

# Historical Romance Author SARAH SUNDIN

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Lynn talks with us about her new book, Never Fall Again, the first book in her new

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#### **Features**



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**Amish** Contemporary Historical Romance

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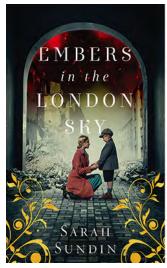
### HISTORICAL ROMANCE Sarah Sundin Embers in the London Sky

**Sarah Sundin** is the bestselling author of *When Twilight Breaks, Until Leaves Fall in Paris, The Sound of Light,* and the popular WWII series *Sunrise at Normandy*, among others. She is a **Christy Award** winner and a **Carol Award** winner, and her novels have received starred reviews from **Booklist**, Library Journal, and Publishers Weekly, and have appeared on **Booklist's 101 Best Romance Novels of the Last 10 Years**.

In this interview, Sarah shares some of her thoughts on her latest novel, *Embers in the London Sky*.

### FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your novel Embers in the London Sky?

Fleeing from the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands in 1940, Aleida van der Zee Martens is separated from her three-year-old son, Theo. In London, the widow desperately searches for her little boy while working for an agency responsible for evacuating children to the countryside. BBC radio correspondent Hugh Collingwood does what he can to help her, even as he's reporting on the London Blitz. When murders begin to flame among London's ashes—murders that hit close to home for Hugh—Aleida and Hugh become determined to find the murderer before it's too late.





### FF: What events were taking place in London from 1940 to 1941?

By June 1940, the Germans had trampled the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, and Britain was next. The nation prepared for invasion as the Battle of Britain raged overhead and German bombers pummeled London. It was a time of great fear and danger and trepidation, and yet also a time of courage and strength as the nation drew together as never before. Britain's fortitude and good will in this time of trial continues to inspire us today. It was a privilege for me to write about this critical moment in history.

FF: When Aleida van der Zee Martens fled from the Netherlands, she not only lost her home but her child was taken from her. Can you provide some background on the details leading up to this traumatic situation?

Long before the German army arrived, Aleida had planned to flee to England with her son—to escape her abusive husband.

But when the invasion comes, her husband decides to take his wife and son to London. However, he is ashamed of little Theo's hand deformity, and one night while Aleida is sleeping, he takes Theo from her arms and thrusts him into the car of an English couple. The next morning, Aleida is horrified to find her son gone. And when her husband is killed by a strafing German fighter plane—without telling her the name of the English couple—Aleida faces the daunting prospect of finding her son.

### FF: When Aleida arrives in London, she takes a job with the Ministry of Health, which is responsible for evacuating children to the countryside. How did she use her role to help her look for her son?

When Britain went to war with Germany in September 1939, they evacuated over a million children to the countryside. When German bombing failed to materialize, many families brought their children home. But with the invasion threat in 1940, the government mounted a new wave of evacuations.

At first, Aleida hopes the Ministry of Health might have information on her son. In her new position, she contacts billeting officers in the country—and she always asks about Theo. But as she hears the evacuation stories, she senses a new role developing—to advocate for the children.

### FF: BBC radio correspondent Hugh Collingwood is caught in the middle of the London Blitz. What part does he hope to play in the war?

Hugh's golden voice and lively radio reporting have made him a rising star with the BBC. He sees great value in live, on-thescene reporting. However, with the risk of invasion and the concern about sending information to the enemy over the airwaves, many push for censorship. Hugh and his journalist friends walk a delicate line between telling the truth and revealing sensitive information—all while boosting morale.

# FF: How did your two protagonists, Aleida van der Zee Martens and Hugh Collingwood, meet?

While Aleida is training to become an air raid warden, Hugh arrives to broadcast from her Air Raid Precautions post. Afterward, Aleida asks him to broadcast a story about her son—if Theo is in England, someone might recognize him. Although Hugh is unable to tell that story, he is drawn to the young widow and does what he can to help her.

# FF: How do both Aleida and Hugh come to help each other through their various difficulties?

Since Hugh has family connections in government, he provides leads to Aleida on where and how to search for her son. More importantly, his good-natured friendship helps when fear and anxiety swamp her. And when murders flame up in Hugh's circle, Aleida's levelheaded thinking helps Hugh consider the various suspects.

# FF: What are some of the main themes in *Embers in the London Sky*?

When does telling the truth become reckless endangerment—and when does discretion become censorship? The story also explores humanity's ongoing struggle to accept those of different nationalities and social classes, those with disabilities, and those we disagree with. Do we cast them aside—or do we go out of our way to care for them?

### FF: How did you become interested in writing World War II novels?

Family stories drew me to the World War II era. During the war, my great-uncle was a B-17 bomber pilot, one of my grandfathers served in the US Navy, and my other grandfather taught American soldiers the German language through the US Army Specialized Training Program. Growing up hearing these stories—plus my father's love for WWII movies!—gave me a love for the era. FF

#### **Visit Sarah Sundin's author page here:**

https://familyfiction.com/authors/sarah-sundin



# **Embers in the London Sky**Sarah Sundin Revell



### **Book Summary:**

As the German army invades the Netherlands in 1940, Aleida van der Zee Martens escapes to London to wait out the Occupation. Separated from her three-year-old son, Theo, in the process, the young widow desperately searches for her little boy even as she works for an agency

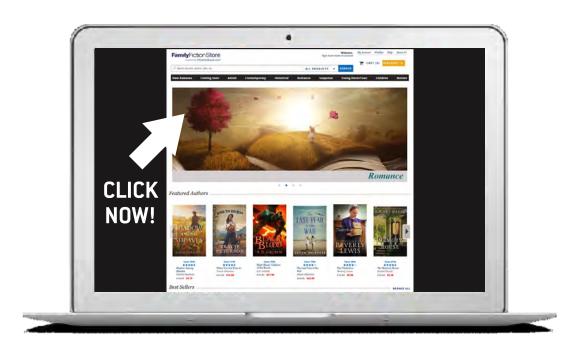
responsible for evacuating children to the countryside.

When German bombs set London ablaze, BBC radio correspondent Hugh Collingwood reports on the Blitz, eager to boost morale while walking the fine line between truth and censorship. But the Germans are not the only ones Londoners have to fear as a series of murders flame up amid the ashes.

The deaths hit close to home for Hugh, and Aleida needs his help to locate her missing son. As they work together, they grow closer and closer, both to each other and the answers they seek. But with bombs falling and continued killings, they may be running out of time.



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# AMISH ROMANCE Wanda E. Brunstetter Letters of Wisdom

**New York Times** bestselling author **Wanda E. Brunstetter** and her husband live in Washington State but take every opportunity to visit friends in Amish settlements throughout the States.

