Mom as a literary "beast," often writing first drafts in a week. I did not receive this gene. I need to pace myself and work a section at a time.

Janette: I need total concentration that can't be achieved without first caring for and completing other things so that I can focus only on the current writing project. That's why I've often gone away from home to do the first draft. Over the years, I've written in hotels, a camper, a quiet farmhouse, and

a condo in the Rockies. By that point, I've done a great deal of planning and outlining for the book, lived with the characters in my mind for some time, and then I'm ready to put pen to paper.

FF: Janette, what advice did you have for Laurel as you began your career as an author?

Janette: I felt very strongly that my life pursuits, particularly in creative arts that connected with readers, should be given over to God. I worked hard at writing, of course, but the outcome was not my responsibility then. God would do whatever He chose to with the results. And He has certainly exceeded any of my expectations or dreams.

FF: Laurel, you have now written more than seven novels. Why did you choose to follow in your mother's footsteps and pursue a career in writing?

Laurel: To be honest, I've enjoyed writing novels, as it fits around the other things I've chosen to do with my life. I raised six kids and homeschooled for twenty-one years in total. I've always done plenty of writing for church, homeschool, and other things in my life, but traditional publishing might not have been on my radar.

However, watching Mom's career has made the idea very accessible and natural to me. (Not to mention that it gave me a pen name that certainly helped!) I love that writing is something I can pursue in tandem and that it leaves me time to babysit my sweet grandkids or spend time with my family. I'm grateful that it's worked out for me in the measure that it has. Writing together with my mom has been a true blessing.

FF: What lessons do you hope readers gain from reading *Unfailing Love*?

Laurel: We knew we wanted this last book to really explore the idea of love—real love verses selfish love. And, of course, so often real love involves sacrifice of self. So, we gave our characters difficult relationships and let them each work through what it means to love in a genuine, self-sacrificing way.

Janette: I have always preferred to write about love that was motivated by commitment, that grows by truly knowing someone—even if that comes slowly or unexpectedly. I'd like to encourage women to look for the kind of guy who is committed and who would care for them. As Christian authors, we help to define true love for younger women, though I don't like to think of my books strictly as romance novels. I think they're better described as family fiction—where love is about being in a family. Over the years, I think that kind of narrative has been well received by readers.

FF: What are you both working on next?

Laurel: I have been working on a very different sort of novel for quite some time that I hope to publish soon, as well as a small group study about how to write down and share your own life story.

Janette: I am not currently working on any new projects. But that's not to say that the literary candle in my heart and mind doesn't still glow with new characters and stories that I could tell. Who knows what that might spark? **FF**

Visit Janette Oke's author page here:

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Unfailing Love

When Hope Calls Series #3

Janette Oke & Laurel Oke Logan

Bethany House

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Book Summary:

Heartwarming Conclusion to the Companion Series to Hallmark Channel's *When Hope Calls*

Lillian Walsh and Grace Bennett have learned so much already about caring for children in distress. It

hasn't been easy, but it becomes even more difficult when they suddenly discover that three children have run away. Concerned for the trio's safety, the sisters will do all they can to find the children.

But the runaways are not the only thing putting the future of the children's home in question. Lillian is faced with choosing between her dreams with fiancé Walter and her commitment to her sister. Steady Ben Waldin is keen to find where his family settled in Canada and to give little Janie a place to permanently call home. And the sisters receive a pair of surprise visitors that leaves them and their family uncertain.

As all of the people invested in the children's home seek to determine their paths forward, they begin to realize that sometimes loving well means making difficult choices.



HISTORICAL ROMANCE

Lauraine Snelling

A Time to Bloom

Lauraine Snelling is the award-winning author of more than 100 books, fiction and nonfiction, for adults and young adults. Her books have sold more than five million copies. She and her husband make their home in Tehachapi, California.

In this interview, she talks about her latest book, ***A Time to Bloom***.

FF: Please provide a brief summary of your new novel, *A Time to Bloom*.

Delphinium, who goes by Del, loves teaching school in Salton, Nebraska, but when a tornado destroyed the building, they had to return to using the church. Del's mission to rebuild the school is thwarted by the town's need to finish the train station first, while the tracks are being laid for the westward bound train. Led by newcomer RJ, a friend of her visiting brother Anders, the men forge ahead while she marshals the women to build the school, one way or another. Grateful her wages help keep food on the table, she works even harder with her sisters to build their dream of proving up their land.

