

Indie Publishing News – Issue 7

From the Editor's Desk

Hello and welcome to issue 7 of Indie Publishing News. I do hope you enjoy the new format. The newsletter is now monthly.

What's New

I would like to introduce you all to two of my helpers. Claudia Plaisted of Cee-Jay Designs who makes my magazine covers www.cee-jaydesign.weebly.com and also my Spotlight Author Cartoonist – Adam Mitchell who you can find at <https://www.facebook.com/Adam-Mitchell-Indie-Illustrator303646706688121/>

Claudia and Adam volunteered their skills to help improve the newsletter for your enjoyment. If there is anyone else with ideas or can volunteer skills, then that would be awesome. Thanks

STAGE THREE OF INDIEPUBLISHING NEWS

Now is the time to send a link to your readers and fans so they can get a copy of the Indie Publishing News. This will take the weight off your shoulders - you won't need to forward the newsletter if they sign up on the link below. Remember the more readers signed up the further everyone's reach – the more likely you are to get new readers and business. Thanks

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It is also nearly time to release our first winner book for our Sponsorship Program which was run in conjuncture with Limelight Literature and Fantasia Covers. PreOrders will be available from Amazon

Discover yby J B Taylor's a Sci-fi novel

After defying the war lord in control of his home planet Veladon, Eckta is sentenced to an eternity of suffering. When his pod crash lands in the Daedalus Crater of Earth's moon he expects he will remain there forever. Little does he know his pod is emitting a pulse and below him, on Earth, someone is listening.

From her station at the SETI Institute, Abigail Murray is about to hear something that will change her world forever. Alien life exists. But after discovering Eckta's amazing abilities will Earth permit this stranger a peaceful life, or will their greed and ambition get the better of them?

Helping Indie Authors get their books published professionally

###Plaisted Publishing House Introducing New Indie Author –Joanne Ruth

Tell us a bit about yourself.

"I am woman hear me roar . . ." Well, maybe not roar. I'm a bit of a mix of introvert and extrovert. Never quite sure which side is going to be out in front. Surprises are good. Maybe that is why I love books so much. You can lose yourself in the world of imagination and learn lots of things along the way.

I raised my children alone (learnt a lot of things on that journey too!) and am very proud of who they have grown to be. They, and my precious eight grandchildren, are always an inspiration with their individual, adventurous, talented and humorous attitudes to life. I see their attitude, strength and wisdom as my reward. I love adventures, love the country I live in and am always amazed at what people can overcome and accomplish. We are amazing beings. I firmly believe in the old adage 'Never, never, never give up!' Even now, when in my later years I am not as agile or active as I used to be.

What bought you to the world of writing?

I've always loved to write - Stories, poems, songs since I could hold a pen and spell. I always wanted to write books but other things took priority for a long time. Now I have the time and still the inclination. And I have amazing inspiration from the Spirit of Life, all that is around me and all I have experienced and witnessed. Now is the time.

What is your first book and what do you think of it now?

My first book 'My Name Is Tamsin' was published a while ago and is now due for re-release with a new title. It is now called 'The Unexpected One'. I love this story still. I hope that doesn't sound conceited, but with every reading it excites me and draws me in. I felt inspired to write it and sometimes the story surprised me as it unfolded. I was always looking for what the characters were going to do next.

What type of books do you write and do they fulfil your reader's needs?

My books are a bit of a mix but classified as sci-fi. They are a bit adventure, intrigue, mystery and spiritual. Even have a touch of romance. I hope they pass on a bit of wisdom and also encouragement for the seekers of this world.

Would you like to feature a book, if so which one? Tell us about it?

I would like to feature 'The Unexpected One' (along with an NB to its sequel which is also ready for publishing now). 'The Unexpected One' follows the journey of two children who come from mysterious roots and grow and develop through the pages. Their story exposes genetic engineering and mind control programs, the hidden agendas of powerful people and the ongoing fight for freedom by those who befriend the main character and her 'sibling'. It shares the building of relationships and the strength, the love and the indomitable spirit of the warrior child and a lot of action.

How long does it take you to write your first draft?

The first 30,000 words of book one were written many years ago and left untouched until most of my life's trials were over. The rest took me almost a year when I started writing again. The sequel took several months. I didn't write every day.

Do you plot or not, if so why?

I don't plot as such. Planning a story takes most of the joy out of writing for me. I prefer to watch it unfold like a movie in my mind and write it down as it goes.

Do you write in 1st or 3rd person, or have you do both?