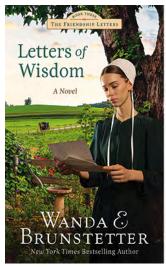
In this interview, Wanda talks with us about the third book in her *Friendship Letters Series*, *Letters of Wisdom*.

### FF: What inspired the story in your book?

After being asked by several people to write a book on the topic of abuse, and then praying about it, I concluded that God wanted me to write this novel. The fact that both my husband and I had suffered some measure of abuse as children, provided me with the information and understanding to tackle this topic.

## FF: What can you tell us about the main characters in your book?

My protagonist in this story is a young Amish woman who is married and has three children. She was the victim of abuse as a child and has never really dealt with the pain of it or her deep-rooted anger toward the man who abused her. The young woman's mother is also a main character who struggles with guilt for allowing her daughter to endure such suffering and not standing up for her. This story is about healing, forgiving and being able to move on.





### FF: Which character surprised you the most?

I think it was the young woman's husband that surprised me the most, with the love and understanding he had for his wife, even after she'd begun to abuse their own children. Rather than taking the children from their home, he found someone to come into the house when he was at work to take care of the children. He also encouraged his wife to get the help that she needed.

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

Readers often connect with characters they read about, especially if they can relate to things that occur in the book that may have happened to them as well.

### FF: What can you tell us about your next book?

My next novel is called *The Protector*. It's the first book in *A Mifflin County Mystery Series*. It begins with the disappearance of a young Amish woman, and the main character, her brother,

feels responsible because he wasn't able to protect her. Since they don't know what happened to her, there is no closure for the family, and each of them struggles to deal with it in their own way.

### FF: What kind of research did you do for this book?

The research I did was mostly about places where a victim of abuse can go for help, which I share with my readers in my author note at the back of the book. I also did some research on why a person would become an abuser. The rest of my research came from personal experience.

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

I hope my readers will understand that Amish people are often faced with the same kind of problems we English deal with. I also want readers to see that when we are faced with a difficult circumstance, or serious issue beyond our control, we need to seek help, and above all, rely on God for wisdom and to help us get through.

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

Since both my husband and I have an Anabaptist heritage, and we have many close Amish friends, I don't feel challenged to write about the Amish. That being said, there are always challenges an author must face when writing a novel—coming up with an interesting topic—making sure all the chapters flow well—and giving each character distinct personalities that will help the reader relate to them.

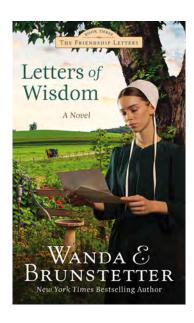
FF: What authors or books have inspired you as an author? I have always loved to read, and as a child, I read a book called Nancy and Plum, by Betty McDonald. The storyline, about two orphaned sisters, pulled me into the book from the very first page, and I couldn't put it down. I felt as though I was right there with the characters—cheering them on, with the hope that things would get better for Nancy and her sister Plum. Betty McDonald's book inspired me to become an author someday; although at that time, I wasn't sure how I could accomplish the goal.

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

My faith in God, which began as a child, has brought me through many joys and trials in life. I feel blessed to be able to create situations for my book characters that readers have told me has helped them grow deeper in their faith, strengthened relationships, and given them a desire to help others who are hurting or in need. **FF** 

#### **Visit Wanda E. Brunstetter's author page here:**

https://familyfiction.com/authors/wanda-brunstetter



### **Letters of Wisdom**

Friendship Letters Series #3 Wanda E. Brunstetter Barbour Fiction



### **Book Summary:**

Letters and Prayers Between Friends Become a Balm for Healing

Irma Miller thought having a family of her own would bring her joy and a sense of accomplishment, but she struggles with memories of the abuse she suffered as a child

at the hand of her stepfather. When she becomes physically and emotionally abusive to her own children, she reaches out to her friend Doretta for prayer and wisdom. But Irma may find herself at an even darker emotional place before she will admit she needs professional help to heal the past traumas. Will Doretta's letters of wisdom help Irma and her family, or will too much be broken to ever be repaired?



# MYSTERY/SUSPENSE Dani Pettrey One Wrong Move

With nearly one million books sold and a Daphne Du Maurier and National Reader's Choice Award under her belt, bestselling author Dani Pettrey has established herself among the very top names in romance and suspense. Recently closing out her blockbuster Coastal Guardians Series, Pettrey trades the lush coast of North Carolina for the scenic desertscapes of the Southwest to launch a brand-new era of stories with One Wrong Move, book one in the Jeopardy Falls Series.

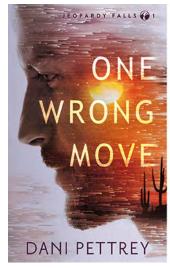
In this interview, Dani talks with us about her latest novel, **One Wrong Move**.

# FF: One Wrong Move is the first book in your new Jeopardy Falls Series. Can you share with us what this book—and series—is about?

One Wrong Move is about two people with pasts they are ashamed of. Both are trying to make it right, but the road they're taking only leads down a dangerous path of lies, riddles, and murder. Only when they come face-to-face with their pasts are they finally able to move beyond the hurt and heartache and find healing in God and one another.

# FF: The last time you had a new series starting was back in 2019. How do you feel about entering a new era of your storytelling with the *Jeopardy Falls Series*?

Wow! It's crazy to think it's been that long. I'm ecstatic to be launching my fifth series with Bethany House. It often seems like I was just meeting my editor and starting my debut series





the Alaskan Courage Saga. At other times, I think of all that has happened in the last decade—all the amazing booksellers, librarians, and readers I've met and been blessed by and the stories I've told. Now, launching Jeopardy Falls, I'm full of excitement and gratitude. I can't wait for my amazingly supportive readers to get a new journey to set out on with the MacLeod family.

**FF: How many stories can readers expect in this series?** There will four books in the series. One for each of the four MacLeod siblings, if the lost one decides to return home. Guess we'll just have to wait and see.

# FF: How does this series stand out from the other books you've written?

I think the biggest difference is the setting. I've always written coastal series. I'm a beach girl and love the ocean, so I've always set my series by water, but this time I've gone a completely different direction into the desert. Jeopardy Falls is set in a

fictional town in New Mexico. Why New Mexico? Because I lived there for seven wonderful years and fell in love with the Land of Enchantment, and I wanted the opportunity to share such a breathtaking place with my readers.