FF: What inspired the idea for this book?

I'd resolved that each book in the series would feature one of the sisters and yet keep all four sisters involved. But my characters take on a life of their own during the writing process. The animosity between Del and RJ surprised me.



FF: *A Time to Bloom* is the second book in your Leah's Garden Series. What is the connecting element that ties all the books in the series together?

The four sisters want to create a garden-based business in honor of their mother, who loved flowers and gardening so much that she named each of her daughters after a different flower.

FF: What are some of your favorite aspects of Del that set her apart from her sisters?

Delphinium is opinionated, determined, and loves teaching children. She's also willing to take on the male leaders of the growing town to get her new school built for their children.

FF: What do you most enjoy about writing from each sister's point of view?

They are all so similar and so different, yet they encourage each other.

FF: What are some of the major historical events in American history that impact the lives of your characters in this book?

The characters are largely influenced by the events of the Civil War, the process of Nebraska achieving statehood, as well as the changes that came to homesteading life with the building of the railroad.

FF: The Nielsen sisters have realized their dream of forming a homestead, but their lives aren't easy. Can you tell us what research was required to fully depict the challenges homesteaders faced?

I've written homesteading stories set in the Red River Valley of North Dakota, in Wyoming off the Oregon Trail, and South Dakota. With such varied terrain, learning about the land is a big task. There were no rocks or trees in the Red River Valley, but Nebraska has rocky soil, trees, and salt swamps—important differences to homesteaders and farmers through the ages.

FF: What interests you the most about the time period in which this book is set?

Post-Civil War to the 1900s was a period of great change, and it's fascinating to learn about. That's why the mid-1800s to early 1900s is my favorite period of history. **FF**

Visit Lauraine Snelling's author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/lauraine-snelling>



A Time to Bloom

Leah's Garden Series #2

Lauraine Snelling

Bethany House

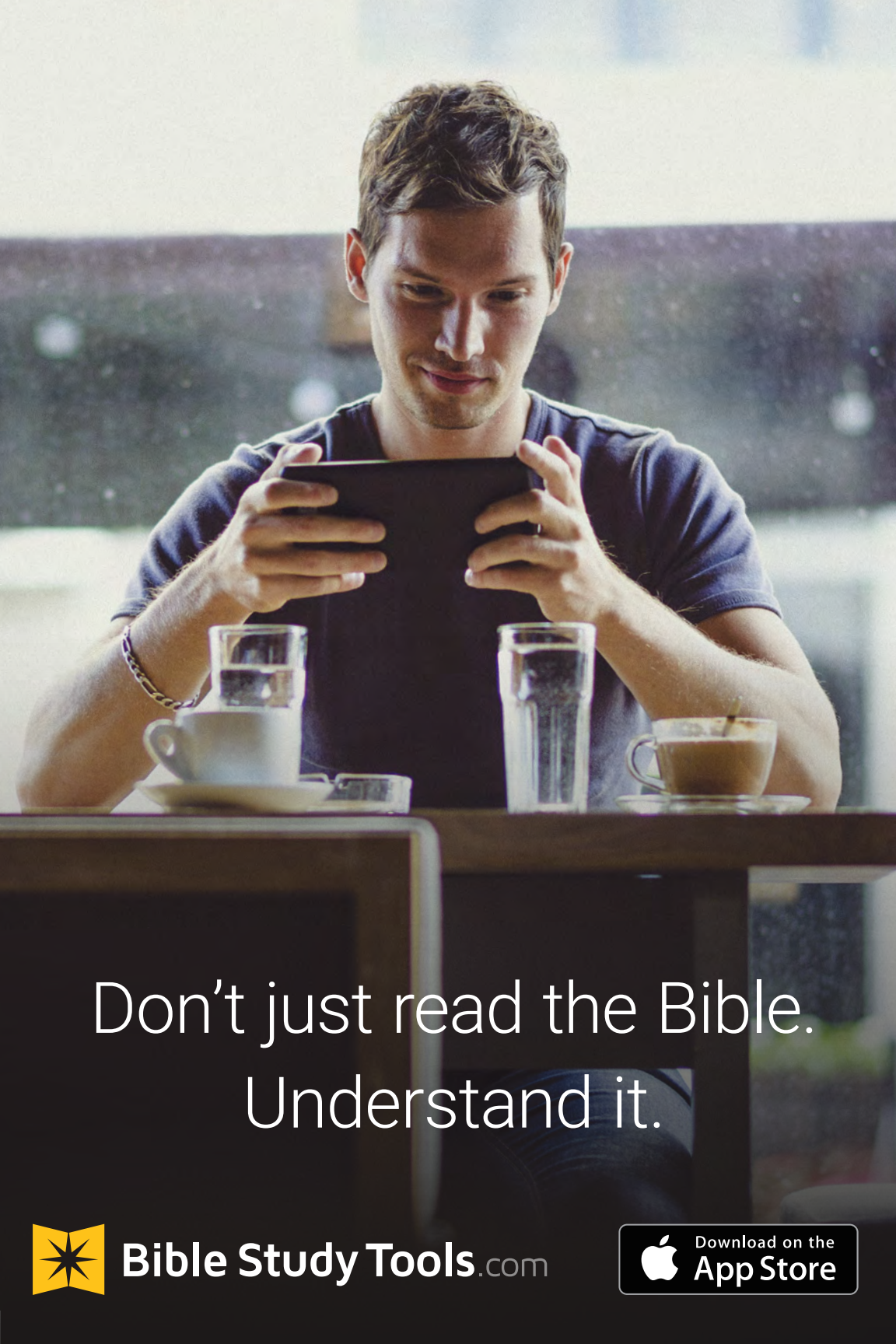
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Book Summary:

Will their dreams fall apart when confronted with all that is stacked against them?

Delphinium Nielsen and her sisters have accomplished much in the past year, traveling west and settling in Nebraska. They are on their way to building a garden in dedication to their mother and working against the forces of nature to make their farm thrive. However, none of that can mask their concern that they are quickly running out of money. Del's work teaching in their booming town offers hope, not only to support her sisters financially, but also to better her students' lives. Not all of the town sees it that way, though, with the rebuilding of the schoolhouse continually neglected and her brightest student's father demanding he work the farm instead of attend class.

When their brother Anders arrives with his war-wounded and heartbroken friend RJ, Anders sees the strength of the sisters' idea to start a boardinghouse and decides to invest in it. Del finds RJ barely polite and wants nothing to do with him. But despite Del and her sisters' best-laid plans, the future—and RJ—might surprise them all.



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ROMANTIC SUSPENSE

Nancy Mehl

Free Fall

Nancy Mehl is the author of more than forty books and a Christy Award finalist, as well as a Carol Award winner, the winner of an ACFW Book of the Year Award, and the winner of the Daphne Du Maurier Award for Excellence in Mystery/Suspense in the inspirational romance category. Her short story, *Chasing Shadows*, was in the *USA Today* bestselling *Summer of Suspense* anthology. Nancy writes from her home in Missouri, where she lives with her husband, Norman, and their puggle, Watson.

In this interview, she talks about the third book in her *The Quantico Files Series*, ***Free Fall***.

FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your novel, *Free Fall*?

Someone has been abducting women with long dark hair across Virginia. When the FBI is called in to help, Alex Donovan, a behavioral analyst, is tasked with putting together a profile. She's aided by her friend and colleague Logan Hart, but he has been acting strangely and won't say why. When the kidnapper demands that Alex meet him at an abandoned amusement park in exchange for the location of all his captives, she takes the bait. But the meeting proves to be a trap, and Alex is abducted. Finding herself imprisoned with several other women, Alex works to think one step ahead of her captor. But the more Logan and the BAU learn about the kidnapper, the more they fear Alex may not make it out alive.



FF: What is different for Alex in *Free Fall* after the events in your second book in the series, *Dead Fall*?

Alex is forced to face feelings she's tried hard to ignore. *Free Fall* doesn't only put Alex in physical danger. Emotionally, she must confront the possible loss of a man that has meant so much to her. *Free Fall* will delve into the hearts and fears of its two main characters in a way I haven't allowed them to explore before.

FF: What sort of research do you do to write from the perspective of a behavioral analyst within the FBI?

I'm blessed to have a retired FBI behavioral analyst as a resource for these books. Most of the information I get is from her, but I also do research using other materials.

FF: What influences your writing about characters involved in government organizations like the FBI and witness-protection programs?

