

JANUARY 27, 2025

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— YOUR GUIDE TO SELF-PUBLISHING —

Indie Spotlight on Self-Help and Business Books • 69 New BookLife Titles Listed •
16 New BookLife Titles Reviewed

Unveiling the Unnoticed

How cover design and color can influence reader choices

BY SIERRA KAY

As I sat on a bench in the Musée Marmottan Monet in Paris this summer, I experienced a moment of clarity: white is not white. Now, before artists and designers roll their eyes in unison, believe me—I understand that this revelation is far from groundbreaking and that those in the creative fields have been shouting this for years. But allow me to elaborate on how this seemingly simple idea applies to creating effective book covers.

While wandering through the museum, I paused to admire a painting depicting a serene winter scene. Leaning in closer, I was struck by the realization that the snow was not the pure white I had always envisioned. Instead, I noticed a spectrum of colors—blues, grays, even subtle peaches. We've been conditioned to accept the notion that snow is white. The Brothers Grimm and Disney reinforced this concept with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. However, the truth is far more complex: reality is nuanced, just like our perception of color.

This complexity lies in the workings of our brains. Design is both an art and a science—a blend that is often overlooked in favor of the artistic side. To understand this better, we must acknowledge that much of the brain's processing occurs outside our conscious awareness. Our brains can process about 11 million bits of data per second, yet only about 40 of those bits translate into conscious thoughts. This disparity is crucial to understanding how we perceive the world and make decisions.



Throughout our lives, marketers and salespeople have not just been engaging our conscious minds: they have been communicating with our unconscious minds. Yes, even those of you who pride yourselves on being rational thinkers often make choices swayed by emotion. *Gasp!* I know.

Consider the typical shopping experience. You walk into Target with a list of five items yet somehow emerge with a cart overflowing with merchandise you hadn't intended to buy. "I don't know why I got all this stuff,"

“Designers can trigger an emotional connection to get books into the hands of readers.”

you might say in disbelief. Well, neuroscientists and neuropsychologists understand why. Studies show that our unconscious desires and emotional responses drive many of our choices, often leading us to purchase items that we didn't plan on buying. We can leverage that phenomenon for book sales through intentionally designed covers.

Of course, questions arise: How does a cover go beyond merely being deemed “cute” to being recognized as “impactful”? What elements make a book cover resonate deeply with potential readers?

First, let's explore the psychology of color. Each hue evokes distinct emotions and associations. For instance, red can signify passion or danger, while blue often conveys calmness and trust. When designing a book cover, understanding these emotional responses is crucial. A cover that effectively communicates the genre and tone of the book while evoking the right feelings in potential readers can lead them to pick it up and delve into its pages.



Next, consider composition and imagery. The arrangement of elements on a cover can create a narrative triggering an emotional response before readers even peruse the back cover. A well-composed cover draws the eye, guiding potential readers' focus and sparking curiosity.

Let's take a look at Stephen King's book *Holly*. Of course, King's brand of horror is so well-known and consistent that the mere sight of his

name can evoke interest, triggering readers to buy. But there's more going on here.

The use of color is striking. When you look closely at the cover, you'll notice the dark blues and blacks that are often used in the horror genre. And the designer used yellow so cleverly: the significant contrast between the dark background and the yellow makes the yellow stand out. Looking at the shadowy figure in the upstairs window and the figure down below (you can tell just by looking at that house that it's not a finished basement

Q&A SPONSORED

BookLife Talks with Lindsay M. Ellis

As a leadership and marketing consultant, Ellis has seen both good and bad leaders in her two decades of experience. Her book, *Beyond the Ordinary Leader*, is an attempt to help leaders become positive forces both for their team and for their businesses.

Is there a specific instance in your career that serves as an example of why your book is needed?

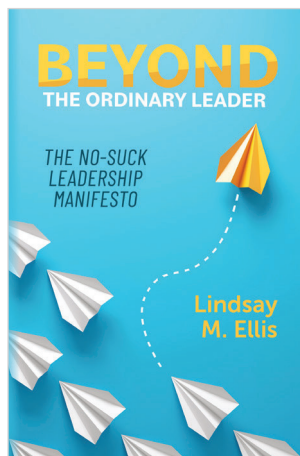
I worked for a leader who truly took the cake for being an awful leader. This person cussed at employees over the office intercom, burped and farted during meetings, constantly belittled the staff, and never offered positive reinforcement. To make matters worse, they would call at five a.m. or late at night, disrupting any semblance of work-life balance. Experiencing this firsthand made me realize how critical it is to equip leaders



with the skills and self-awareness needed to inspire and motivate their teams, not tear them down. I knew I had to write a book to help leaders avoid these pitfalls and build successful, empowered teams.

How does this book differ from other leadership titles?

Unlike many leadership books that tell readers what to do, *Beyond the Ordinary Leader* focuses on what not to do. It provides practical insights into avoiding common leadership pitfalls and emphasizes the importance of self-care and mentoring others. The book is a guide for leaders who want to inspire, motivate, and achieve collective goals while fostering a culture of personal and professional growth.



For more, visit booklife.com/ellis

with a game room—Victorian house basements have secrets), the question becomes: which figure is Holly? More importantly: which isn't? Am I the only one who wanted to shout "Nope!" the minute they saw this cover? That emotion is triggered by all the information being consumed by the subconscious.

But the part that made me want to applaud was the porch light—yes, even a detail as small as a porch light. Symbolically, a lit porch light is meant to welcome visitors to the house. The reader is subconsciously welcomed into the story that King built. And how can they accept that invitation? Buy the book. All of this happens before readers even crack the spine.

Next, let's look at the cover of *Disruptions* by Steven Millhauser. This cover brilliantly speaks to the subconscious mind. Humans are hardwired to recognize patterns, and, as such, we also recognize disruptions to those patterns and zero in on them. Readers' eyes tend to scan blocks of content but pause at bullet points. Why? Because they disrupt the pattern.

In this case, the images of eyes with black pupils create a pattern guiding the viewer to the outlier: the green eyes. Every time the pattern



is disrupted within a busy cover, our eyes pause and allow us to absorb information such as the title and the author's name. Have you ever walked down the street and noticed everyone staring in one direction and then turned to look in the same direction? It happened to me this summer while I was minding my own business on my way to visit the Sacré-Cœur basilica. I saw a group of people staring to the right, so I stared, too. A few minutes later, I stumbled upon an Olympic cycling event.

This cover leverages crowd behavior to make the reader stare at the outlier, which in this case is the pair of green eyes. The question becomes: why? The curiosity ignited by this cover can only be quenched by purchasing the book.

There are numerous ways that psychology can be leveraged to engage buyers. Color and composition are just the tip of the iceberg. As publishers, we want to position books for success. To do that, we can yank a page out of the playbook used by marketing and sales professionals: by speaking more to the subconscious brain, designers can trigger an emotional connection to get books into the hands of readers. 🧠

Sierra Kay is an indie author and a consultant for public relations and marketing technology.

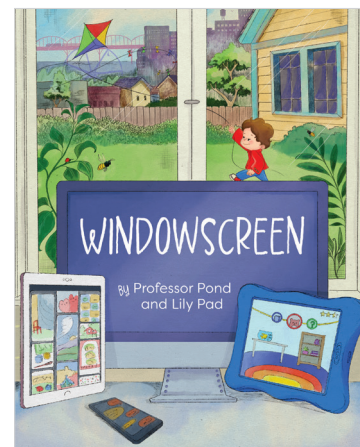
Q&A SPONSORED

BookLife Talks with Tina Mowen

Mowen's first title is a picture book aimed at helping children understand the pros and cons of living life from behind a screen, be it a digital window or a physical one. We spoke with the author about her inspiration, why this book is important now, and what she wants parents to know.

Why or how do you think *Windowscreen* is particularly relevant now?

I took my daughter roller-skating with one of her friends. They were both seven at the time, and my daughter's friend brought a phone with her. Once skating got a little hard, my daughter's friend stopped trying and got on her phone instead. It's hard to compete with something that gives you instant gratification. It's hard to explain to kids in those moments that it's supposed to be hard. That's what makes it so fulfilling when you conquer it. I continue to watch kids give up and abandon



experiences because it's too easy to turn to windows and screens.

Even in my kids' elementary school, I see children mimicking unrealistic displays of beauty, status, wealth, and fads that are found in their digital worlds. A book provoking a discussion about the fine line between the benefits and the dangers of the digital world is not only helpful but crucial for the times we are in.

For more, visit booklife.com/mowen

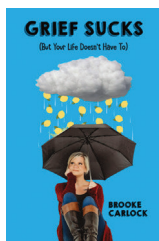
Indie Spotlight

In this edition of our monthly roundup, we feature self-help and business books.

Want to see your book featured? Check out the Indie Spotlight calendar at booklife.com/indiespotlight.

PERSONAL HEALING & RELATIONSHIPS

Grief Sucks (But Your Life Doesn't Have to)

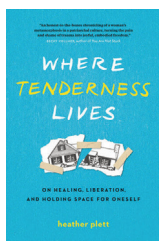


Brooke Carlock

ASIN BOCWYCBG1W

Author statement: “This book doesn’t just acknowledge the depth of grief; it also offers practical, actionable strategies for moving through it with my innovative TRUST Method. It’s your no-BS guide through the grief minefield—no platitudes, no sugar-coating, just raw, real talk.”

Where Tenderness Lives: On Healing, Liberation, and Holding



Space for Oneself

Heather Plett

ISBN 978-1774583630

Author statement: “This book is a loving exploration of what it means to unravel what we’ve learned from our families, societies, religions, and cultures in order to heal and create a purposeful and joyful life. Each chapter contains a revelation

about how to move from fear and doubt to freedom and joy.”

Wings to Rise above Divorce: Finding Forgiveness, Redemption, and Renewal during Turbulent Separations



Loren Cribbs

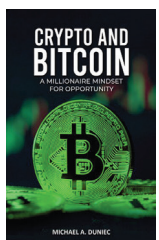
ASIN BOCY4573XP

Author statement: “As a freelance writer for startups and ghostwriter for tech executives, I was used to writing for someone else and telling their story. As a writer, I jotted down my thoughts (good and bad) while I was going through my divorce as a way to heal and process.

During this time, I wrote a fiction book based on my experiences, but after much thought decided to write my debut novel as nonfiction to help others.”

MONEY MATTERS & CAREER GUIDANCE

Crypto and Bitcoin



Michael A. Duniec

ASIN B0D67CJ6BH

Author statement: “*Crypto and Bitcoin* is a comprehensive exploration of the digital currency revolution. From the genesis of bitcoin to a myriad of crypto-assets that followed, this book delves into the technological innovation that has challenged traditional financial systems and sparked a global conversation about the future of money.”

From Rags to Enrichment: How I Define Success in Business and in Life



Wayne Brown

ASIN B0DJQNZP1G

Author statement: “In *From Rags to Enrichment: How I Define Success in Business and in Life*, I share my unique and sometimes unconventional perspective on what success really means—and how simple it is to achieve it for yourself.”