# FF: At the same time, what will longtime readers who enjoy your work love about these books as well?

The stories are still full of romance, suspense, adventure, those twists and turns that I love weaving in, and, of course, faith. My characters, particularly Andi and Christian in *One Wrong Move*, are real and raw and hurting. It's through their journey together and the unplanned paths God leads them down that they find what they've been looking for all along.

# FF: Each book in the series follows one of the MacLeod siblings as they strive to overcome a family legacy of crime. Without spoilers, can you give us a little background on the family and their history?

The siblings were raised in Las Vegas by illusionist parents, but beneath the glitz and the charm, their parents were con men, and they forced their children to participate in many of the schemes. They just kept pushing until one day they conned the wrong guy and had to go on the lam. Being raised in cruddy motel rooms, always on the move, always committing whatever crimes they could find to keep them going, the siblings—now grown—have to live with the trauma they endured as kids. Their mother incarcerated and their dad killed in a car bombing, the four siblings struggle to find their footing. It takes time and some big mistakes of their own before they find level footing in Christ. Now, they've turned their lives around and have devoted themselves as private investigators to bring those pulling cons, schemes, and heists to justice. To work off some

of their "red." It'll take some rough roads with Jesus to see and accept that they are already forgiven and can let go of that need to prove ourselves worthy.

# FF: This book takes place in the fictional town of Jeopardy Falls. What do you look forward to readers experiencing about this new locale?

A brand-new experience for those who have never experienced the Southwest. There will be beautiful sunrises over the mountains, purple- and orange-hue sunsets, horses, open land and skies, and a close-knit ranching community of wonderful and often quirky neighbors.

# FF: Throughout your career, you've highlighted a variety of law enforcement and investigative professions in your books. What kind of research was required to write Christian and Andi's characters accurately?

I spent a lot of time researching what private investigators do, the resources available to them, and the boundaries they can't cross. It was fascinating and a little crazy to see all they, and anyone who's good at research, can pull up on an individual. I also read a lot on real-life heists and the insurance agents who investigated them.

FF: What kind of reader do you envision will fall in love with Christian and Andi's story—as well as the rest of the series? I think readers who enjoy sweet romance, fast-paced suspense, and the fun of trying to figure out whodunit and how on earth the hero and heroine are going to survive.

# FF: Do you have a favorite character that you're especially excited for your readers to meet?

Greyson Chadwick. He's surprisingly not one of the siblings, but he works with them. He's a man of mysteries I still haven't fully figured out, so I'm really excited to dive in to his story thread.

# FF: One of the main themes in *One Wrong Move* that both Andi and Christian must deal with is facing the past to find healing. How do you think confronting old and often painful memories or choices that we've made can help us move forward?

I think there's a place where we should confront past memories and past mistakes, but the key isn't wallowing there. I come from a trauma background, so I'm not making light of the pain of anyone's past, but rather speaking of a lesson I learned in my own life.

I had a lot to deal with and walk through, but at some point, I realized I needed to stop treading water and to swim for the shore. I feel like that's Christian, and once he realizes he's free to swim to shore, he will. Andi is in a different place with her past, one that keeps her in a killer's crosshairs. How she deals with it is very different, which made the story really interesting for me to write. Seeing how God has different paths of healing for each of His children.

### FF: What do you hope readers experience when picking up One Wrong Move?

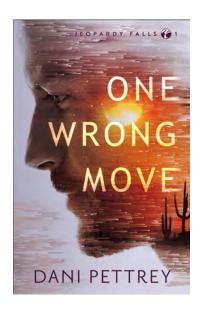
I hope they feel like they're part of Jeopardy Falls, riding in the car with Christian and Andi, seeing everything firsthand and experiencing the story as if they were there. I've called my

### Dani Pettrey — One Wrong Move

stories "Armchair Adventures" since my debut novel, but it's how I hope my readers enjoy my stories. Going along on the journey, the ups and downs, and Tilt-A-Whirl moments right from the comfort of their favorite chair with a yummy drink in hand. **FF** 

### Visit Dani Pettrey's author page here:

https://familyfiction.com/authors/dani-pettrey



### One Wrong Move

Jeopardy Falls Series #1 Dani Pettrey Bethany House



### **Book Summary:**

Haunting riddles. A deadly string of heists. Two broken hearts trapped in a killer's game.

Christian MacLeod was pulled into a life of crime at a young age by his con artist parents. Now making

amends for his corrupt past, he has become one of the country's foremost security experts. But when a string of Southwestern art heists targets one of the galleries Christian was in charge of securing, he is paired up with a gifted insurance investigator who has her own checkered past.

Andi Forester was a brilliant FBI forensic analyst until one of her colleagues destroyed her career, blaming her for mishandling evidence. She now puts those skills to work investigating insurance fraud, and this latest high-stakes case will test her abilities to the limit.

Drawn deep into a dangerous game with an opponent bent on revenge, Christian and Andi are in a race against the clock to catch the perpetrator, but the game is far from finished, and one wrong move could be the death of them both.



### ROMANTIC SUSPENSE Lynn H. Blackburn Never Fall Again

Lynn H. Blackburn is the award-winning author of Unknown Threat, Malicious Intent, and Under Fire, as well as the Dive Team Investigations Series. She loves writing swoonworthy Southern suspense because her childhood fantasy was to become a spy, but her grown-up reality is that she's a huge chicken and would have been caught on her first mission. She prefers to live vicariously through her characters by putting them into terrifying situations while she sits at home in her pajamas.

In this interview, Lynn talks with us about her new book, **Never Fall Again**, the first book in her new **Gossamer Falls Series**.

### FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your novel, Never Fall Again?

Landry Hutton has spent three years rebuilding her life behind the secure gates of The Haven, an exclusive resort on the outskirts of Gossamer Falls, North Carolina. As the artist-in-residence, she is finally ready to build a new life and home for her and her daughter—with the help of a handsome former Marine. But when danger threatens them, can Callum Shaw help protect both their hearts and their lives?

# FF: Never Fall Again is the first book in your new Gossamer Falls Series. How will the books in this series be connected?

The heroes of the first and third books and the heroine of the second book are cousins. They are part of a large, close family that has been living in Gossamer Falls for over one hundred years.





### FF: What inspired the idea behind this series?

All of my books have a strong ensemble cast. In previous books, the glue connecting the characters has been law enforcement–related. But I wanted to do a series where the characters were connected by blood instead of a workplace. And as a native of Western North Carolina, I knew I wanted to set the story in my mountains and give my characters a sprawling family that will both love and annoy them.

### FF: What makes this series stand out from your previous works?

My romantic suspense has always leaned heavily toward the romantic side, but with this series, I was very intentional about that decision. The suspense is still there and the stakes are high. But it was a delight to put more words on the page that focus on both the romantic relationships as well as the friendships and family relationships.