I write in 3rd person. I am the narrator of what I see unfolding before me.

How do you edit your work? Do you leave your draft alone for a while or edit as you write?

I edit as I write then go over it several times more when finished.

What type of people/readers do you market your books to?

All people. The series is written for young adults and up.

Do you self-publish or have you worked with an Agent/Published?

I worked with both an agent and a publisher with the first publishing of the first book. It was not a great experience for me and I am a lot wiser now. Every situation you find yourself in brings something to learn. I now am working with a wonderful Indie Publisher who has helped me immensely and I take my hat off to her knowledge, skill and generosity of spirit. I would be very reluctant to go back down the traditional publishing road now.

How do you promote your writing?

I am in the process of preparing promotional material now, which will be going out on social media sites and book promotional sites. I'm building a website as well. All new to me.

Where can we buy your books?

Both books will be available by 15th December on online bookstores - in kindle, e-book and print.

Who are your favourite authors?

I read so many authors. I love a diverse range of genres and styles. The list of authors could go on and on. Here's a few. Sam Bourne, Lee Child, Andrew Gross, Georgette Heyer, Jane Austin, Matthew Riley, Kyle Mills, JRR Tolkien, Rick Riordan, Taylor Caldwell, Lisa Scottoline, C S Lewis, Ann Herries, Robert A Heinlein and so many, many, many more.

Kudos to so much amazing talent.

Links

Facebook link <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100014221278651>

E-mail address authorjoruthsmith@gmail.com

Website <https://authorjoruthsmith.wordpress.com>

###Indie Author Reviews

The Railroad by Neil Douglas Newton

Makes you think. Seriously.

This book was recommended to me by a friend who knows I like to read serious books. And this is not a fun, beach, snack book. This is a serious meal you need to sink your teeth into and think. The author has decided to tackle plenty of important, real life situations, and it's far easier to dig our heads into reality shows than deal with reality. As you follow the developments in the life of Mike Dobbs, his transformations and turbulence, cleverly told in first person, you will question his decisions, go with him through his 9-11 experience (excellent scene in the subway and consequences mentioned subsequently), a bitter, cold, dying relationship, utter depression and then the unexpected change. When Mike drinks, when he is insensitive to the Dennis or Barbara, when he thinks of how to get rid of Eileen and Megan, he is what he is, a traumatised average man hardened by the alienation of modern life, yet doomed to reluctant kindness, generosity and heroism when face to face with a person in real trouble. It's the damaged souls guiding damaged souls, like the blind leading the blind, but still sticking together. There is good in us humans, despite the bad in us. Mike is the kind of hero I like – almost an antihero, an accidental hero who never sees himself as such because he himself is so rundown and empty that even the author makes no excuses for him. All the characters are realistic and intriguing, even the five-second appearances (the girl in the cyber cafe, the innkeeper couple in a small

town), and their psychology is really well expressed, shown, not preached. I will not divulge my favourites to avoid spoilers.

The cover itself is not a compromising one – there is no couple to inspire romantic notions, although a huge portion of the story deals with relationships – romantic, family and friendships. There is no blood gushing, although the story is far from a gentle one. The title is not only an important literal image in the story, but also a metaphor, and the railroad puns and analogies woven into the plot have been placed there naturally, almost unnoticeably, yet emphasizing the message, using both the positive and negative connotations of it (travelling, discovering your paths, traditional settings, as opposed to being derailed, railroaded, cheated and defeated, whether by cunning or violence, etc.)

The initial chapters are not your average writing style and popular writers' vernacular, which grabbed my attention with plenty of interesting lines and expressions, which obviously come naturally and follow the events without distracting the reader. This style blends into more action in the second part of the book, as the story itself twists and turn that way. I enjoyed the excellent, flowing dialogues, quite an original line of thinking, and blending dialogue and character's thoughts seamlessly yet clearly defined. The language flows with impact, sometimes even like an old black and-white detective movie or even a movie done in comic-book style. The Railroad is a book not easily-digested, because of the topic – heavy, gruesome subjects people want to avoid but need to talk about and read about. You will want to drop it at times, because it might hit too close to home, but as soon as you put it down, you will want to get back to it. You will want to see how it turns out. Alienation, terrorism, child abuse, disfunctional marriages, detached relationships, dying friendships, inadequacy in the simplest intimate situations, post-traumatic stress, loneliness, disregard for common decency, system failures, bribe and the cowardice of laws, alcoholism, conformity... There are no comic reliefs, the readers will not be pampered with easily digestible scenes or easy, rose-coloured romance, and Mike's battle is constant and relentless. At times there is even an unusual, erratic pace of telling events, showing the mess in Mike's mind and soul, all strongly tied into the plot as the web thickens towards the end. After the entire ordeal, you will wonder whether Mike continued the search out of bravery, stubbornness, pure love, madness or the simple need for closure. But hang in there – like life, it is all worth it. There is nothing average about Mike – the average person stays away or gives in. Mike doesn't.