I have a deep respect for law enforcement. These people put their lives on the line to protect us. Of course, there's the danger aspect that adds excitement to my books, but I also believe readers need to care about the characters I write about. They must be people readers can admire. I create characters that I believe fit this description.

FF: What do you love about writing suspense?

The excitement! I love creating plots that will pull readers in and keep them engaged. I love it when someone contacts me and tells me they stayed up late reading because they couldn't put my book down.

FF: How does your faith impact your writing?

It's the reason I write. I pray over every book, asking God to use it to touch someone. Jesus told parables, using fictional stories to show people who God is, how much they are loved. My goal is to do the same with my books.

FF: How did you develop a character like Alex Donovan, with a dark past and determination to help others?

Actually, characters just come to me. That's never been a challenge. I think maybe creating a difficult past is easier for me because of the way I grew up. I believe I have empathy for other people who have traveled a rather rough road in life.

FF: Do you particularly relate to any of your characters?

I relate to all of them. Each one is made up of some of my own thoughts, fears, and struggles.

FF: What do you hope your audience feels as they read your book?

I hope they can see that God has a great plan for every person. And that no matter what they struggle with, God is waiting to deliver them, heal them, set them free. Nothing is impossible for Him! **FF**

Visit Nancy Mehl's author page here:

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Free Fall

The Quantico Files Series #3

Nancy Mehl

Bethany House

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Book Summary:

The closer she comes to the truth, the deadlier her chase gets.

FBI behavioral analyst Alex Donovan and her colleague Logan Hart have been called upon to write a profile for a missing woman, but a little digging quickly turns up more disappearances in Virginia with the same physical description.

Alex is in a race against the clock to rescue the missing victims, so when the UNSUB makes demands of her in exchange for information, Alex takes the bait. But when her life is put in jeopardy, Logan must do whatever it takes to track them down before time runs out.

Alex works to think one step ahead of the suspect, but the more Logan and the BAU learn about the serial kidnapper, the more they fear Alex may not make it out alive.



HISTORICAL / BIBLICAL FICTION

Angela Hunt

The Apostle's Sister

The author of more than 100 published books and with nearly 5 million copies of her books sold worldwide, Angela Hunt is the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Note*, *The Nativity Story*, and *Esther: Royal Beauty*. Romantic Times Book Club presented Angela with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006. In 2008, Angela completed her PhD in biblical studies in theology.

In this interview, Angela talks with us about her latest Biblical fiction novel, *The Apostle's Sister*.

FF: Can you please provide a summary of your new novel *The Apostle's Sister*?

This novel, the fourth in the *Jerusalem Road Series*, is about Paul's sister. The *Bible* mentions her, so I imagined what her life must have been like. Did she also follow Jesus? Or did she remain skeptical like so many others?

FF: What research did you have to do to write in this era?

I've written quite a few first-century novels now, so the only additional research I had to do was more about Paul...and ancient music, because Paul's sister is a singer.

FF: What inspired you to write about a character torn between the battle of two faiths?

I'm always interested when the *Bible* speaks of women because it often overlooks their activities. Paul's sister and nephew took action that saved his life, so that was the starting point for me.

FF: How did your faith impact writing about such an intense time in Biblical history?

As always, writing about these characters challenges me. We have it so much easier than they did—we have the New Testament, we are generally familiar with the story of Christ, but so few were in those days. They were just beginning to understand the theology behind Christ's life and mission, and it's fascinating to see how the Spirit led and taught them.

FF: What do you hope your readers take away from this story?

First, I hope they're entertained. A novel seeks to evoke emotion and involve the reader first and foremost. Second, I hope they enjoy learning about what life was like in the years after Christ's resurrection.

FF: As Aya is someone who loves an apostle but does not share his faith, what do you hope the fresh perspective of the character brings to the story of the apostles?

Too often modern readers don't understand why some of the first-century Jews were so slow to come to faith. We forget that the Jews at the time, so entrenched in the form of their religion, couldn't see the reason why Jesus came along and broke so much of the form while keeping the intention pure. He turned their worlds upside down.

FF: What do you love most about writing novels in the Biblical fiction genre?

I love learning new things. **FF**

Visit Angela Hunt's author page here:

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The Apostle's Sister

Jerusalem Road Series #4

Angela Hunt

Bethany House

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Book Summary:

She's always longed for more, but what if the path she's chosen requires more than she's willing to give?