# FF: What type of research was required to write *Never Fall Again*?

Both of my main characters have unique hobbies/skills. My heroine is a potter, and I spent time with a potter who generously gave of her time and teaching skills—the two bowls I made during our lesson are some of my favorite things ever! And I got to watch the wood turning/burning process that creates the unique wooden vases, bowls, and bookmarks that my hero creates. It was wonderful! I now have two vases that I adore—one in my office and one on my piano.

### FF: Is Gossamer Falls inspired by a real location?

Gossamer Falls is an amalgamation of multiple towns in Western North Carolina. I borrowed bits and pieces from places I've lived and visited.

# FF: Landry Hutton is known as the artist-in-residence at The Haven. What does this mean for Landry?

The Haven offers their guests everything from guided hikes to private art lessons. As the artist-in-residence, Landry spends half of her time catering to the needs of the guests by providing private and group instruction in painting and pottery. The rest of her time is spent creating pottery that is sold online and in The Haven's gift shop, Favors.

### FF: Can you share more about Cal's background as a former Marine turned construction worker?

Cal has a four-year degree in construction management. He joined the Marine Corps as an officer after graduation. He had always planned to return to Gossamer Falls and join his family's construction firm, but he wanted to serve his country first.

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

I always want my readers to come away from my stories with a renewed sense of hope and a deeper faith.

## FF: What do readers have to look forward to in the rest of the series?

Books two and three will cover everything from meth addiction to corporate espionage. The romances are going to be intense and will hit some of my favorite tropes: friends to lovers, grumpy/sunshine, and second-chance romance. There will also be a novella with a plucky chef, a deputy with dark secrets, and a devious villain.

# FF: What do you love most about writing romantic suspense?

I truly wanted to be a spy when I was little. I was also (and still am) a hopeless romantic. Romantic suspense is truly the best of both worlds!. **FF** 

### Visit Lynn H. Blackburn's author page here:

https://familyfiction.com/authors/lynn-h-blackburn



### **Never Fall Again**

Gossamer Falls Series #1 Lynn H. Blackburn Revell



### **Book Summary:**

After being hidden away for three years at The Haven, an exclusive resort in Gossamer Falls, North Carolina, Landry Hutton finally believes her life is coming together. As the artist-in-residence, her pottery is prized by The

Haven's guests. Maybe she and her daughter, Eliza, can truly call this place home. But to make it permanent, she'll need a safe house for her little family, and former Marine Callum Shaw is just the man to help her build it.

Growing up in Gossamer Falls, Cal knew what his future held. He'd come back to his hometown after his military career and join the family business. What he didn't foresee was how badly he would long for a family of his own. While Landry is funny, talented, and gorgeous, Cal can't let himself fall for her. He barely survived his last relationship, and he can't imagine going through the pain of losing both Landry and her daughter too.

Just as Cal is preparing to begin construction on Landry's house, a mysterious fire destroys all of her pottery. The fire is only the beginning, and Landry and Eliza are obviously in danger. But who could have a death wish for them? Though he wanted to maintain his distance, Cal can't leave Landry to face this threat alone. He knows Landry needs him—and he fears that he may need her just as much.



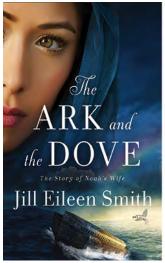
# Jill Eileen Smith The Ark and the Dove

Jill Eileen Smith is the bestselling and award-winning author of the biblical fiction series The Wives of King David, Wives of the Patriarchs, and Daughters of the Promised Land, as well as The Heart of a King, Star of Persia: Esther's Story, Miriam's Song, The Prince and the Prodigal, and Daughter of Eden. She is also the author of the nonfiction books When Life Doesn't Match Your Dreams and She Walked Before Us.

In this interview, Jill talks with us about her latest book, **The Ark and the Dove**.

# FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your novel *The Ark and the Dove?*

Emzara and Noah live in a world that no longer respects or believes in the Creator. Except for a few of their remaining ancestors, they are alone in their beliefs. The world is a dark place because of the demonic infiltration of the Nephilim, which began in the days of Adam and Eve. When Noah hears from the Creator, who says He is going to destroy the world as they know it and tells Noah to build an ark to save himself and his family and the animals, Noah obeys without question. The challenge of building such an enormous ship takes years fraught with trials, loss, sabotage, and continuing animosity from friends and family. When the time comes to enter the ark, Zara and her family embark on an adventure that tests their faith and patience until that wonderful day when they step again onto dry ground. But the future is nothing like what they expected.





Can their family survive in this newly cleansed world when their own hearts are far from free?

FF: What drew you to the story of Noah's wife and convinced you to make Zara the subject of your next novel?

The story of Noah and the ark has been the subject of much speculation and interest for generations. Besides the many children's stories and Hollywood films on the subject, people have searched for the lost ark for years. The ark intrigues us, but nothing is really known about the people who boarded it and lived on it with the animals for over a year. Noah's wife and daughters-in-law are not even named in Scripture. So who were they? What was it like to live with a man who heard from God and did what He said, even if it meant building a huge ship in the middle of a field? I wanted to get to know Zara and her family and imagine what life was like before, during, and after that famous flood.

### FF: Where did you turn to do research for this novel?

I visited the Ark Encounter in Kentucky the year I began this book. I bought books there that helped me to picture the ins and outs of life back then. I read the scriptural account many times and searched online and in my store of reference books for anything I could find to help me grasp what Noah's family went through and what that might have been like.

### FF: What fictional elements did you weave into this story? Can you explain the purpose behind one of them?

Every character contains fictional elements because the Bible doesn't tell us much about any of them. I had to create personalities for each individual, and I chose to make one of the daughters-in-law—Keziah, Ham's wife—more difficult to live with to add conflict to the story. This also helps us to imagine why Ham is the one who later laughs at his father's drunken nakedness and why Noah ends up cursing Ham's son. Giving Ham a difficult wife added to his own rebellious spirit.

### FF: Throughout the book, Zara struggles with heartbreak. What allows her to push through?

She prays. She does try to fix things sometimes, but when fixing fails, she talks first to her mother and later to Noah. But most of the time she turns to the Creator because she recognizes that He is the only one with power to do anything regarding her circumstances.

### FF: Often, retellings of Noah's story end when they leave the ark. Why did you decide to continue the story beyond that point?