I See You: A Guide for Women to Make More, Have More, and Be More—Without More Work



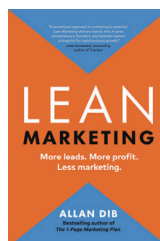
Amy Kemp

ISBN 978-1-77458-442-2

Author statement: “In *I See You*, I draw on 20 years of experience growing my own successful business, as well as what I’ve learned from coaching thousands of women, to give you the tools you need to increase your level of success while working fewer hours. While the idea of

working less may seem unconventional, if you make small daily changes and trust the process, you will rediscover the best and most successful version of yourself.”

Lean Marketing: More Leads. More Profit. Less Marketing



Allan Dib

ISBN 978-1-77458-394-4

Author statement: “You keep being told to do more marketing—more complex, more aggressive, and more expensive marketing. Chasing the latest bright, shiny object is exhausting. Increased efforts keep leading to disappointment. There’s a better way. The lean movement has transformed manufacturing and is now revolutionizing marketing.”

The One Week Writing Workshop: 7 Days to Spark, Boost or Revive Your Novel



Karin Adams

ISBN 978-1-896711-24-9

Author statement: “Shortly after my first middle grade novel was published, I began offering writing workshops. I discovered a passion for helping to nurture the writing process in others. In this book, I’ve gathered all the bite-sized

lessons and the motivational energy I bring to my in-person sessions into one place—a portable writing workshop aspiring writers can toss in their bag and do any time!”

BookLife Talks with James Christian

A film and a chance encounter with an author sparked a lifelong interest in the Civil War and, specifically, the Battle of Gettysburg for debut author Christian. His book, *Abraham Lincoln's Honored Dead at the Gettysburg National Cemetery*, seeks to resurrect the thousands of soldiers who lost their lives at that battle by making them more than just casualties.



What sparked your interest in the Civil War?

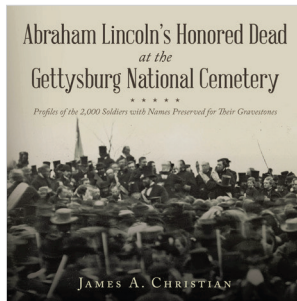
As an African American youth growing up in the South in the mid-1960s, I wasn't so much interested in the Civil War as I was in our 16th U.S. president, Abraham Lincoln, and the profound address he delivered at the Gettysburg cemetery. Of course, Lincoln was also credited with freeing the Southern slaves. When I came north to Maryland to begin my medical residency, I took advantage of Gettysburg's proximity to visit the battlefield. But I was befuddled by all the monuments and didn't comprehend much beyond the fact that the South had lost the battle in a futile charge. Then, in 1993, the movie *Gettysburg* came out. I had to return to Gettysburg to see that famous hill that Jeff Daniels charged down with the 20th Maine to save the day for the Union Army. That movie initiated my romantic infatuation with Gettysburg and relatedly the Civil War.

What's the story behind this book—why and how did you write it?

At a Battle of Gettysburg anniversary event in 2000, I met Greg Coco, who was an extraordinary National Park Service interpretive ranger. A few years before, Greg had written the book *A Strange and Blighted Land: Gettysburg, the Aftermath of a Battle*. Meeting Greg and reading his book opened my eyes to the very unromantic, in fact apocalyptic, aftermath of this battle for the town of Gettysburg, in particular, the public health urgencies of burying all the dead soldiers, including those who died from the very poor 19th-century medical care for the wounded. So, a couple of decades ago, the seed was planted to one day write this book.

What was your research process like?

My research for the book involved working from the burial listings in the 1865 *Report of the Select*



Committee Relative to the Soldiers' National Cemetery. Since my book presents capsulized biographies within a tabular format for every one of the named 2,000 soldiers buried in the cemetery, I first had to check the names in the book against the names on the gravestones. Then, I needed to check these names for gross errors or mere surname misspellings against these soldiers' military service records, which I accessed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. I further used these records to compile many distinctive details about these men's lives, which I hoped to use to resurrect their being. These details include each soldier's age at death and their birth year, army unit, pre-enlistment residence

and occupation, enlistment date and rank, promotions, detachments, absences, dates of any previous battle woundings, date of their Gettysburg wounding, wound care, which was mainly amputations, and date of death. I also utilized Civil War databases on *ancestry.com* and *fold3.com* to access U.S. Pension Office records for the names of widowed wives and orphaned children, who qualified for stipends. The book serves well as a genealogical resource, as I include the ages of these children in 1863.

What is the one thing you most want to tell readers about you or your book?

I want to impress upon the reader the importance of remembrance. My book identifies a 14-year-old infantryman buried in this cemetery. The Union soldiers buried at Gettysburg are among the hundreds of thousands who died to resolve the secessionist crisis of the 1860s. How different would this country, or indeed this world, be had they not done so?

What's next for you?

I'm not sure American history is as important to the youth today as when I was growing up. So, I'd like to identify a topic for a children's book that would portray an important historical event from the perspective of a child living in that day.

For more, visit booklife.com/christian



New Titles from Self-Publishers

Booksellers, publishers, librarians, and agents are encouraged to look at the 69 self-published titles below. Each appears with a list of retailers that are selling the book and a description provided by its author. Some of these writers are waiting to be discovered; others have track records and followings and are doing it on their own. If you are a self-published author interested in listing titles in this section, please visit publishersweekly.com/pw-select for more information.

Fiction

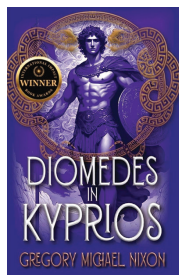
Catching Raven, Vol. 2



C.B. Tucker. Authors' Tranquility Press. \$10.99 paper (210p), ISBN 978-1-964362-87-8
Amazon
Samantha, a single mom and forensic accountant, faces chaos when Trevor

enters her life, leading to a truth that brings her peace and happiness.

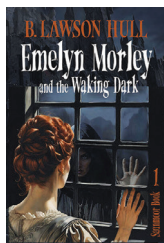
Diomedes in Kyrios



Gregory Michael Nixon. Historium Press. \$24.95 (242p), ISBN 978-1-962465-71-7; \$4.99 e-book, ASIN BODM2QWNL6
Amazon, Apple Books, Barnes & Noble, Google Play, IngramSpark, Kobo

Diomedes and Queen Lieia promise to meet again at the Temple of Aphrodite on Kyrios, where wars are raging.

Emelyn Morley and the Waking Dark

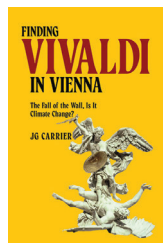


B. Lawson Hull. B. Lawson Hull. \$15.99 paper (320p), ISBN 979-8-9908048-0-7; \$4.99 e-book, ASIN BODG11FBQY
Amazon
Southern England, 1735:

The darkness is watching. Under pressure to marry and save her family's crumbling estate, Emelyn Morley

learns there is more to her fate than domestic daylight.

Finding Vivaldi in Vienna: The Fall of the Wall, Is It Climate Change?



Jean-Guy Carrier. Austin Macauley Publishers. \$16.95 paper (250p), ISBN 978-1-0358-7528-3; \$4.50 e-book, ISBN 978-1-0358-7529-0
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Waterstones, WHSmith

At the fall of the Iron Curtain, an imprisoned dissident engages with his historian friend Lenka in a search through crypts and monasteries for the lost remains of Vivaldi.

Goldberg Variations: The Redemption of the Damned

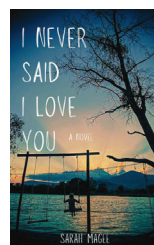


Jonathan Taylor. Arnold Press. \$19.95 paper (392p), ISBN 978-1-7342957-0-2; \$9.95 e-book, ISBN 978-1-7342957-1-9
Amazon

For Jamie Goldberg, coming out poses more problems than it solves. With the help of accepting friends he is prepared for a date with his past that threatens to damn him or redeem him.

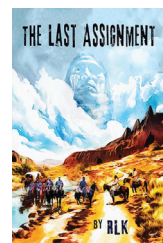
I Never Said I Love You

Sarah Magee. Tantor Media. \$14.99 paper (228p), ISBN 979-8-9891266-1-3; \$19.99 audio, ASIN B0CL5FPW81



Amazon, Audiobooks.com, IngramSpark
From ancient temples in Laos to remote corners of Senegal, this is the story of an unlikely love affair—and a searing examination of friendship, love, forgiveness, and roads not taken.

The Last Assignment



R.L.K. Dorrance. \$18.99 paper (244p), ISBN 979-8-88925-387-7; \$13.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-88925-887-2
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Dorrance Publishing
After 19 years of

cavalry service, Captain Travis Butler wants to retire and settle down on his ranch in Oklahoma. One last request sends him back on a perilous journey.

Lunch Ladies: A Novel



Jodi Thompson Carr, illus. by Zoe Mitchell. Century House Press. \$14.99 paper (336p), ISBN 979-8-9915682-0-3; \$4.99 e-book, ASIN BODKPFJFRKK
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop.org

Love, loss, redemption... and a parade. A nostalgia-laden visit to a Minnesota town as its quirky lunch ladies, and full cast of appealing characters, prepare for the bicentennial.

I Have My Daughter Because of Cancer Research.

Standard treatment for Kelly's cancer would have saved her life but left her unable to have any more children. Because of a breakthrough clinical trial and research funded by SU2C, she is now cancer free and has a beautiful baby girl.

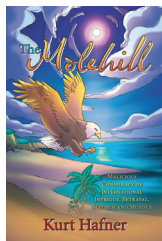
**You Can Help Push Cancer Research Further at
StandUpToCancer.org/Cures**



Andrea Cercek, MD *SU2C funded researcher*
Kelly *Cancer Survivor*
Photo by Mario Morgado

STAND UP TO CANCER IS A 501(C)(3) CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION.

The Molehill: Malicious Conspiracy of International Intrigue, Betrayal, Mayhem and Murder

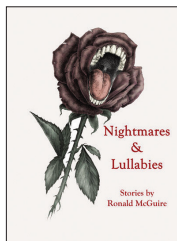


Kurt Hafner.

AuthorHouseUK. \$16.79 paper (178p), ISBN 979-8-8230-8490-1; \$4.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-8230-8489-5
Amazon

Rolf and Sabine's business faces renewed aggression as a relentless predator employs subversion, bribery, intimidation, threats, strong-arm tactics, and murder to undermine and attack their enterprise.

Nightmares & Lullabies: Stories by Ronald McGuire



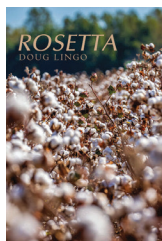
Ronald McGuire.

Beach Book Press. \$14.99 paper (120p), ISBN 978-1-965621-02-8; \$4.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-965621-03-5
Amazon, Barnes & Noble,

Bookshop.org, Kobo

The LGBTQ stories collected in *Nightmares & Lullabies* shine a light on the bittersweet, at times darkly inhumane, nature of existence. Joyful, disturbing, and decidedly surreal.