The ending might surprise you, and goes to prove that the most unlikely heroes, the ones who don't go looking for it, are the ones who do change the world, one act at a time. There is a slight feeling of bitterness and injustice, knowing Mike's sacrifice. But then again, the loveliest roses need thorns.

This Review is written by Anita Kovacevic and can be found on her blog. www.anitashaven.wordpress.com

Bound to Blackwood by Sharon Lipman

Reviewed By Kätzchen

With Paranormal Romance and Urban Fantasy authors popping up just about everywhere nowadays, I braced myself for another mediocre read. Still, I love vampires, so I bought the novel and started to read.

Let me get one thing straight however; this book is far from mediocre. Sharon Lipman manages to put a new, refreshing spin on vampires. Her world building is extraordinary and her characters feel real. I was on the verge of my seat several times and found it hard to put the book down. Before I knew it I was halfway through and it was 3 in the morning. I love stubborn, reckless Lena. As the only female Guardian she is used to having to prove herself, but she has this underlying insecurity when it comes to Thorn.

Thorn on the other hand is the hot, handsome King of Vampires, but sometimes I wanted to smack him. While he is a strong alpha male (which he needs to be as the king), he was not as unlikeable as some romance heroes.

All in all Sharon's characters are well rounded, the world is amazing, so put this on your TBR list, even if you are growing tired of vampires, because Sharon's are unlike any other vampires.

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HARD WORK**

Souls of the Reaper by Markie Madden

Reviewed By K. Meador

First of all, the characters Lacey, Colton, and the newest member of their team, Kazz, rival the characters from Law & Order: SUV Olivia Benson and Elliot Stabler and NCIS characters Mark Harmon, Michael Weatherly, and Pauley Perrette. So if you like those shows, you will absolutely love Souls of the Reaper.

From the very first page, the story line grabs your attention with a scene from the villain's perspective. The action doesn't slow as Lacey begins noticing disturbances across the city and when these disturbances turns violent then the Undead Unit is on the case. Kazz isn't introduced to the reader until a later date and she is totally likable from her love for speed and her aggression against perpetrators. All three collaborate, each bringing a unique set of skills and talents that compliments one another. However, even with all their talents, this case is nothing like they had ever seen or would likely to see again. They call on help from others in specialty fields and even that isn't enough.

So you may wonder, was the resolution satisfactory to the complications of the story?

Oh, absolutely! I can't tell you or even hint at what happens to bring the resolution because that would be unfair to both the reader and the author. The author, Mrs. Madden, has an extensive knowledge of police procedure and has expertly woven the complexities of this story into a well-rounded and developed story.

I highly recommend that if you even think you might enjoy a mystery such as this, you should give it a try. I read many Indie authors and Markie Madden's, Undead Unit Series, has captivated me with the professional cover, interior layout, and a developed story. Vampires, Werewolves, Shifters, and more are combined into a mystery that will keep you on the edge of your seat.

Don't miss her first book in the series, Fang and Claw. Highly recommended.

Revenge of Zeeka by Brenda Mohammed

Reviewed by Faridah Nassozi for Readers' Favorite

In *Revenge of Zeeka* by Brenda Mohammed, the island of Gosh is under attack by an army of zombies under the command of a vengeful science genius. In the year 2016, the Zika virus broke out in Central and South America with life threatening effects for pregnant women. Given a choice to save the mothers or the unborn babies, a decision was made to save the mothers. The tiny stillborns were securely and secretly buried. Only a few people knew of this. Unknown to everyone, however, a certain scientist managed to get hold of all 51 bodies, bring them back to life, and condition them to follow his command, creating himself a perfect army of zombies. Now, twenty years later, the evil scientist seeks revenge on those he holds responsible for the stillbirths. Only three of the current doctors at Central Hospital - Raynor, Mark and George - witnessed the unfortunate events of 2016. The three have strong suspicions about who might be controlling the zombies. for the elusive Master Zeeka. Will they save the islanders from Zeeka and his zombies, or will it be too late?