Noah lived for many years after the flood, and if we do the math with regard to his age and that of his sons, we realize that they lived until the Tower of Babel and the confusing of the languages. I wanted to show what happened generations later without going into too much detail, while imagining what Noah and Zara might have felt when they saw their family moving in different directions. After they had been so close aboard the ark, that couldn't have been easy, and yet they knew this was what God wanted. When I look at someone who has lived a long life, I find it fascinating to see what they lived through.

### FF: What do you hope readers will gain from reading The Ark and the Dove?

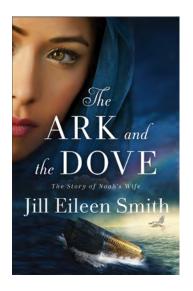
My hope is that readers will look at this story less as a mythical tale and more as a fictionalized account of history. That they will see God's heart in creating humanity and how sin and evil caused Him great sorrow because sin broke our fellowship with Him. The flood came as judgment to show us how heinous sin is and to restore us to a relationship with the Creator. Of course, true restoration didn't come until God sent the Redeemer. I hope my readers will seek to know our Redeemer, Jesus Messiah.

### FF: Is it intimidating to retell and flesh out the stories of the Bible?

Yes. Most of the time it feels nearly impossible to find the bigger story within the vignette given in Scripture. Every time thus far, after much prayer and many drafts, God has shown me that there is a story worth telling. **FF** 

### Visit Jill Eileen Smith's author page here:

https://familyfiction.com/authors/jill-eileen-smith



### The Ark and the Dove The Story of Noah's Wife Jill Eileen Smith Revell



#### **Book Summary:**

Experience the story of the great flood as you never have before.

Zara and Noah have walked together with the Creator for their entire lives. They have done their best in an

increasingly wicked and defiant world to raise their three sons to follow in their footsteps. It has been a challenge—and it's about to get much, much harder.

When the Creator tells her husband to build an ark to escape the coming wrath against the sins of humankind, Zara steps out with him in faith. But the derision and sabotage directed their way from both friends and extended family are difficult to bear, as is knowing that everyone she interacts with beyond her husband, her sons, and their wives is doomed to destruction.

When the ark is finally finished and the animals have been shut up inside, Zara and her family embark on an adventure that will test their patience and their faith as they await deliverance and dry ground.



# YA/TEEN, FAIRY TALE/FOLKLORE Cathy McCrumb Guardian

**Cathy McCrumb** graduated from Biola University with a degree in English Literature and a love for stories. She and her husband, whom she met while writing letters to soldiers, have five children and currently live within the shadow of the Rocky Mountains. While writing is one of her favorite things to do, she also enjoys reading, long hikes and long naps, gluten-free brownies and raspberries, and crocheting while watching science fiction movies with friends and family.

In this interview, Cathy shares some of her thoughts about her new book, *Guardian*, book number 3 in her *Children* of the Consortium Series.

### FF: What inspired the story in your book?

Years ago, a friend gave me a ride home from work. She and I talked about current events, technology, and the way society sometimes dehumanized people who weren't "normal." (As if Normal is an attainable state, rather than a city in Illinois.) What if people forgot that value of life itself, of each individual human? What if being God's creation no longer mattered, in and of itself?

A few days later, I dreamed of standing on a moon, looking up at the stars that spread across the inky blackness of space. A sense of wonder and belonging connected that dangerous, cold beauty overhead to the love of the Maker of the universe. Then, I followed the others—a serious young woman, Jordan, Alec, and a young man named Timmons—into tunnels.

#### Cathy McCrumb — Guardian





I jotted it down and told my friend, and she said, "Keep going."

I did.

### FF: What can you tell us about the main characters in your book?

The series revolves around a young woman with no name. She has defied the Consortium, the organization that raised her, by developing feelings and opinions the governing members of the Consortium will not tolerate. After discovering friendship, freedom, and love, disaster threatens the people this Recorder cares for. Despite the potential consequences, the Recorder will risk anything and everything she can to save them.

Her friends, however, are not willing to lose her.

And, yes, she must find her name.

### FF: Which character surprised you the most?

Kyleigh Tristram surprised me the most this time. After losing her family and almost everything she loves, Kyleigh's faith seems to waver. Grief is a tangible force for her, but allowing it to distract her could lead to more deaths. Since Kyleigh was the one person willing to admit her faith to the Recorder in the first book, her trust in an "unquantifiable God" is pivotal to the Recorder's understanding of belief.

Having lost family members, Kyleigh's struggle was very real to me. How do you hold fast when someone's absence leaves a gaping hole? I hadn't anticipated the way writing her would affect me.

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

We learn in many different ways—visual, aural, verbal, physical, logical, social—but I believe we also learn through imagination. This is one of the reasons children have been told fairy tales about avoiding gingerbread houses in the woods or speaking words like diamonds instead of like toads. Well-crafted stories sink deep into our hearts and minds. They can inspire courage and illustrate the consequences of folly.

### **FF: What can readers expect from the rest of this series?** Recorder's very first line hints of a promise:

"I did not have a name—none of us did—but once, when I was young, I had a friend."

Since Guardian is the end of the series, I will keep that promise. (I know. That is a little obscure, but you'll see what I mean.)

### FF: What kind of research did you do for this book?

For all three books, I spent a lot of time reading articles from the National Center for Biotechnology Information. For *Guardian*, I studied brain function and the effects of certain types of trauma. Occasionally, history would become my focus, including articles about early Soviet experiments with the removal of marriage as an institution. (Note: That didn't end well.)

Some of the more fun topics included idioms, the development of slang, and Victorian mourning jewelry. Since long hair is a status symbol in this world, in part because members of the Consortium are bald, different ways of styling hair was another topic that was fun to read about.

Funny thing: I wanted to have a solid naming system for various ships and decided that one class should be named after British prime ministers, even if only one of those ships appears in the novel. I decided on Attlee, then panicked and called a friend in the United Kingdom to make sure that it would be all right. She and her husband found my concern amusing.

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

When I started writing the *Children of the Consortium trilogy*, I said that it was a love song to those who felt left out. I still hold to that.

You are valuable and unique. Hold fast to hope, for you are not alone.

And you are loved.

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

One of the biggest challenges is wanting to be as accurate as I can be, but I am writing science fiction, not science fact. Even though I am writing very character-driven stories, the imagined world needs to be extrapolated from and grounded in what we know now. The trick of it is that I can be a detail-oriented person, so I can't let my fear of missing something distract me from the story.

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

So many books have inspired me, but it wasn't until last year that I realized which ones had some of the biggest impacts. I read some of my favorite books from childhood to my youngest. Narnia, of course. The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings. But then, we reached Charlotte's Web, Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH, The Chronicles of Prydain, and The Best Christmas Pageant Ever. We haven't yet read At the Back of the North Wind, A Wrinkle in Time, or The Giver. I might need more tissues for those.