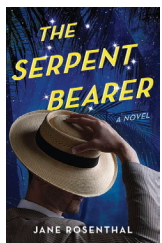
Rosetta



Doug Lingo. Dorrance Publishing. \$11.99 paper (42p), ISBN 979-8-89341-290-1; \$6.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-89341-789-0
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Dorrance Publishing

Rosetta is a fictionalized retelling of Doug Lingo's early years. After working in the fields of the South, rising up in the Air Force, he finds his calling in government.

The Serpent Bearer

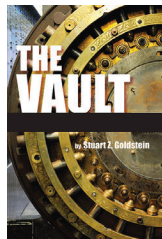


Jane Rosenthal. She Writes Press. \$17.99 paper (328p), ISBN 978-1-64742-850-1; \$12.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-64742-851-8
Barnes & Noble, Bookshop.org

The lives of a glamorous British aristocrat, a Jewish gambler, and a beautiful Hollywood

screenwriter are all swept up by dangerous political currents during WWII.

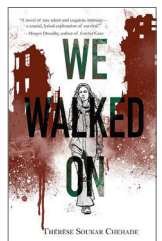
The Vault



Stuart Z. Goldstein. Pen Paper Press. \$14.99 paper (304p), ISBN 978-1-7366322-3-9; \$6.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-7366322-5-3
Stuartzgoldsteinbooks.com, Amazon

Employees decide to steal \$100 million in bearer bonds from the largest securities vault in the world—just as Hurricane Sandy slams N.Y.C., flooding the vault.

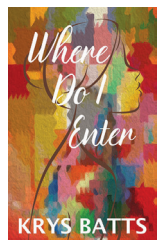
We Walked On



Thérèse Soukar Chehade. Regal House Publishing. \$18.95 paper (262p), ISBN 978-1-64603-520-5
Amazon, Regal House Publishing Bookshop

We Walked On portrays a people devastated by the Lebanese civil war and the beauty they reclaim from the ruins.

Where Do I Enter



Kryss Batts. The Real Ideal. \$11.99 paper (382p), ISBN 978-0-9963211-8-1; \$3.99 e-book, ASIN B0DJWP7QTW
Amazon

After Paige's father suddenly dies, she uncovers heinous secrets he had hidden from her, causing her to question everything she once believed about him and herself.

Poetry

A Candle Burning: A Collection of Poetry



Stanley D. Price. Dorrance Publishing. \$17.99 paper (200p), ISBN 979-8-89027-036-8; \$12.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-89027-534-9
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Dorrance Publishing

A collection of poetry 60-plus years in the making. Filled with a variety of serious subjects in poetic form, the author hopes

to provide an uplifting experience to all readers.

How Hot It Be in Hell



Aubrey E. Drummond. \$5.99 paper (94p), ISBN 979-8-3396-8076-5; \$2.99 e-book, ASIN BODHFGSJ8D
Amazon

Witness dark longing for the taste of innocence. Travel the destructive path that beer causes. This book paints a vivid portrait of human emotions and the final evil that evolves.

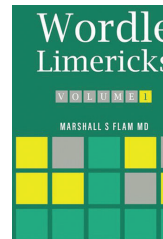
The New Florida Man: A Book of Poems



Vej. Dorrance Publishing. \$22.99 paper (64p), ISBN 979-8-89341-092-1; \$17.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-89341-591-9
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Dorrance Publishing

The New Florida Man is a transformative journey told in a series of poems and paintings. There's opportunity for growth, reflection, and inspiration to be better in these stories.

Wordle Limericks: Flamericks

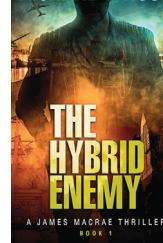


Marshall S. Flam. Penguin Bookwriters. \$39.99 (196p), ISBN 979-8-8718-9801-7; \$19.99 paper, ISBN 979-8-8718-9467-5
Amazon

Laugh and learn with Marshall S. Flam as he dishes out Wordle-inspired limericks (Flamericks) that will get you laughing in no time.

Mystery/Thriller

The Hybrid Enemy (A James Macrae Thriller #1)

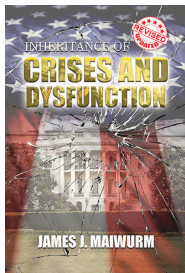


Richard D. Ross. Steel Door Publishing. 99¢ e-book, ASIN B09FJ3XKWZ; \$17.45 audio, ASIN B0CNTBDD6
Amazon, Audible

A mystery crime thriller set against the backdrop of the international shipping business.

A fast-paced story of drama, intrigue and betrayal.

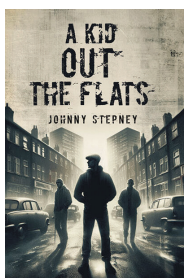
Inheritance of Crises and Dysfunction



James J. Maiwurm.
Maiwurm Publications.
\$20.99 (252p), ISBN
978-1-958518-60-1;
\$12.99 paper, ISBN 978-
1-958518-59-5
Amazon, Barnes & Noble
Retired diplomat

Salt Pepper is pulled into a secret mission tackling global chaos, domestic divides, and personal struggles. A timely, insightful, and thought-provoking novel.

A Kid Out the Flats



John Long. Austin
Macauley Publishers.
\$15.95 paper (216p),
ISBN 978-1-0358-3998-
8; \$4.50 e-book, ISBN
978-1-0358-3999-5
Amazon, Barnes & Noble,
Waterstones, WHSmith
A story of survival in

the run-down docklands area of East London where murderous drug gangs are looking to take control of London.

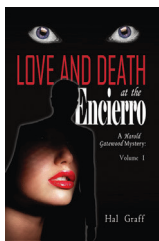
The Left Hand



Brittnay J. Sears. Brittnay
J. Sears. \$19.99 paper
(282p), ISBN 979-8-218-
51593-5; \$9.99 e-book,
ISBN 979-8-218-
51596-6
Amazon, Bookshop.org,
IngramSpark

Step back in time with this swingin' new thriller that follows the lives of the women behind the men in an American crime family.

Love and Death at the Encierro: A Harold Gatewood Mystery



Hal Graff. Harold Graff II
Publishing. \$14.99 (170p),
ISBN 978-1-960684-93-6;
\$8.99 paper, ISBN 978-1-
960684-95-0
Amazon, Barnes & Noble
Harold Gatewood's
journey from ex-baseball

star to secret agent begins with love, danger, and terrorism at Spain's Running of the Bulls.

Side Hustle: A Female Sleuth Thriller (Darcy Walker Crime Thrillers #1)



A.J. Lape. A.J. Lape. \$14.99
paper (352p), ASIN
B09BY3WPNS; \$3.99
e-book, ASIN B096YF8BHJ
Amazon, Barnes & Noble,
Google Play, Spotify
Darcy Walker, aspiring
cop and delivery driver,
discovers a customer
murdered. Dismissed by police, she keeps
a clue and dives into L.A.'s underworld
to solve the case, risking her future for
justice.

Something Wicked



John F. Myslinski and
Michael McKinley. Pierian
Springs Press. \$29.95
(308p), ISBN 978-1-
953136-88-6; \$22.95
paper, ISBN 978-1-
953136-98-5
Akademibokhandeln,

Amazon, AbeBooks, Barnes & Noble, Books-a-Million, Bookshop.org, Booktopia, Thriftbooks
A fast-paced page-turner of a thriller about murder and mayhem in the Pope's city. Set in Rome, Jerusalem, Beirut, and Vatican City, Sister Marie goes on a quest to uncover who killed Sister Maureen and 12 other nuns.

SF/Fantasy/Horror

The Amulet's Power: Blood of the Vampire—Fire of the Witch



Kendra Powers. JAS
Publishing. \$12.99 paper
(200p), ISBN 979-8-
9919251-1-2; \$6.99
e-book, ASIN BODMKNSG5X
Amazon, IngramSpark
Billionaire vampire
Alistair and time-
traveling witch Iris unite in Paris to protect
their world with a magical amulet.

Beyond the Darkness

S.W. Champagne. DNP Publishing. \$22.95 paper
(458p), ISBN 979-8-89705-999-7; \$6.99
e-book, ISBN 979-8-3481-4742-6



Amazon, Barnes & Noble,
IngramSpark
Desperate to uncover the
truth about her identity
and the mysterious death
of her father, Cynthia
fights for her survival.

Divine in Essence



Yarrow Paisley. Whiskey Tit.
\$17.99 paper (216p), ISBN
978-1-952600-55-5
Whiskey Tit, Amazon,
Bookshop.org
Ten short stories in the
oneiric mode: horror, fab-
ulist, unreal, weird. literary,
stylized, playful, grotesque. Ligotti,
Aickman, Gombrowicz, Bruno Schulz.
Escape from the real!

Forgiving Darkness: Binary Souls Duology, #1



Cat Sirota. C. R. Sirota
Industries. \$18.99 paper
(364p), ISBN 978-1-
7637047-0-1; \$5.99
e-book, ISBN 978-1-
7637047-1-8
Amazon, AppleBooks,

Barnes & Noble, Kobo

In a gripping, high-stakes fantasy romance, dark witch Estrid and fallen fae king Zain must learn to forgive themselves for their pasts and find redemption and love to save the world.

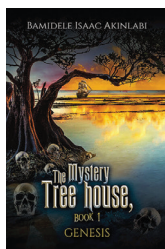
Godless Armageddon



Scott Coon. Hypatia Press.
\$13.99 paper (302p),
ISBN 978-1-83919-671-3;
\$3.99 e-book,
ASIN BODGGBJ77G
Amazon
After Thomas Jefferson
Stoneshield VII dies in
World War II, he uses weaponized memo-
ries to battle two false gods bent on
Armageddon, as well as his own deeply
repressed homosexuality.

The Mystery Tree House, Book 1: Genesis

Bamidele Isaac Akinlabi. Austin Macauley
Publishers. \$15.95 paper (220p), ISBN 978-1-
0358-8578-7; \$4.50 e-book, ISBN 978-1-
0358-8580-0



Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Waterstones, WHSmith
The Mystery House is an epic tale of shipwrecked survivors who forge a mystical tree kingdom, facing betrayal, mythical forces, and destiny in a timeless struggle for salvation and redemption.

The Others

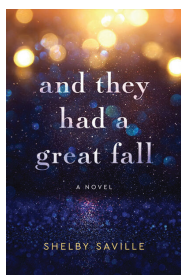


T.C. Weber. Freedom Thorn Press. \$16.95 paper (336p), ISBN 978-1-7369017-4-8; \$4.95 e-book, ISBN 978-1-7369017-3-1
Amazon

A marine biologist discovers a secret civilization of amphibious hominids off the Florida Keys and must stop a plot by a rogue cabal to destroy humanity.