Aya, daughter of Zebulun of Tarsus, does not want a traditional life. After

years of being overshadowed by her brilliant brother Sha'ul, she wants a chance to use her own gifts beyond being a wife and mother. When her father insists that she marry a Torah student, she reluctantly agrees.

A dedicated scholar, Sha'ul, or Paul, returns to Tarsus to follow the instructions of the Law and wed the woman his father has chosen to raise his profile and help him earn a seat on the Great Sanhedrin—the highest religious court in the land. But when the Nazarene, Yeshua, and his followers bring trouble to the Holy City, Sha'ul will stop at nothing to silence them.

After moving to Jerusalem with her husband, Aya expects to be bored in her role as wife to a Torah student. Instead, she finds herself fascinated by his studies. Then her brother makes a life-altering decision, and she must face a troubling question: Can she remain true to her beliefs and still love her blasphemous brother?



HISTORICAL ROMANCE

Rachel Fordham

Where the Road Bends

Rachel Fordham is the author of *A Lady in Attendance*, *A Life Once Dreamed*, *The Hope of Azure Springs*, and *Yours Truly, Thomas*. Fans expect stories with heart and she delivers, diving deep into the human experience and tugging at reader emotions. She loves connecting with people, traveling to new places, and daydreaming about future projects that will have sigh-worthy endings and memorable characters. She is a busy mom, raising both biological and foster children (a cause she feels passionate about). She lives with her husband and children on an island in the state of Washington.

In this interview, Rachel talks about her latest book, ***Where the Road Bends***.

FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your new novel, *Where the Road Bends*?

Just before entering a marriage of convenience, Norah King brings an injured man home with her and nurses him back to health. The two seem to have an instant connection, but he is penniless and has no home of his own. With no means to rescue her from her current situation, he leaves, vowing to be a better man.

He assumes she got married and is well taken care of and goes on with his life, though the image of Norah King is never far from his mind, or heart.

Years later, their paths cross once again, and he must face the fact that Norah's life did not go how he'd expected—and he is largely to blame.

FF: Quincy faces quite the predicament in this novel. Without giving away too much, can you elaborate on the moral dilemma he's caught in?

Poor Quincy ends up with a heavy burden of guilt all because he made an assumption rather than finding out the truth. His troubles get more complicated the longer he hides from his own guilt or tries to solve it without really solving it!

Without telling too much, I do want to note that his struggle to rationalize and ultimately own his poor choice is a dilemma readers will relate to. How many people have made a mistake and not known how to keep what they want and need, while also making amends?

FF: Quincy also has more than physical wounds that need healing. Can you tell us about his emotional state as well?

Quincy is not your typical upper-class hero. He's a former boxer who fights for money in back alleys and lives recklessly in between. He's been on his own since his teenage years, floundering with no real direction, until he meets Norah and realizes there is a different way to live.

Past poor relationships, a disheartening family life, and an uncertain sense of belonging make Quincy a deeply flawed character who you can't help but root for.

FF: Where Norah once was innocent, later in the novel, we discover she's become more jaded. Can you elaborate on Norah's character and what has shaped her?

Circumstances leave Norah struggling for survival. In the late 1800s, that means dwelling with a different, more unsavory crowd than she's ever dealt with before. During these years she sees the cruelty humankind is capable of and fears she will forever be marked because of it.

FF: What was the inspiration for your novel?

Two things triggered this story. While researching, I came across accounts of people who hid money in their clothing so it would not be stolen. My wheels started turning, and I asked myself, What if someone with no money were to discover hidden treasure in that way? Their whole life could change overnight.

Then my mind went to *Les Misérables* and the priest who changed Jean Valjean's life. It's a classic story of a fresh start, but he has a past that follows him. *Where the Road Bends* is not *Les Misérables*, and my lead character doesn't find money sewed into clothing. But it is a story of a man whose life course is altered by one decision and the repercussions, both good and bad, that follow.

FF: What do you love most about writing novels in the historical fiction genre?

So many things! I love digging deep into the hearts of my characters and discovering that, though they live in a different time, they are not so different from people today. I love weaving in real pieces of history and the quest to find those unusual gems. I love the simpler times (I think I would have

thrived in the late 1800s). It's like going on an exciting vacation every time I start writing a historical novel!