These books shaped the way I experienced fiction. The ones that made me laugh, cry, and think left an indelible mark on my heart and mind.

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

With God, we have hope.

In John 16:33, Jesus tells us that we will have trouble but to take courage, for He has overcome the world.

#### Cathy McCrumb — Guardian

Troubles and sorrow will come. Heartache will come. But beyond all that pain is the solid conviction that the One who made the world has overcome. He shall never leave us or forsake us.

God is bigger than what we face—and what a joyous thought! This is at the heart of my stories, whether they are science fiction, fantasy, or something else entirely. That is the core of what I write. **FF** 

#### **Visit Cathy McCrumb's author page here:**

https://familyfiction.com/authors/cathy-mccrumb

#### Cathy McCrumb — Guardian

https://familyfiction.christianbook.com/lumen-hardcover-2/9798886050820/pd/050825?event=ESRCG



#### Guardian

Children of the Consortium Series #3
Cathy McCrumb
Enclave Publishing



### **Book Summary:**

The Recorder's fate has been sealed, but the Consortium is not the only enemy.

Labeled an aberration by the Consortium, the Recorder is not yet

free. Time is running out as an engineered bioweapon wreaks havor on friend and foe alike.

Stopping both the biological agent and the people who created it is no easy task, especially since the Recorder and her friends are trapped on a research station infested with behemoth insects. Without Consortium technology, the probability of neutralizing the threat falls to nothing. In order to save her allies, the Recorder must activate a drone, but her success might destroy any hope for freedom, a future, and a name.



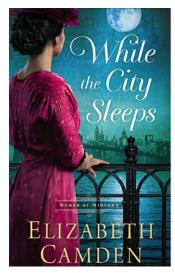
### HISTORICAL ROMANCE Elizabeth Camden While the City Sleeps

**Elizabeth Camden** is best known for her historical novels set in Gilded Age America, featuring clever heroines and richly layered storylines. Before she was a writer, she was an academic librarian at some of the largest and smallest libraries in America, but her favorite is the continually growing library in her own home. Her novels have won the RITA and Christy Awards and have appeared on the CBA Bestsellers List.

In this interview, Elizabeth shares some of her thoughts regarding **While the City Sleeps**, the second book in her **The Women of Midtown Series**.

### FF: Can you tell us a little about your new novel While the City Sleeps?

The story takes place in 1913, and despite her being a woman in a male-dominated field, Dr. Katherine Schnieder has established a good life for herself in New York City. Her world, however, is plunged into danger after she learns the identity of the people behind a string of bombings. Thus she seeks protection from a dashing police officer. Lieutenant Birch has long admired Katherine from afar, but he has good reasons for keeping her at arm's length. Now they must work together to unravel the criminal conspiracy that threatens Katherine's life.





# FF: While the City Sleeps kicks off the start of The Women of Midtown Series. What's the connecting element between the books of this series, and are they strongly linked or more loosely associated?

The novels are loosely linked by the Midtown Manhattan apartment building where all the heroines live. In the early twentieth century, there were several female-only apartment buildings reserved for unmarried career women who might otherwise struggle to find safe housing. The heroines are all professional women who live on the same floor of one such building, but each novel will stand entirely on its own.

### FF: Can you share with us why the book is titled While the City Sleeps? What significance does this have to the story?

I've always wanted to write a novel featuring the culture and comradery among people who work an overnight shift. I worked the late shift while in college and so appreciate the unique environment of overnight workers—those who keep hospitals staffed, the plumbing and electricity working prop-

erly, and the police and fire departments ready to swing into action at a moment's notice. I wanted to shine a spotlight on these people and celebrate their often overlooked contributions carried out while the rest of the city is sleeping.

## FF: You're famous for setting your novels in the Gilded Age. What is it about that time period that captures your interest?

The Gilded Age has the glamour and romance of a bygone era, yet there's enough familiarity with this time period that it doesn't seem alien to the contemporary reader. It was a time when women were entering professions, so I have the freedom to explore interesting work environments and have my heroines fully engaged in the drama of the storyline.

# FF: Your main female character, Katherine, is employed as a dentist, which was uncommon for women in the early 1900s. Where did you find the inspiration for her character and her profession?

I've always wanted to have a dentist for a hero, and I assumed it would be a man. However, the plot for this novel required the dentist to need constant police protection during which a love story could develop. It worked best to have a female dentist paired with a police lieutenant, who's determined to keep her safe. By 1913 there were plenty of female dentists, so the idea worked perfectly.

# FF: Your male protagonist, Jonathan, is a New York City police lieutenant. What kinds of criminals were the NYPD going after in the early 1900s? What crimes were the biggest threats to the city and its citizens?

The type of crime in New York back then is exactly what they

have today—mostly petty street crime, although more serious offenses like murder, terrorism, and Mafia crime consumed the majority of the police's time and attention. What was unique about this era was that growing professionalization within the NYPD led them to start forming specialized crime-fighting teams. The Bomb Squad and the Italian Squad were established around this time, and both play an important role in the novel. In 1913, almost all Mafia crime was assumed to be Italian, thus the name Italian Squad.

### FF: What is one lesser-known tidbit you came across while researching this story that you found most interesting?

I have a few scenes set in newspaper offices during the overnight hours as the editors and typesetters prepare the morning edition. I learned that William Randolph Hearst, owner of the New York Journal, routinely showed up after midnight to participate in laying out the front page and featured stories for the morning newspaper. He often arrived wearing a tuxedo and drinking champagne after a night at the theater. Hearst was a hands-on owner and loved working into the small hours of the morning, fiddling with his newspaper.

## FF: You've written quite a few historical novels now, each one focusing on a different slice of history. How do you form an idea for a new story?

I devour memoirs written by people who lived during the Gilded Age. For While the City Sleeps, I read memoirs written by early twentieth century dentists, a police officer, and several by newspaper publishers. These memoirs provided authentic details and insights not only for this novel but they also stir ideas for future books. For example, in a memoir by publisher George Putnam, he spoke about living in a boardinghouse alongside a

### Elizabeth Camden — While the City Sleeps

bunch of revolutionary exiles from Bolivia. They were a colorful crew who offered to make him their minister of education should they succeed in retaking their country. Okay, that's simply fabulous! This is the sort of unique insight into boardinghouse life I can tweak for a future novel.