Romance/Erotica

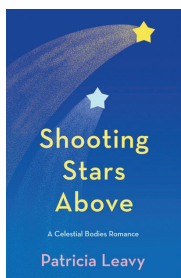
And They Had a Great Fall



Shelby Saville. She Writes Press. \$17.99 paper (280p), ISBN 978-1-64742-846-4; \$12.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-64742-847-1
Barnes & Noble, Books-a-Million, Bookshop.org
Contemporary

romance about a celebrity and a single mom who push and pull against each other as they teeter between a carrying on a secret affair and living an authentically happy life.

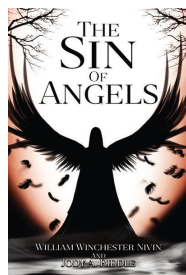
Shooting Stars Above (Celestial Bodies Romances #1)



Patricia Leavy. She Writes Press. \$17.99 paper (224p), ISBN 978-1-64742-854-9; \$12.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-64742-855-6
Barnes & Noble, Bookshop.org

A heartfelt contemporary romance about a bestselling novelist and a federal agent fighting to heal past wounds. Can unconditional love help heal through this epic love story?

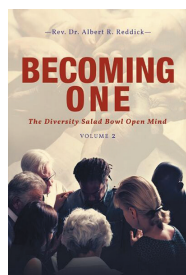
The Sin of Angels



Jody A. Riddle. William Winchester Nivin and Jody A. Riddle Publishing. \$34.99 (596p), ISBN 978-1-963379-11-2; \$27.99 paper, ISBN 978-1-962730-14-3
Amazon, Barnes & Noble
Edward Marquand's forbidden love for Sally, his father's slave, faces betrayal and danger in 1850 Illinois. Can he protect her from his twin's schemes and a divided nation?

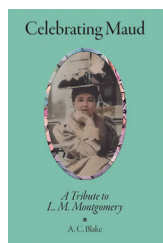
Nonfiction

Becoming One: The Diversity Salad Bowl Open Mind, Vol. 2



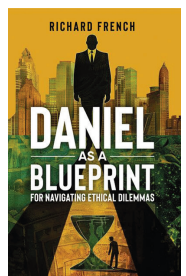
Albert Reddick. ReadersMagnet. \$10.49 paper (132p), ISBN 979-8-89091-722-5; \$3.99 e-book, ASIN BODK9ZRX5H
Amazon
Bringing together writings from his previous books, Albert R. Reddick builds on MLK Jr.'s dream, offering a practical model to end racial discrimination. Combining research and analysis, this book envisions a more equitable America.

Celebrating Maud: A Tribute to L.M. Montgomery



A.C. Blake. Birdtree Press. \$19.99 paper (112p), ISBN 978-1-7340854-8-8
Amazon
Celebrating Maud blends poetry and art to honor her resilience, love of nature, and imagination. A.C. Blake offers a heartfelt tribute to her enduring legacy.

Daniel as a Blueprint for Navigating Ethical Dilemmas

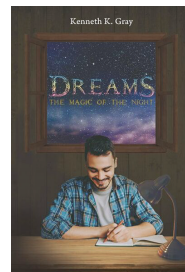


Richard French. Indie Pen Press. \$14.99 paper (174p), ISBN 979-8-9916530-7-7; \$9.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-9916530-6-0
Amazon, Apple Books, Barnes & Noble, Google

Play, Indigo, Kobo

Discover how Daniel's ancient wisdom can guide modern ethical leadership. Learn to navigate complex business challenges while maintaining integrity and driving organizational success.

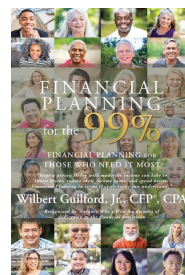
Dreams: The Magic of the Night



Kenneth K. Gray. Page Publishing. \$15.95 paper (170p), ISBN 978-1-64544-499-2; \$9.99 e-book, ASIN B08NFN249J
Amazon

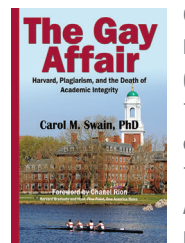
Dreams: The Magic of the Night is for people who want to understand their dreams. It shows the reader how to do this through examples from the author's dream journals.

Financial Planning for the 99%: Financial Planning for Those Who Need It Most



Wilbert Guilford Jr. ReadersMagnet. \$29.99 (236p), ISBN 979-8-89091-491-0; \$15.49 paper, ISBN 979-8-89091-490-3
Readersmagnet.com
This book offers practical guidance on personal finance, covering investing, taxes, retirement, credit, debt reduction, major purchases, student loans, business, cryptocurrency, and more.

The Gay Affair: Harvard, Plagiarism, and the Death of Academic Integrity

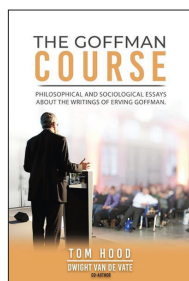


Carol M. Swain. Be the People Books. \$16.99 paper (132p), ISBN 978-1-7374198-4-6; \$7.99 e-book, ISBN 978-7374198-5-3
Amazon, Alibris, Barnes & Nobles, Books-a-Million

Claudine Gaya's resignation as Harvard University's first Black president shocked the world. Her departure occurred amidst allegations of plagiarism and leadership deficiencies.

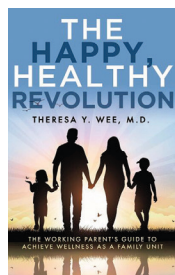
The Goffman Course

Thomas Hood. Authors' Tranquility Press. \$12.99 paper (262p), ISBN 978-1-959930-54-9



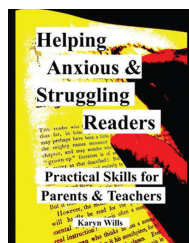
Amazon
This book compiles essays linking Erving Goffman's ideas to philosophy and sociology, presented as lectures to University of Tennessee students over several years.

The Happy, Healthy Revolution: The Working Parent's Guide to Achieve Wellness as a Family Unit



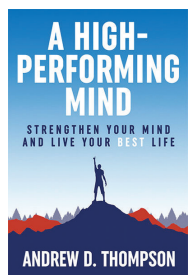
Theresa Y. Wee.
ReadersMagnet. \$8.89 paper (122p), ISBN 979-8-89091-468-2; \$2.99 e-book, ASIN B0CW2Y5C37
Amazon
Parents struggle with health costs and misinformation. Theresa Wee, a mother and pediatrician, shares her 40-year experience to help families navigate these challenges.

Helping Anxious and Struggling Readers



Karyn Wills. KR Wills.
\$7.87 e-book, ISBN 979-8-3030-0444-3
Amazon, Kindle, Kobo
It can be distressing when children we care about are anxious about reading or are struggling to learn to read. This book is short, informative, pragmatic, and accessible.

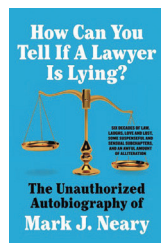
A High-Performing Mind: Strengthen Your Mind and Live Your Best Life



Andrew D. Thompson.
Andrew Thompson.
\$16.95 paper (230p), ISBN 978-1-7390210-6-1; \$4.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-7390210-8-5
Amazon, Apple Books, Barnes & Noble, IngramSpark, Kobo

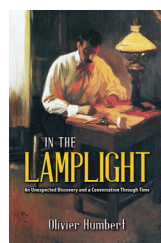
Empower your mind and develop the skills, mindsets, habits, and understanding to increase resilience, be at your best, achieve your goals, and create lasting improvement in your life

How Can You Tell If a Lawyer Is Lying? The Unauthorized Biography of Mark J. Neary



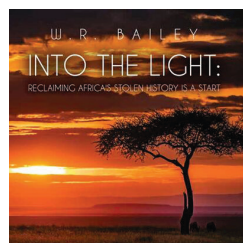
Mark J. Neary
Mark Joseph Neary. Mark Joseph Neary. \$9.95 paper (236p), ISBN 979-8-8761-5907-6; \$3.99 e-book, ASIN B0CSX2L3TK
Amazon
Mark Neary's journey spans from a small town to a small college, exploring the Midwest and beyond, gathering stories that reflect a life filled with joy, heartache, and human emotions.

In the Lamplight



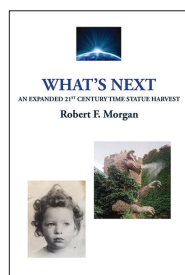
Oliver Humbert. Oliver Humbert. \$24.99 (312p), ISBN 979-8-3343-2070-3; \$14.99 paper, ISBN 979-8-3269-5498-5
Amazon
In the Lamplight is a collection of essays, woven together to create a philosophical, historical, cultural, and familial journey.

Into the Light: Reclaiming Africa's Stolen History Is a Start



W.R. Bailey.
Dorrance Publishing. \$18.99 paper (82p), ISBN 979-8-89027-183-9; \$13.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-89027-681-0
Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Dorrance Publishing
W.R. Bailey presents a detective story that highlights the recent efforts of writers and filmmakers to restore Africa's stolen history and bring Africa's cultural and intellectual inheritance into the light.

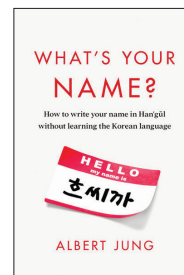
What's Next? An Expanded 21st Century Time Statue Harvest



Robert F. Morgan. Morgan Foundation Publishers.
\$23.99 paper (320p), ISBN 978-1-885679-38-3
Amazon
Time is a place. A lifespan revisit to international time statues from the first quarter of the 21st

century, they are followed by ones that may come after.

What's Your Name?



Albert Jung. Good Governance Research.
\$17.99 paper (238p), ISBN 979-11-990032-1-7; \$7.99 e-book, ISBN 979-11-990032-2-4
Amazon
Discover Hangul, the Korean writing system, as a tool to transcribe names, master pronunciation, and bridge cultures with exercises, history, and multilingual guides.

Women: Down through the Ages, How Lies Have Shaped Our Lives



Jerry Schaefer, illus. by Gabriel Berron. Ingram.
\$17.95 paper (232p), ISBN 978-0-578-28868-0
Amazon, Barnes & Noble
Ever got shafted in the Garden of Eden. Was that the first false flag? Ever since then, men have gone to ludicrous lengths to stifle women's ordinary ambitions.

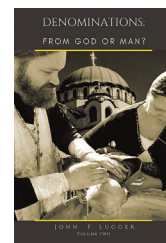
Religion/Spirituality

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit



John Manigo. Prominent Books Edge. \$37.99 paper (946p), ISBN 978-1-958475-95-9
This book is about seeing deaf, hard of hearing, hearing-impaired, deaf-blind, and hearing as well to come to know the Savior Jesus Christ.

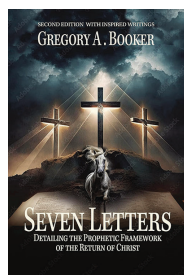
Denominations: From God or Man?