FF: What do you hope readers gain from reading this novel?

First, I hope they feel thoroughly entertained and swept up in the Iowa landscape and the characters' struggles and triumphs. It's also my hope that readers close the book, ponder the journey these characters have taken, and pull nuggets of wisdom from it. Are there people in our lives who are like Quincy? Destined to fail until someone intervenes. Are there times when we need to speak up and tell the truth, no matter how hard it is to do so?

I hope as readers journey with Norah and Quincy and cheer them on, that they also cheer for those around them in their real lives.

FF: Are readers always promised a "happily ever after" in your novels? Why or why not?

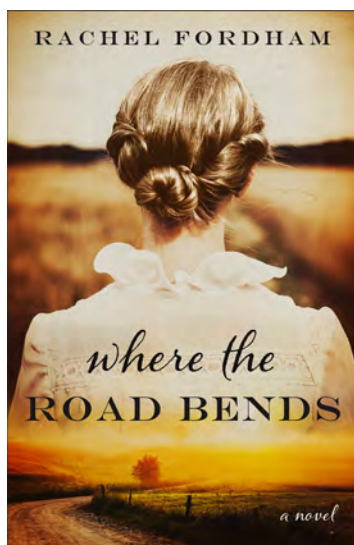
I am a huge fan of happily-ever-after endings! I haven't written a novel without one and can't imagine doing so.

Having said that, I don't mind tackling tougher issues and leaving some aspects of a story realistically resolved (which sometimes includes a sad reality). When viewed through the right lens, the messiness of life doesn't have to be depressing and can add depth to a story.

That was a long way of saying, expect happily ever after from me, but the journey to it could have lots of bumps in the road. **FF**

Visit Rachel Fordham's author page here:

<https://familyfiction.com/authors/rachel-fordham>



Where the Road Bends

Rachel Fordham
Revell

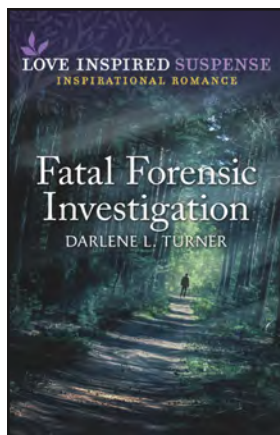


Book Summary:

As Norah King surveys her family land in Iowa in 1880, she is acutely aware that it is all she has left, and she will do everything in her power to save it—even if that means marrying a man she hardly knows. Days before her wedding, Norah discovers an injured man on her

property. Her sense of duty compels her to take him in and nurse him back to health. Little does she realize just how much this act of kindness will complicate her life and threaten the future she's planned.

Norah's care does more than aid Quincy Barnes's recovery—it awakens his heart to possibilities. Penniless and homeless, he knows the most honorable thing he can do is head on down the road and leave Norah to marry her intended. But walking away from the first person to believe in him proves much harder than he imagined.



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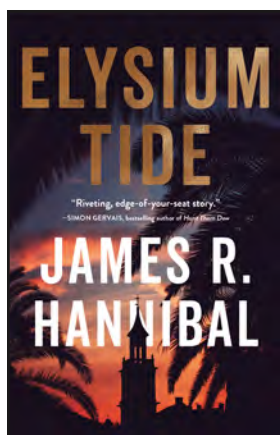
Darlene L. Turner

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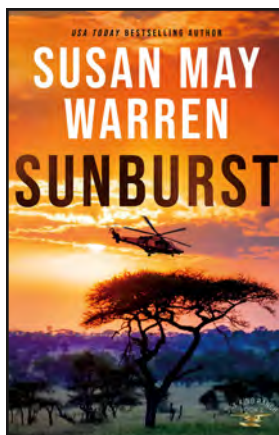
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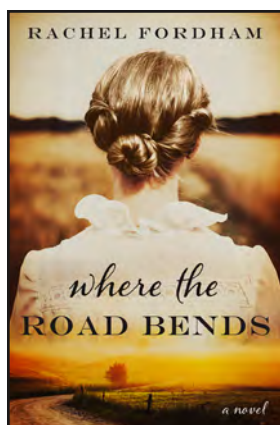
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Rachel Fordham

Revell

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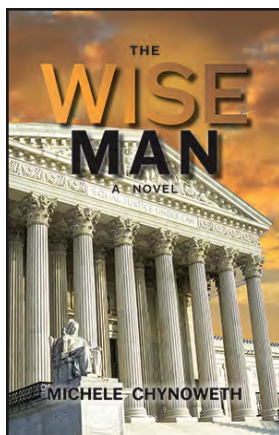
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Elk Lake Publishing Inc.