### FF: What do you hope readers take away from an Elizabeth Camden novel, and this one in particular?

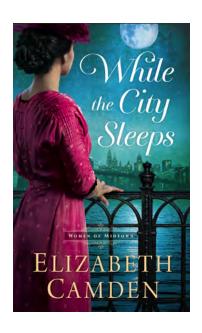
I hope readers enjoy a thrilling and powerfully emotional love story. One of the things that stands out in this novel is the ability for a person to reinvent themself. Must we live with the hand of cards life has dealt us, or does God give us the freedom to change our lives by reinventing ourselves into a new and better person? Several of the characters in the story face this issue, and I hope readers can take inspiration from them if they too feel trapped by something in their past.

### FF: What can readers look forward to in the next book of the series?

The next book will feature a real-life American ambassador to Berlin in the years immediately before World War I. He was a sportsman, a socialite, and completely unprepared for such an important ambassadorship as the war loomed on the horizon. My heroine will be his secretary, and the hero is his chief of staff. It will be an opposites-attract romance, set amid the glamour of aristocratic Berlin and the drama of an impending war. **FF** 

#### Visit Elizabeth Camden's author page here:

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



### While the City Sleeps

The Women of Midtown Series #1 Elizabeth Camden Bethany House



### **Book Summary:**

Katherine Schneider's workaday life as a dentist in 1913 New York is upended when a patient reveals details of a deadly plot while under the influence of laughing gas. As she is plunged into danger, she seeks help from the dashing Lieutenant Jonathan Birch, a police officer she

has long admired from afar.

Jonathan has harbored powerful feelings for Katherine for years, but never acted on them, knowing his dark history is something she could never abide. Now, with her safety on the line, he works alongside her through the nights as they unravel the criminal conspiracy that threatens her...even as he keeps his deepest secrets hidden at all costs.

Join award-winning author Elizabeth Camden for a sweeping and romantic adventure of dangerous secrets and wounded hearts, fighting to overcome the darkness while the rest of the city sleeps.





# ROMANTIC SUSPENSE Patricia Bradley Fatal Witness

Patricia Bradley is the author of Counter Attack and Fatal Witness, as well as the Natchez Trace Park Rangers Series, Memphis Cold Case Series, and Logan Point Series. Bradley is the winner of an Inspirational Reader's Choice Award, a Selah Award, and a Daphne du Maurier Award; she was a Carol Award finalist; and three of her books were included in anthologies that debuted on the USA Today bestseller list. She makes her home in Mississippi.

In this interview, Patricia shares some of her thoughts on her latest book, *Fatal Witness*, which is the second book in her *Pearl River Series*.

### FF: Can you please provide a brief summary of your novel, Fatal Witness?

Although she witnessed the murder of her parents 25 years ago, Dani Bennett has no memory of the event. However, it's clear that the killer remembers her when she returns to Pearl Springs in search of answers. Local K-9 Deputy Mark Lassiter is determined to protect her, but who will protect her heart?

### FF: What do you hope readers will gain from reading Fatal Witness?

I hope readers will know that when they go through trials (that's a when, not if), God will be with them. One Bible verse that Mark claims, then Dani, is Psalm 56:3: "When I am afraid, I will trust in you."





### FF: How do you balance the heart-pounding suspense and sweet romance your novels are known for?

Writing suspense comes much easier to me than writing sweet romance. I've always said it's easier for me to kill a character off than to get them together romantically. Most of the time my characters resist my matchmaking, so what I try to do is write about a developing relationship more than romance. And that makes it easier to balance the two.

## FF: The male protagonist in *Fatal Witness* is a K-9 officer. What sort of research was necessary to develop his character?

A lot of research went into developing Mark's character. When we had a K-9 officer in our town, I interviewed him, and most of my information came from the interview. I also have a friend named Google where I read real-life stories from K-9 officers.

### FF: There are some shocking twists in this novel. How do you decide when to implement them?

As I write, I see the story much like a movie, and the twists seem to fall naturally in my head.

## FF: Identity is an important topic in this novel. Without giving any spoilers, can you elaborate on how *Fatal Witness* addresses the idea of identity?

The heroine in the story witnessed the murder of her family when she was nine and suffered from dissociative amnesia. Because her uncle feared the killer would come after Dani, he whisked her away to Montana where they could disappear. When the story opens, she has no idea of her history or family back in Pearl Springs. The story is as much about her discovering her roots as the solving of her parents' murders.

### FF: What was your motivation for choosing Pearl River as the location for your current series?

I love the mountains, and my sister lives near Chattanooga, so I knew the area. However, I didn't want to be tied to a specific town, so I made up a town, the Pearl River, and a lake. I even have a map of the town with a layout of the stores, the Pearl Springs Police Department, the Sheriff's Office, and a McDonalds.

### FF: This is the second book in your *Pearl River Series*. What can readers expect in the third installment?

The third book has a working title of *Deadly Vengeance*. Two former city councilmen have been murdered, and the killer has his sights set on the former mayor, now running for the US Senate. The reader first meets Deputy Jenna Hart and Tennessee

#### Patricia Bradley — Fatal Witness

Bureau of Investigation Agent Maxwell Anderson in *Fatal Witness*. They have a history together and it did not end well, but now they are thrown together to protect the former mayor when he visits Pearl Springs for a big political rally. **FF** 

#### Visit Patricia Bradley's author page here:

https://familyfiction.com/authors/patricia-bradley



## Fatal Witness Pearl River Series #2 Patricia Bradley Revell

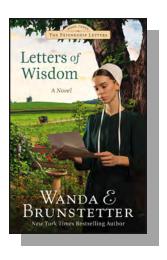


### **Book Summary:**

As a child, artist and potter Dani Bennett witnessed the brutal murder of her parents. With no memory of the incident or her true identity, she was forced to take on a new name and a new life, hidden away in Montana for the past 25 years.

Mae Richmond has spent the same stretch of time searching for her granddaughter, who went missing the night her daughter and son-in-law were murdered. Convinced the woman she saw in a pottery magazine feature is the woman she's been searching for, she enlists the help of K-9 officer Mark Lassiter of Pearl Springs, Tennessee, who tracks Dani down.

Skeptical but curious, Dani sets out on a journey to uncover the secrets of her past and reclaim her true identity. But someone close to her is determined to keep the truth of what happened all those years ago hidden.



### **Letters of Wisdom**

Friendship Letters Series #3 Wanda E. Brunstetter Barbour Fiction

**Genres**: Amish, Amish Romance **Release Date**: March 1, 2024





#### Between You and Us

Kendra Broekhuis WaterBrook

**Genres**: Contemporary, Women's Fiction

Release Date: March 12, 2024





### **Never Fall Again**

Gossamer Falls Series #1 Lynn H. Blackburn Revell

**Genres**: Mystery & Suspense,

Romantic Suspense

Release Date: March 12, 2024





### A Lady's Guide to Marvels and Misadventure

Angela Bell **Bethany House** 

Genres: Romance, Historical Romance Release Date: February 27, 2024





#### The Ark and the Dove

The Story of Noah's Wife Jill Eileen Smith Revell

Genres: Historical, Historical Romance.