John Lugger. AuthorHouse.
\$25.99 paper (426p), ISBN 979-8-8230-2103-6; \$3.99 e-book, ISBN 979-8-8230-2102-9
Amazon
The outcomes of denominationalism have been devastating to the church. This volume explores the decisions of religious leaders

leading to this rebellion against God's Divine Authority.

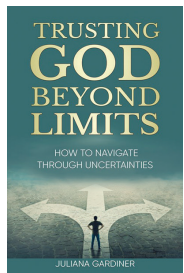
Seven Letters Detailing the Prophetic Framework of the Return of Christ



Gregory A. Booker. Prominent Books Edge. \$9.99 paper (135p), ISBN 978-1-958475-29-4 Amazon, Barnes & Nobles, Goodreads
First and foremost, this book is an experience and inspirational

writing from the author revealing a faith and a hope for the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Trusting God beyond Limits: How to Navigate through Uncertainties



Juliana Gardiner. Trilogy Christian Publishing. \$14.99 paper (134p), ISBN 979-8-89041-131-0; \$9.99 e-book, ASIN BOCDF6DHGK Amazon
Trusting God beyond Limits chronicles my

faith journey. It offers practical wisdom and inspiration for those seeking encouragement and growth.

Children's/YA

Adele and the Whispering Garden: Book 1



Polly Richards. Ceallagh Publishing. \$14.99 paper (50p), ISBN 978-1-966131-08-3; \$9.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-966131-14-4 Amazon, IngramSpark
Adele's garden adventure unveils a magical gnome

and friendly creatures, teaching her nature conservation and gardening. Perfect for ages 6-13!

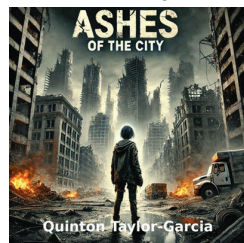
The Adventures of Marie and LeeLee



Lisa Cortez, illus. by Laura Watson. Lisa Cortez. \$19.99 (24p), ISBN 979-8-218-56490-2 Amazon, IngramSpark

Come join best friends Marie and LeeLee on their childhood adventures! The beauty of their friendship turns every moment together into an unforgettable adventure.

Ashes of the City

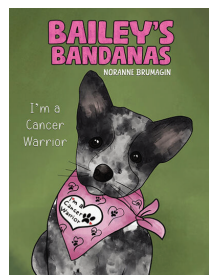


Quinton Taylor-Garcia. Bamboo Village Books. \$23.94 paper (424p), ISBN 979-8-89295-013-8; \$9.99 e-book, ASIN BODK4397YD

Amazon

In a crumbling city, survivors rebuild their lives while uncovering secrets that may hold humanity's future in a postapocalyptic world of peril and hope.

Bailey's Bandanas: I'm a Cancer Warrior

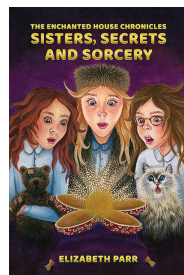


Noranne Brumagin. Austin Macauley Publishers. \$10.95 paper (30p), ISBN 978-1-3984-2399-2; \$4.50 e-book, ISBN 978-1-3984-4143-9 Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Waterstones,

WHSmith

Bailey, a four-year-old blue heeler, suddenly finds herself in the fight of her life. During chemotherapy, an unforeseen event inspires hope and unity amongst the canine warriors battling cancer.

The Enchanted House Chronicles: Sisters, Secrets and Sorcery

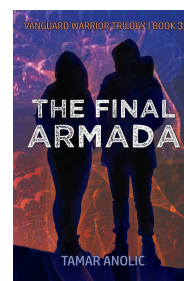


Petrina Cribb. Austin Macauley Publishers. \$8.95 paper (92p), ISBN 978-1-0358-5647-3; \$4.50 e-book, ISBN 978-1-0358-5650-3 Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Waterstones, WHSmith
Hastings, 1943. Three

girls have an identical dream of crystals and discover they are witches. They use a portal to help win D-Day and find two of the crystals.

The Final Armada: Vanguard Warrior Trilogy, #3

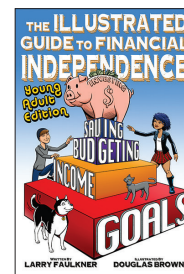
Tamar Anolic. Tamar Anolic. \$11.45 paper



(280p), ISBN 979-8-3247-6242-1; \$3.99 e-book, ASIN BOD3NSG5JN Amazon

The MH1 gene has reawakened. Cadets at military schools gain supernatural abilities, including Gael and Isadora Perez. They have to figure out which side they will fight for.

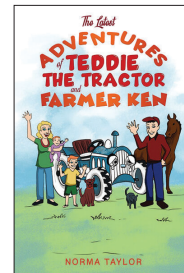
The Illustrated Guide to Financial Independence: Young Adult Edition



Larry Faulkner, illus. by Douglas Brown. Faulkner Financial Freedom. \$14.95 paper (312p), ISBN 979-8-8604-2305-3; \$4.99 e-book, ASIN BOCKLX3LST Amazon

The Illustrated Guide to Financial Independence helps young adults master money, build wealth, and shape their future with confidence.

The Latest Adventures of Teddie the Tractor and Farmer Ken



Norma Taylor. Austin Macauley Publishers. \$8.95 paper (34p), ISBN 978-1-0358-1401-5; \$4.50 e-book, ISBN 978-1-0358-1403-9 Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Waterstones, WHSmith

A family farm story, suitable for all age groups. Some are fictional, but most are actually happening on the farm.

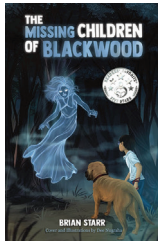
A Lucky Turn



Carrie Wright-Christopher. AuthorHouse. \$13.99 paper (150p), ISBN 978-1-6655-6492-2; \$9.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-6655-6491-5 Amazon

This book details a struggling teen's attempt to suffer through her mother's madness while beginning a friendship, gaining a pet, and surviving middle school.

The Missing Children of Blackwood

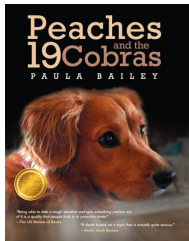


Brian Starr. Brian Starr.
\$12.99 paper (218p), ISBN
979-8-3008-3310-7

Amazon

Daphne Planter embarks on her first legend-hunting adventure with her world-famous parents as they research the mysterious town of Blackwood for their next book.

Peaches and the 19 Cobras



Paula Bailey. 1derfulife Publishing. \$19.99 (68p), ISBN 978-1-963379-57-0; \$12.99 paper, ISBN 978-1-963379-59-4

Amazon, Barnes & Noble

Peaches, a brave rescue pup, takes on the 19 Cobras (Covid-19) in this fun, vibrant adventure for ages 5-8, filled with friendship and valuable lessons.

Sue's Splashy Surprise: A Pond-ering Adventure



Mamimo Chan. Partridge Singapore.

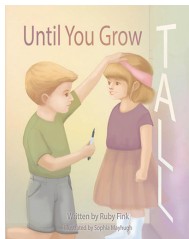
\$26.99 paper (46p), ISBN 978-1-5437-8199-1;

\$3.99 e-book, ISBN 978-1-5437-8198-4

Amazon

Join Sue on a thrilling journey with her siblings to build a fish pond, learning teamwork and tradition. Can she save the day when surprises arise?

Until You Grow Tall



Ruby Fink, illus. by Sophia Mayhugh. Fink Press.

\$10.99 paper (24p), ISBN 979-8-9917728-1-5; \$10.44 e-book,

ASIN B0DNV1KBXY Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Bookshop.org,

IngramSpark

Until You Grow Tall is a tale of sibling love and guidance from an older sibling to a younger one, outlining the many lessons they will share as the younger sibling grows.

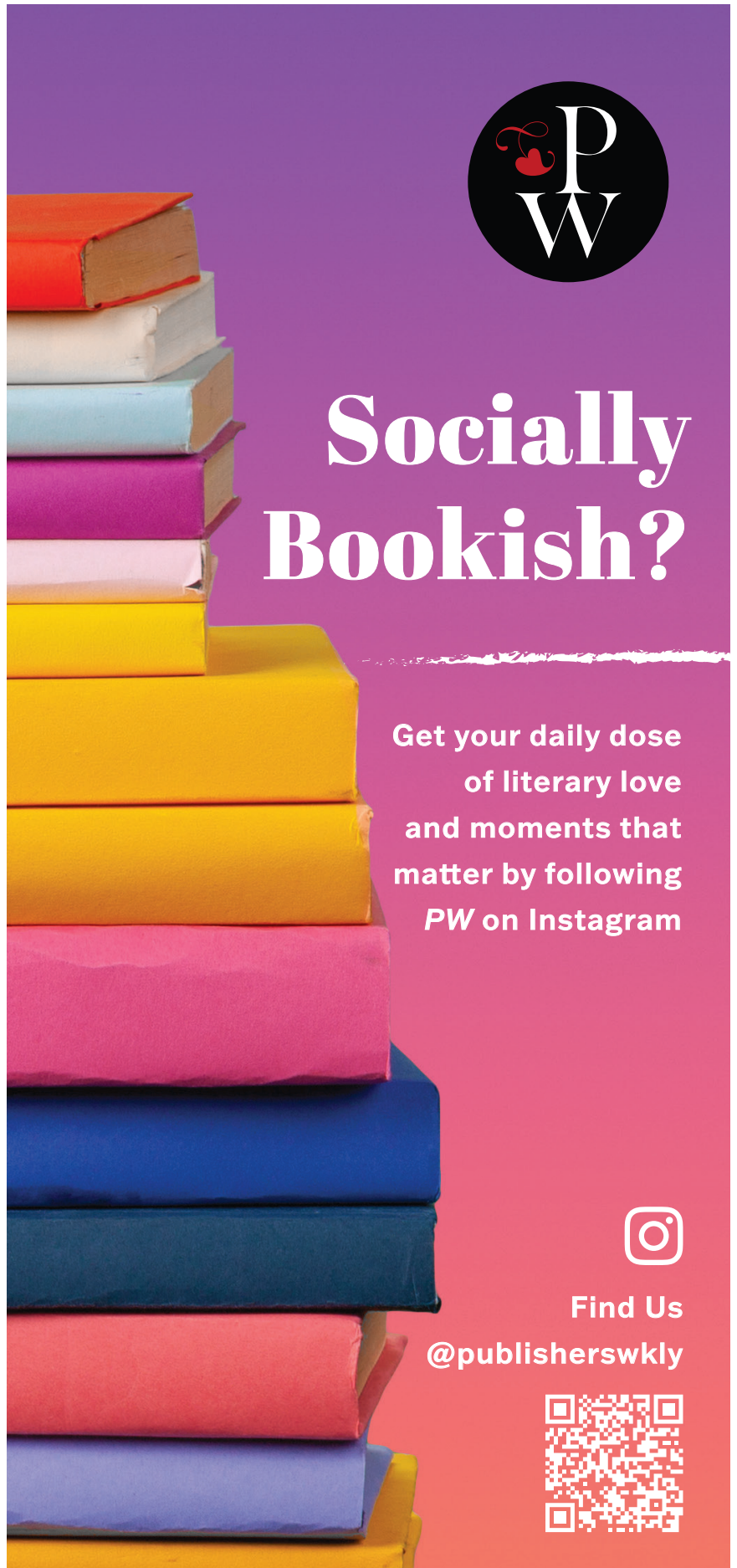


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MEMOIR

EDITOR'S PICK

Land of Tears: A Journey of Language, Loyalty, & War from an Iranian-American Translator Serving with U.S. Marines in Afghanistan

Sanjar Rohām | MillSpeak Books/MillSpeak Foundation
286p, hardcover, \$28.95, ISBN 979-8-9911731-0-0

In his absorbing memoir, Rohām, an Iranian immigrant to the US, details his time spent as a “terp” (interpreter) with the US military in Afghanistan circa 2010. Propelled by a sense of purposelessness, Rohām learns Pashto and is posted to Camp Leatherneck. Rohām’s sincerity and willingness to volunteer overcome the Marines’ initial suspicions and earn their trust while he witnesses the horrors of regions “synonymous with death.” His popularity causes tension with Ziar, another terp who hates him for his country of origin. When disaster strikes, Rohām must not only cope with its aftermath but also clear his name.