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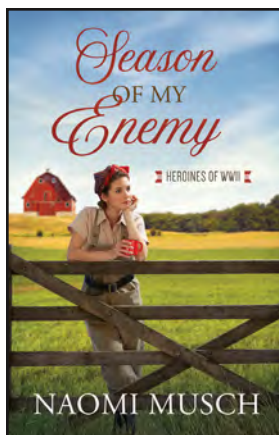
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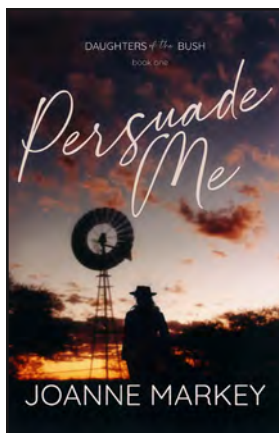
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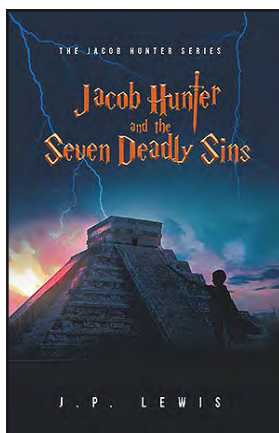
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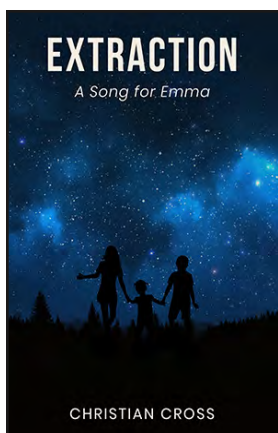
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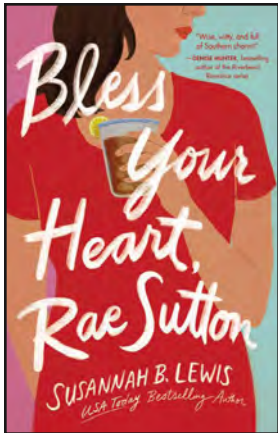
Sunrise Publishing

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Bless Your Heart, Rae Sutton

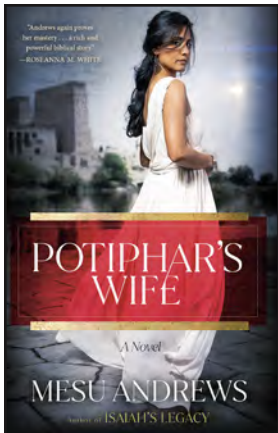
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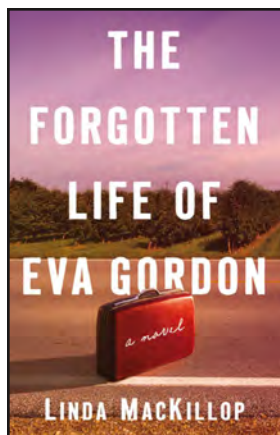
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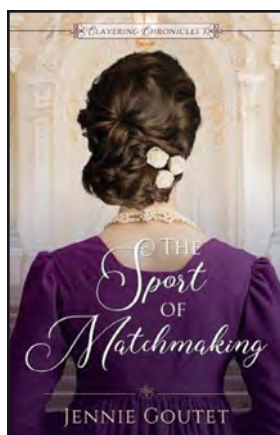
The Forgotten Life of Eva Gordon

Linda MacKillop

Kregel

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Women's Fiction

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The Sport of Matchmaking

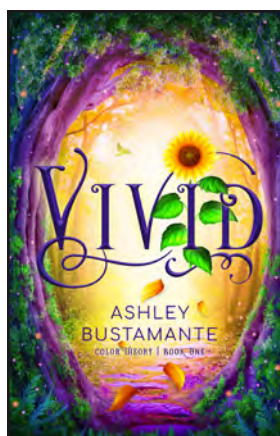
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