**Biblical Fiction** 

Release Date: February 27, 2024





### Coop Messes Up

The Wheelies Series #1

Sarah Reju

Illustrator: Tania Rex **New Growth Press** Genres: Children's

Release Date: February 26, 2024





#### Guardian

Children of the Consortium Series #3
Cathy McCrumb
Enclave Publishing

**Genres**: YA/Teen, Sci-Fi, Fairy Tale & Folklore

Release Date: February 20, 2024





### **Relying on the Enemy**

Harbored in Crow's Nest Series #4 Danielle Grandinetti Hearth Spot Press

**Genres**: Mystery & Suspense,

Romantic Suspense, Historical Romance

Release Date: February 20, 2024





### The Divine Proverb of Streusel

Sara Brunsvold

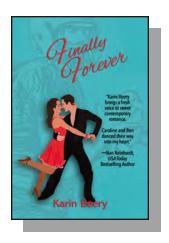
Revell

Genres: Contemporary,

Women's Fiction

Release Date: January 16, 2024



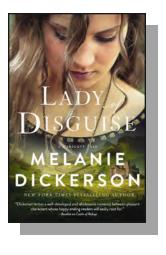


### **Finally Forever**

Karin Beery Elk Lake Publishing **Genres**: Romance

Release Date: February 16, 2024





### **Lady of Disguise**

A Dericott Tale Series #6 Melanie Dickerson Thomas Nelson

**Genres**: YA/Teen Sci-Fi, Fairy Tale/Folklore

Release Date: February 13, 2024





### The Irish Matchmaker

Jennifer Deibel Revell

**Genres**: Historical Romance

Release Date: February 13, 2024





### **Chasing the Horizon**

A Western Light Series #1 Mary Connealy Bethany House

Genres: Historical Romance,

Western Romance

Release Date: February 13, 2024





### **One Final Target**

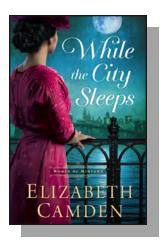
Janice Cantore Tyndale House

**Genres**: Mystery/Suspense,

Romantic Suspense

Release Date: February 13, 2024





### While the City Sleeps

The Women of Midtown Series #1 Elizabeth Camden Bethany House

**Genres**: Romance, Historical Romance **Release Date**: February 13, 2024





#### The Shadow and the Promise

The Redemption Tales Series #1
Marty Machowski
Illustrated by Blair Files
New Growth Press

**Genres**: Children's, Action & Adventure **Release Date**: February 12, 2024





### **Embers in the London Sky**

Sarah Sundin

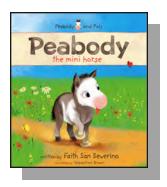
Revell

**Genres**: Historical Romance,

Mystery & Suspense

Release Date: February 6, 2024





### **Peabody the Mini Horse**

Faith San Severino

Illustrator: Sebastien Braun

Tyndale House **Genres**: Children's

Release Date: February 6, 2024





### One Wrong Move

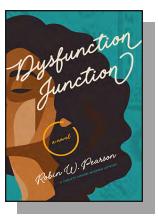
Jeopardy Falls Series #1 Dani Pettrey Bethany House

Genres: Mystery/Suspense,

Romantic Suspense

Release Date: February 6, 2024





### **Dysfunction Junction**

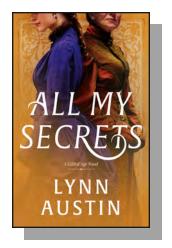
Robin W. Pearson Tyndale House

**Genres**: Contemporary,

Southern Fiction

Release Date: February 6, 2024





#### **All My Secrets**

Lynn Austin Tyndale House

**Genres**: Historical Romance, Historical

Release Date: February 6, 2024





#### **Fatal Witness**

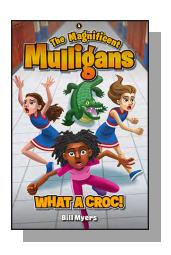
Pearl River Series #2
Patricia Bradley
Revell

Genres: Mystery/Suspense,

Romantic Suspense

Release Date: February 6, 2024





#### What a Croc!

Magnificent Mulligans Series #4 Bill Myers

Focus on the Family

Genres: Children's, Action & Adventure

Release Date: February 6, 2024





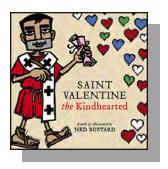
### **Mortal Queens**

The Fae Dynasty Series #1 Victoria McCombs Enclave Escape

**Genres**: YA/Teen, Sci-Fi, Fairy Tale & Folklore

Release Date: February 6, 2024





#### Saint Valentine the Kindhearted

The History and Legends of God's Brave and Loving Servant Ned Bustard IVP Kids

**Genres**: Children's

Release Date: January 16, 2024



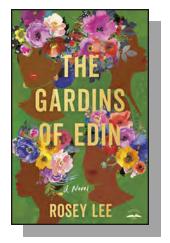


### A Season of Harvest

Leah's Garden Series #4 Lauraine Snelling Bethany House

**Genres**: Historical Romance **Release Date**: January 30, 2024





### The Gardins of Edin

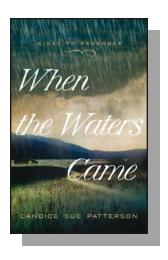
Rosey Lee WaterBrook

Genres: Southern Fiction,

Contemporary

Release Date: January 9, 2024





#### When the Waters Came

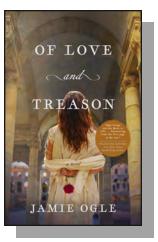
A Day to Remember Series #1 Candice Sue Patterson Barbour Fiction

**Genres**: Mystery/Suspense,

Romance, Historical

Release Date: January 1, 2024





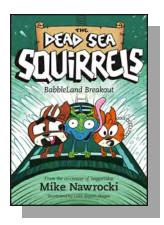
### Of Love and Treason

Jamie Ogle Tyndale House

**Genres**: Biblical Fiction, Historical Romance

Release Date: January 23, 2024





### **BabbleLand Breakout**

Dead Sea Squirrels Series #12 Mike Nawrocki Tyndale Kids

Genres: Children's Action & Adventure

Release Date: January 9, 2024