Unforgiving terrain, studded with mines and IEDs, is brought to life through



A translator's urgent account of life with Marines in war-torn Afghanistan.

Great for fans of Sebastian Junger's *War*, Nathaniel Fick's *One Bullet Away*.

Rohām’s language, which transports readers to the battlefield. Rohām weaves in scenes from his childhood in Iran with portraits of his strong mother, Mini, who immigrated to the US before the Islamic Revolution. Insights into Afghan history and culture pepper the narrative, while the scenecraft is compelling. The encounter with Hila, recklessly brave in her hope to better her life, haunts the reader, as does a portrait of a major in mourning.

Rohām’s pained, precise narration illuminates the chaotic, brutal nature of war, the bravery and large-heartedness of the Marines, the helplessness of the populace, and the relentlessness of the Taliban. The account stirs admiration for the bravery of military men and women, always ready to obey their bosses, whose justification for the drawn-out war sounds hollow when weighed against the sacrifices of the personnel. An engrossing read.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

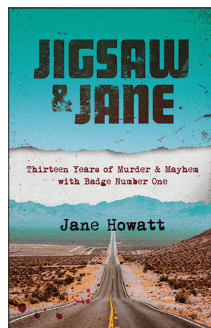
MEMOIR

Jigsaw & Jane: Thirteen Years of Murder and Mayhem with Badge Number One

Jane Howatt | Chimney Road Press
389p, e-book, \$9.95, ISBN 978-0-9911703-0-2

Howatt’s affecting debut is several things at once: a shocking true crime story, a heroic account of a celebrated homicide detective, a memoir of an odd couple friendship, and, most of all, a book about writing a book. Her urgent desire to become a writer takes front and center stage, as she details the unlikely path that led her to convince top Los Angeles homicide detective John “Jigsaw” St. John—a gruff, old-school cop widely acclaimed for his work in high profile murder cases—to share his story with her. Eventually, as Howatt gains St. John’s trust, he opens up about his career, the horrifying events he’s seen, and his deep empathy for the victims.

Once St. John lets Howatt into his world, her instincts as an investigator and observer are quickly sharpened, as she tags along to crime scenes, autopsies, and sobering interactions with grieving families, shaking her but strengthening her



An unlikely friendship sets the stage for a touching true crime memoir.

Great for fans of Janet Malcolm's *The Journalist and the Murderer*, Michael Finkel's *True Story*.

resolve to tell his story. And that story has all the makings of a gritty crime novel, with Howatt capturing nights spent in St. John’s squad car, booths in Denny’s, and interviewing a slew of colorful witnesses. She never shies from brutal details, crafting a suspenseful narrative that centers on his arrest of “Freeway Killer” Bill Bonin and successful case against

serial killer Bill Bradford.

Howatt’s desire to write is eventually eclipsed by her disarming friendship with St. John, who maintains his unshakable belief in her. The pair are as mismatched as they are engaging. Their bond is undeniable—lasting through his retirement and to his death, where he whispers “you loved homicide and you loved me. That’s all I ever wanted,” sentiment that will soften even the most seasoned crime fans.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: **A** Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

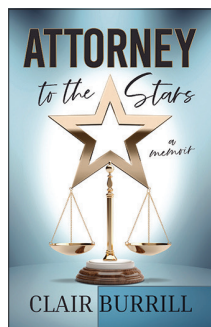
MEMOIR

Attorney to the Stars

Clair Burrill | Clarified Libros Publishing
357p, e-book, \$7.99, ISBN 979-8-9912942-0-1

Entertainment attorney Burrill spins colorful tales of his time with high profile clients, from the Rolling Stones to John Candy to Robin Williams, in this lively debut memoir. Burrill, who handled a range of celebrity cases, humorously details his work here, touching on such mundane issues as a simple phone call terminating a greedy management agency to more rousing stories of tracking down rock guitarists who have gone MIA. Hollywood’s inner circle comes to life in his hands, and, in between the witty anecdotes of his celebrity clients, Burrill weaves in his early childhood days in Plymouth, Wisconsin, meeting and falling in love with his wife of over 50 years, and his time spent in the U.S. Navy.

Burrill’s behind-the-scenes vignettes will mesmerize readers, as he writes with an easy charm and infuses his stories with inside jokes and firsthand details from Hollywood fan favorites. Robin Williams, with his “piercing bright eyes [and] gentle smile” is “always performing,” flashing a razor-edged wit and nervous energy,



Entertaining and memorable stories from a high profile Hollywood attorney.

Great for fans of Paul Tweed's *From Hollywood to Hollywood*, Nell Scovell's *Just the Funny Parts*.

Waylon Jennings affectionately refers to Burrill as “Hoss” in nearly every conversation, and Bill Withers derails a deposition by claiming his professional role is to “think up stuff.” Playful quips like that—sprinkled among Burrill’s recollections of big-league events and personal friendships—steal the spotlight. His chance meetings with stars such as Elizabeth Taylor and Suzanne Somers are recounted as well, where he writes of Taylor: “She literally lit up the room... and yes, her eyes were a captivating violet hue.”

Hollywood fans will pour over Burrill’s personal photographs of the stars he served, as well as his references to hot-button entertainment topics, like the shocking ease with which people exploit music. His comedic timing never misses a beat, and his passion for developing meaningful relationships with his clients inspires his writing, making this good-natured tell-all a captivating reflection of surreal encounters with some of Hollywood’s most beloved.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: **A** Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

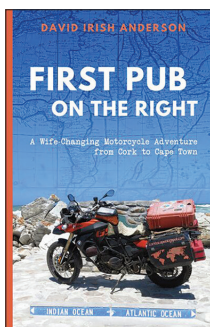
MEMOIR

First Pub on the Right: A Wife-Changing Motorcycle Adventure from Cork to Cape Town

David Irish Anderson | Pure Ink Press
346p, trade paper, \$18.99, ISBN 979-8-9875866-3-1

This lively and unpredictable travelogue debut plumbs the “power of the human spirit to adapt, endure, and ultimately find peace amid chaos.” Anderson’s trip—launched from a night of bar-fueled dreaming—is emotionally, physically, and spiritually exhausting, as he and his wife, Sarah, embark on an epic motorcycle trip from Cork, Ireland, to Cape Town, South Africa. Growing up in Northern Ireland during The Troubles, Anderson is no stranger to chaos, though his background can’t prepare him for the challenges, dangers, and inspirations he and Sarah will face on this much-needed “break from logic and reasoning.”

Anderson is a gritty yet tender writer who fashions touching moments just as easily as he does the harshest of circumstances, juxtaposing images like the “picturesque tapestry” of England’s verdant farmlands with his despair at discov-



Epic motorcycle trip up ends—and rebuilds—a man’s life.

Great for fans of Kathleen Turner’s *Living at Full Throttle*, Todd Lawson’s *Inside the Belly of an Elephant*.

“I think I’m more afraid of not living.”

Anderson’s memoir is in turns amusing and poignant; when delays force him to set up camp in Jungle Junction just outside Nairobi, he muses on the similarities he shares with strangers from myriad backgrounds, while, when driving near the Dead Sea, he works to “escape [his] dark thoughts” after his “decade of devotion” with his wife comes to a screeching halt. Those moments will cause readers to pause and reflect on the twists in their own lives as well, to consider the power of not knowing what lies ahead against the painful awareness of what’s been left behind. This is a journey worth taking.

Cover: **B+** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: **A** | Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

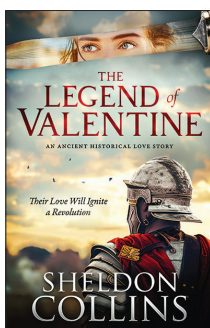
FICTION

The Legend of Valentine: An Ancient Historical Love Story

Sheldon Collins | Hutchinson & Collins Publishing, LLC
337p, trade paper, \$6.99, ISBN 979-8-9913624-1-2

Collins’s captivating debut takes place in ancient Rome, as Valentine Romanus—a renowned soldier who converts to Christianity and becomes a healer—falls deeply in love with Agatha, a blind maiden, and defies Emperor Claudius’s persecution of Christians. Valentine swiftly becomes a target when he begins officiating Christian wedding ceremonies against the emperor’s wishes, propelling him into a daring attempt to influence the emperor through his empress, Serena, and placing his life—and all he holds dear—at risk.

The narrative intricately weaves together elements of legend, history, and imagination, creating a rich tapestry that brings Valentine’s story to life. Collins’s background in film is evident in his writing, as the novel unfolds with a cinematic quality that immerses readers in the ancient world of Rome. Detailed descriptions of the setting—from bustling Roman streets to the serene countryside—provide a vivid backdrop for the unfolding drama. Collins’s characters are well-developed,



Well-crafted, engaging fictional rendering of Saint Valentine’s life.

Great for fans of Jamie Ogle’s *Of Love and Treason*, Emma Hooper’s *We Should Not Be Afraid of the Sky*.

embodying courage and grace despite her vulnerabilities.

One of the novel’s strengths is its historical accuracy; Collins has clearly done extensive research, and he includes real historical figures and events that add authenticity to the story. The narrative enhances the historical foundation with creative liberties that never detract from its integrity. The portrayal of early Christian communities and their struggles under Roman rule is both informative and moving, providing a heightened understanding of the historical context in which Valentine lived. Collins’s piercing exploration of faith, sacrifice, and redemption gives this epic love story an intricate depth often missing in similar titles.

Cover: **A-** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – | Editing: **A-** | Marketing copy: **A**

FICTION

Montjoy

Curt Finch | Alternative Book Press
110p, trade paper, \$12.99, ISBN 979-8-990-85317-1

Owen Schoenberg, a middle-aged Jewish professor, lives a quiet life. Separated from his wife following his teenage son’s death by suicide, he spends his days mostly on academic pursuits like teaching, grading, and writing his second book. The few breaks in monotony come from his friendship with married couple Ella and Noah Grunebaum, but when Noah is diagnosed with cancer, Owen embarks on an indefinite visit to spend time with them, a trip that coincides with Ella’s discovery—just outside the museum she works at in Vienna—of a German SS officer’s diary, the writings of Martin Ulbrecht Tauber.

Schoenberg’s deep interest in Tauber’s diary—which recounts a vigilante going after the Gestapo—turns his attention to his own history, and that of his son, whose lingering presence has been shadowing him since the funeral. Finch’s narrative explores loss, regret, and the self-deception that often accompanies both, in writing that is sometimes technical and sometimes evocative, touching on the historical accuracy and background of Tauber’s artifact just as Schoenberg reflects that, much like his obsession with Tauber, his son, Zach, is now a “lifelong tenant” in his



Meditation on grief and acceptance, with rich historical context.

Great for fans of W.G. Sebald’s *Austerlitz*, Marilynne Robinson’s *Gilead*.

mind, one who “in death... was present in ways that he wasn’t in life.” Schoenberg’s struggle with guilt over his perceived inability to save his son is the reckoning that ultimately drives him to accept that loss, if not completely move on from it. What sets this work apart is its ability to weave philosophical discourse with universally human pain—and while occasionally dense, those willing to engage are rewarded with a nuanced exploration of grief and moral responsibility. Finch invites readers to reflect on how meaning is discovered amid loss and uncertainty, how death transforms our relationships with lost loved ones, and, perhaps most importantly, how to experience “the kind of love... that [comes] from letting go.”

Cover: **B+** | Design & typography: **B** | Illustrations: – | Editing: **A-** | Marketing copy: **A-**

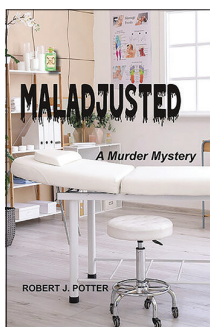
MYSTERY/THRILLER

Maladjusted: A Murder Mystery

Robert J. Potter | Farcical Life Publishing
129p, e-book, \$2.99, ISBN 979-8-9901800-1-7

Zack Webster has a problem: he suspects that his boss—the hypnotic and flirtatious chiropractor, Dr. Sycort—is a killer. While working for Sycort, Zack discovers that the practice's regular customers are going missing, despite being owed more treatments, prompting him to dabble in a little amateur sleuthing. Sure enough, Zack stumbles onto secrets galore: suspicious receipts record purchases like chloroform and steel cages and a missing patient's purse is buried in Sycort's office. But when he hatches a brilliant plan to out Sycort—with the help of sultry office assistant, Jolene, who promises to keep the doc occupied for one evening—it quickly becomes evident that Zack's in over his head.

Potter, as in his prior novel *Farsighted*, weaves strands of the supernatural with common, everyday occurrences of a very real world. When Zack finds himself caught in a deadly trap, he turns to memories of high school witchcraft to escape, though those efforts prove futile; they do lead to a slew of new discoveries however,



Spirited mystery that weaves past and present intrigue.

Great for fans of Kate Racculia's *Tuesday Mooney Talks to Ghosts*, Mark Mills's *The Savage Garden*.

Those old-fashioned times and sensibilities of Zack and co. give this novel a vintage pulp feel, and Potter's sequence-of-events writing style makes the story easy to follow, though readers may find it lacking in dramatic tension. Potter takes his fair share of detours from the central plot, diving into stories from Zack's past and an excess of background information on the main players' motives, but by the story's end readers will be sufficiently convinced that Zack has a hidden knack for solving the stickiest of mysteries. Those seeking a slim-spined comfort read that will remind them of the eagerness of youth will enjoy slipping into this sweet thriller.

Cover: **B** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: — Editing: **B** | Marketing copy: **A**

MYSTERY/THRILLER

The Secrets That They Keep

T.M. Lore | Carmen DaVinleam
414p, trade paper, \$19.99, ISBN 979-8-218-47494-2

After her parents die when she is only 17 years old, Alyx Beck does whatever she must to take care of herself and her autistic twin brother, Trent—including her efforts as a high end sex worker, where she sticks to stringent professional rules and tries to stay on the good side of her handler, Estelle. But when her driver, roommate, and only friend, Sasha Belmont, fails to pick her up after an evening job, Alyx's world comes crashing down around her: Sasha's scheme to steal from their employers implicates Alyx, landing her in the middle of a risky cat-and-mouse game that threatens everyone she loves.

Lore (the pseudonym for Carmen DaVinleam) threads betrayal, seedy business dealings, and taut loyalty into a complex story of survival that unfolds through the eyes of a street-smart protagonist trapped in a dangerous web of lies. Alyx's only way of escape involves outsmarting those in charge and dismantling the business from the inside, and Lore uses incredibly high stakes to band together her central female characters, who must trust each other before they can successfully



Street-smart female lead confronts the dark world of sex trafficking.

Great for fans of Ian K. Smith's *Eagle Rock*, Elizabeth Gilbert's *City of Girls*.

overthrow a sadistic enemy. Twists and turns keep coming, as Alyx learns surprising nuggets about her parents' deaths, and Lore ratchets up the tension into a suspenseful climax that finds Alyx working behind her handler's back to uncover the truth—and gain her freedom. Readers will root for Lore's whip smart lead, an incredibly resilient young woman who isn't afraid to get her hands dirty if that's what it takes to exact vengeance on anyone who crosses her—or her loved ones. Diverse characters give the story layered depth, and Lore capably handles weighty topics like sex trafficking, kidnapping, and unbelievable violence. This gritty thriller vividly depicts the lives of young girls trapped in the sex trade, exploited by men and women with staggering amounts of money and power.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: — Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

ROMANCE

One Night Standard

E.F. Dodd | Sugar Beaver Books
390p, trade paper, \$16.95, ISBN 979-8-986-28808-6

This charming fish-out-of-water romance, the second in Dodd's Standard of Love series, has legs. Professional mermaid performer Coral Triton lands in Vegas, eager to start her dream gig at the L'Atelier Hotel, under the management of Jocelyn Standard. A chance meeting with a handsome stranger—first during a baggage-claim mishap and then again at the hotel bar—gives Coral the no-strings, give-him-a-fake-name one-night stand she's jonesing for as she starts her new job and life in Vegas. Little does she know that her “hot, sexy, smoldering” “Airport Guy” is none other than Jamie Standard, her new boss's older brother. A real estate developer on the brink of closing the deal of his career, Jamie is doggedly trying to shake his new title of “Boston's Bad Boy of Business,” courtesy of an article in *Boston Commons*.

After video of Coral and Jamie interacting during her first performance goes viral, Jocelyn concocts just the kind of delicious, forced-proximity scheme that romance readers relish: why not have Coral fake a relationship with her brother to fix his reputation, help him close his big deal, and publicize the hotel's new show?



Winning meet-cute faux-mance centered on a Las Vegas mermaid performer.

Great for fans of Jamie Wesley's *Fake It Till You Bake It*, Ali Hazelwood's *Deep End*.

While Jamie is only in town for two weeks, the ticking clock, plus Coral and Jamie's very real attraction to each other, adds tension and spice to a love story that develops swimmingly. With dashes of welcome heat, Dodd deftly entangles Coral and Jamie's lives despite their every effort to keep it casual. While the Vegas fantasy is fun, the couple's issues are rooted convincingly in character: Coral is a rootless only child with a mother who still seems to be putting her own life together, while Jamie contends with his playboy mogul rep.

Tension, lust, and personal and career priorities fuel this page-turner, and lovers of meet-cute romances that embrace conventional tropes will swoon as Coral and Jamie, in the throes of what should be a fauxmance, grow closer despite conflicting interests and jaded stances on love.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: — Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

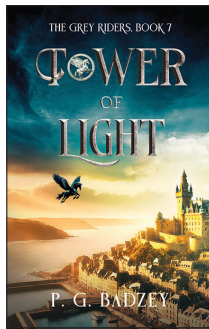
SF/FANTASY/HORROR**Tower of Light: The Grey Riders, Book 7**

P.G. Badzey

400p, e-book, \$3.99, ISBN 978-1-7328627-6-0

Badzey's spirited seventh entry in the Grey Riders series confronts a question traditional epic fantasies don't often address: what happens after the war with darkness has been won? The answer, of course, is more adventure—sometimes of a more personal nature than the world-shaking previous book—plus surprises like the conversion of a goblin commander to Christianity. Again lacing a thread of faith into a fantasy world inspired by Tolkien, Lewis, and good ol' Dungeons & Dragons paperbacks, Badzey brings fresh energy to traps, trolls (undead this time!), and halflings ducking danger under camouflage cloaks. This blend of the familiar and the pleasingly novel (the metal serpents!) will entice lovers of the genre, even as this entry's narrative thrust lacks some of epic fantasy's urgent stakes and sense of self-discovery.

Tower of Light is something of an extended epilogue, starring tested heroes who now hold positions of power, undertaking an elective mission of rebellion. To that



Spirited fantasy finale in a classic vein, alive with adventure and faith.

Great for fans of Patrick W. Carr, S.D. Grimm.

soar south to inspire a rebellion and free kingdoms still gripped by that darkness.

The geopolitics are complex enough to be interesting but not needlessly complicated, and Badzey is generous with the pegasii, dragons, vampires, and characters with histories intimately connected to earlier books, including the offspring of heroes. The elegiac feel and sense of reunion mean that, at times, narrative momentum is slowed for emotional payoffs, though fans of the series will relish these moments. The surprise is that Badzey still conjures such spirited action, missions, and fun, demonstrating by the end that the fate of a single village can feel every bit as pressing as that of realms.

Cover: **A-** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A-**

SF/FANTASY/HORROR**Sagittarius Stronghold: Battle at the Pillars of Creation**

Dennis Ideue

454p, hardcover, \$24.80, ISBN 979-8-520-14350-5

The stakes remain high in Ideue's second New Terrans novel, which continues a space-opera adventure blending far-future tech, present-day concerns about AI and drones, and old-school science-fiction thrills and heroism. When the explorer ship *Curiosity* goes missing, Elliot Greyjoy, the bold Earth-born Commander now serving as Prime Minister of the United Terran Federation, finds his dreams of a peaceful future for New Terra dashed, as he and the leaders of a fractious collection of empires face a dire new threat: a plot to wipe out what is left of humanity. Dispatching Captain Rodney Jamison to take command of the investigation, along with the newly created Humaniform android Hailey Link, Elliot and his team are in a race against time to save New Terra and its fraught alliances. Ratcheting up the tension: the young android seemingly goes rogue on a mission that will either save our species or set us on the path to annihilation.

Bursting with high-stakes action, old and new feuds, a dash of romance, a diverse



Exciting space-opera sequel pitting what's left of humanity against advanced AI.

Great for fans of Joshua James's *Artifact*, Christopher Ruocchio's *Empire of Silence*.

to capitalize on a plan of vengeance.

Among vivid accounts of space-battle tactics, considerations of the finer points of lasers and shields, and classic space opera moments where the day is saved by scientific improv like "injecting ferrous particles into the output aperture," Ideue weaves intricate layers of intergalactic politics, exploring tense, complex relationships between the surviving humans and between humans and AI. This volume builds with smoother pacing than its predecessor, the tension mounting to an explosive conclusion that sets up more books to come, but the relative swiftness of the storytelling never comes at the expense of compelling characterization or fresh spins on big SF ideas.

Cover: **A-** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – Editing: **A-** | Marketing copy: **A-**

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How are you handling self-published books?

Every week, *Publishers Weekly* reviewers highlight self-published books that deserve your attention.

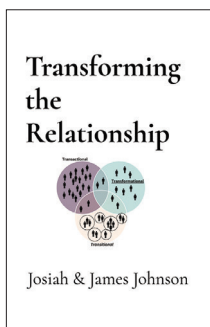
BUSINESS & PERSONAL FINANCE**Transforming the Relationship**

Josiah & James Johnson

110p, mass market, \$14.99, ISBN 979-8-218-54492-8

This heartening and practical guide from father-and-son team James and Josiah Johnson centers business success on interpersonal connection, identifying three categories of relationships—transactional, transitional, and transformational—and analyzing how each impacts human bonds. The authors establish a “level of understanding” as the key factor driving attachment, writing that “understanding may vary in depth ... but it is necessary to produce the greatest benefit.” That sentiment is echoed in the structure, with Josiah crafting the primary narrative and James, a retired insurance salesman, interjecting anecdotes and asides to deepen comprehension.

“My father and I hold the view that relationships are fundamental to our existence, influencing our experiences, emotions, and life paths,” Josiah writes, contending that readers must grasp how the relationship types manifest before they can transform them into higher-level personal and professional success. To help that



Practical business advice centered on interpersonal relationships.

Great for fans of Ed Wallace's *Business Relationships That Last*, Jan Yager's *Productive Relationships*.

goal Transformational relationships—those that “provide mutual growth and make us better than the people we were”—are human connection at its best.

Beyond business interactions, the authors touch on family attachments, including how parenting looks through the lens of the relationship types. They close with a discussion of transfiguration as “the fulfillment of transformation,” emphasizing that true change occurs from the inside out and tying this concept to their Christian faith. Their central idea that “with every person we meet... we build each relationship into a beautifully intertwined story full of significance” is moving.

Cover: **B** | Design & typography: **A-** | Illustrations: – | Editing: **A-** | Marketing copy: **B+**

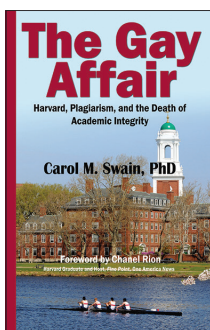
POLITICAL & SOCIAL SCIENCES,**CURRENT EVENTS****The Gay Affair: Harvard, Plagiarism, and the Death of Academic Integrity**

Carol M. Swain | Be the People Books

132p, trade paper, \$16.99, ISBN 978-7374198-4-6

Swain (author of *The Adversity of Diversity*, among other titles) takes aim at academic plagiarism at elite universities by telling the story of Harvard President Claudine Gay's resignation in early 2024—and Swain's personal history with the accusations of plagiarism facing Gay. As Swain frames it, Gay, Harvard's first Black president, rose through the ranks of academia with a label of “brilliant” that protected her work from scrutiny. Swain targets Harvard's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (the topic of Swain's outraged previous book) initiatives as essential to Gay's success. She also charges, with detailed line-by-line comparisons, Gay with having incorporated into her 1997 dissertation, without credit, language and ideas from Swain's book *Black Faces, Black Interests*, winner of the 1994 Woodrow Wilson prize for the year's best book on government, politics, or international affairs.

The Gay Affair blends Swain's presentation of her case with polemic elements—



Controversial academic's personal account of Harvard plagiarism scandals.

Great for fans of Heather Mac Donald's *The Diversity Delusion*, Helen Pluckrose and James Lindsay's *Cynical Theories*.

built amid clashes over DEI initiatives and other topics with progressive students and administrators—offers both academic rigor and a spirit of pained aggrievement, but with a lighter touch: *The Gay Affair* is in many ways a victory lap.

Though she acknowledges the public perception of her as “the controversial Carol Swain,” she undermines the reach of her argument by singling out only liberal alleged perpetrators of plagiarism in her book like Kamala Harris and Malcolm Gladwell. At times it's difficult to not read this book as simply sour grapes from somebody who wished their academic career had gone the way of Gay's. Gay isn't Mozart, but this feels at times like a book by Salieri.

Cover: **A-** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: – | Editing: **A-** | Marketing copy: **A-**

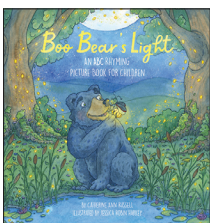
PICTURE BOOKS**Boo Bear's Light: An ABC Rhyming Picture Book for Children**

Catherine Ann Russell | Basketfull Relief Project

42p, e-book, \$3.99, ASIN B0DJG1KBYJ

The joy of learning is the key ingredient in Russell's lively alphabet picture book. Deep in the woods, Boo Bear lives happily with his family—but one morning his parents can't find him, which is a problem because his mother has just prepared an apple cake to share. As Boo readies himself to return home, he encounters a forlorn firefly named Jack, who is lost and has injured his wing. Boo immediately feels compassion for Jack, insisting that he allow Boo to help him recover. At first, Mama Bear is frustrated with Boo for not coming when she asked, but when she learns the reason for his delay, she happily helps Boo deliver Jack safely back to his family.

While following Boo Bear on his journey, Russell (author of *The Last Storyteller*) highlights different words to represent each letter of the alphabet: the letter “I” is used for “injured” when Jack explains his hurt wing to Boo, while “R” refers to “rescue,” which is exactly what Boo and his mama do. That makes for some fun learning, and Russell even pulls out prepositions and verbs, using “O” in “on” and “V” for “vamoose,” resulting in a fun, engaging tale that younger readers will relish following along with, even after they've mastered their letters.



ABC book follows a bear helping his firefly friend find his way home.

Great for fans of Teagan White's *Adventures with Barefoot Critters*, Oliver Jeffers's *Once Upon an Alphabet*.

growing on logs make the world feel fully realized. Because young children learn best through play, this educational book's entertaining format allows an ABC journey while also enjoying a sweet story of friendship and compassion.

Cover: **A-** | Design & typography: **A-** | Illustrations: **A** | Editing: **A-** | Marketing copy: **A-**

Jessica Robin Harkey's expressive illustrations will immerse readers in Boo Bear's imaginary world. Immense in size—and colored an intriguing shade of blue—the bears all have bushy fur and kind eyes, while Jack the firefly wears glasses and sports large, drooping wings that gradually perk up when Boo's family helps him. The forest is verdant and dense with trees, and small details like mushrooms

MIDDLE GRADE

The Adventures of the Flash Gang, Episode Three: Berlin Breakout

M.M. Downing & S.J. Waugh | Fitzroy Books
203p, trade paper, \$14.95, ISBN 978-1-646-03569-4

Crime-fighting preteens go multi-continental with the lively third installment in the Adventures of the Flash Gang series (after *Treasonous Tycoon*). As Hitler gains power in Germany in 1936, the group is on a mission to save one member's father. Traveling from New York City to Berlin under aliases—privileged Pearl Clavell, the daughter of a British aristocrat calling herself Lola Lavender, and Lewis Carter, also known as Nigel Davenport—the preteens, part of the Flash Gang, outwit Nazis with spirited derring-do. Hopping trains and boats, Lewis and Pearl are laser-focused on finding Professor Harold Carter, a renowned chemist. Lewis is devastated to discover that his father appears to be complicit with the bad guys—but looks can be deceiving.

Young readers will learn hard truths about the era, including the Nazis' genocide against Jews and others, as well as the shame of having a collaborator in the family. Still, despite the authors' deft handling of the real-world stakes of the historical



Rip-roaring thriller blending history, adventure before World War II.

Great for fans of Kimberly Brubaker Bradley's *The War that Saved My Life*, Joan Hiatt Harlow's *The Watcher*.

conflict, readers will cheer as the good guys come ever closer to winning the day—not only Lewis and Pearl but also eccentric old Lillian Whitford and some other unexpected heroes. Tense close calls keep the pages turning. A cruel steel magnate, a villain from earlier in the series, makes an exciting reappearance with further nefarious deeds; here, too, the blend of history and adventure is skillfully handled, as his henchmen are disposed of in satisfying fashion.

While the story ends on yet another cliffhanger as the team focuses on its next case, readers will forgive the authors, who ably demonstrate what heroic preteens can do with a “flash”—a remarkably effective diversion tactic that their enemies are determined to capture. This spirited tale will attract readers both old and new. Middle-grade readers will devour the latest installment of the Flash Gang and eagerly anticipate the next.

Cover: **A** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: — Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**

YOUNG ADULT

Swimming with the Sun

Julia Martel | Martel Enterprises, LLC
432p, mass market, \$18.99 ISBN 979-8-990-28120-2

In a society where everyone's jobs are assigned by a special department within the government—in the hopes of leading society to transcendent evolution—19-year-old Noa finds herself with a new career in the Cavalry, as a rancher, in Martel's mildly fantastical dystopian debut. Noa, who has already lived life as a nurse and bureaucrat when she is Reassigned yet again, worries about dark rumors that this change is just a way to “get rid of problem citizens.” Meanwhile, 13-year-old Tali fights her urge to be different amidst the never-ending sameness at Main Ranch, where she and her cohort prep the land for the arrival of the new Cavalry “Drops.”

Martel sets up an intriguing world that is both divided by the strict rules driving career assignments and banded together by the collective fear and uncertainty plaguing its citizens. Noa and Tali initially have nothing in common, but, as the tension in the story builds, their paths inevitably cross—and bring to light a society that functions on mystery and secrets, from the enigmatic Pastor (described as a



Dystopian society is fractured by rigid rules and dark underlying secrets.

Great for fans of Dave Eggers's *The Circle*, Jeff VanderMeer's *Borne*.

“nobody, or everybody”) who delivers broadcasts for the controlling Variety to attempts to suppress the unusual gifts some citizens possess. Those citizens include Noa, who, believing herself to be some type of prophet, soon finds out she's not the only one experiencing visions—and the government is on to her.

That realization drives the story's quest to expose the truth—and potentially overthrow the government. Martel supplements the action with touchstone themes of friendship, loyalty, and, of course, an unexpected romance, in the shape of Noa's crush on her trainer, Amar. The story muddles somewhat as the Cavalry recruits confront the artificial intelligence at the heart of the Variety, but, still, dystopian fans will relish Martel's uneven heroine and cold, controlling society.

Cover: **B** | Design & typography: **A** | Illustrations: — Editing: **A** | Marketing copy: **A**



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