Meanwhile Zeeka is lying in wait for the perfect time to unleash his army onto the island. Zeeka has big, evil plans and this is just the beginning. In a desperate search for answers, and with very little to go on, the doctors search is a one of a kind novella trilogy that delivers an incredible story guaranteed to give readers an absolute sci-fi treat. I especially liked how Brenda used current events as the pivotal point from which to build this amazing sci-fi horror. This made the story even more relatable. More importantly, however, I admired how she owned her story and created this captivating version of events. She captured with amazing depth the setting, characters, plot, and emotions in such few words. If you are looking for a thrilling short read, this fast-paced, sci-fi action novella will give you the time of your life.

###Author Spotlight – Husband and Wife Team Elizabeth & Neil Newton

Elizabeth Horton Newton and Neil Douglas Newton are a fabulous husband and wife team. They write amazing stories which make you think and learn about things you didn't know. Elizabeth and Neil are family orientated with an amazingly supportive family.

They were recently interviewed by Anita Kovacevic

Well, hi there, you two! Finally, in the same place at the same time! Do tell, how difficult was it to get the three of us in the same spot online, on a scale of 1-100? Liz: 2. Nah, really? Only two? Neil: It's a quantum entanglement issue 😊 Liz: You did all the work; I just held on for the ride. Are you actually in the same room right now? Neil: There is a wall between us. We don't like intimacy. Liz: There is no wall. He's silly. Go to your corner, Neil!

Were you both writers when you met or not? I'm just letting you fight over who answers this one.

Liz: Yes, we were both writers. We met in a writers' critique group Neil set up. What were you criticising;)? Critiquing? Neil: I had started a mailing list for writers and she joined. I found out later that she was also from New York and that she had gone to the same school my father taught in, but he never met her. I liked her stuff from the beginning. I don't like a lot of fluff and she doesn't have that. Sparse and to the point. Would you call that serendipity or fate? Meeting her like that?

Neil: Absolutely. I never met her in New York. Or at least I don't remember. There are a lot of people there. Meeting anyone is a low odds prospect. Liz: Fate! Kismet! I bet it was.

Do you have similar writing routines or do they clash? The music you listen to, if any, the writing spot...

Liz: Hmm that's a good question. I think I am more intense. Live what I write. It's as though I experience it.

Is it a character trait or a male-female thing? Empathizing?

Liz: It may be a female thing. I like to get into the heads of my characters. I prop myself up in my recliner or at my desk by the window in the den and turn on some true crime TV thing and write away. Sometimes I write while listening to CNN.

No kidding? No wonder you write crime! What about you, Neil?

Neil: I write when I feel like it. No schedule. I don't like music when I write. It's distracting. But I can write with people talking and the TV on. Lizzie is more of a "trance" writer. It starts to affect her moods even when she's not writing. I am not that enveloped by it and can walk away. She thinks that if she loses a piece of writing it is bad because she will "never write that again". I feel that if I write something over it will probably be better.

Oh wow! Huge difference there. But sort of balances you. Neil: Crime is fine with me but not a passion. I tend to like stories of transformation of characters.

Do you help each other? Was there ever a situation when one spouse's writing annoyed the other?

Neil: We help each other in practical ways, like proofreading, but I don't think we have any desire to be back seat drivers during the writing process. I am happy to let her write what she wants. I may make one or two suggestions after I proofread her book.

Liz: I don't think his writing annoys me. I suspect my intensity can be difficult for him at times. It must be like living with someone who has DID (dissociative Identity disorder) LOL.

Neil: That's not just when she's writing 😊

Liz: Hush. I'll let Olivia get you! Neil: Olivia is on vacation. She told me so before she left. Well, authors are a world in a person, right?

Did you happen to name a character the same, envision a similar setting or scene, or even title?

Liz: No, I can't even imagine that. Although we are working on a book together. But even that will be from different POVs. Neil: No. We've discussed a project where we both write but we talk it out and usually persuade each other to do things a certain way. Never any arguments! Lizzie and I have a character of a similar surname and that was from before we'd even met or published the books. OK, so tolerance in works for the two of you then. That's good in any relationship, let alone marriage/writing.

Having read your books, I can sort of see the similarities and differences. You both write about socially relevant topics for modern times. Do you discuss them previously? Tell us a bit about this aspect of your novels.

Liz: We discussed my first book a lot. Neil went with me to Dallas and we discussed the whole Oswald conspiracy thing ad infinitum. As for his book, yes, we talked about his characters, child abuse, and of course 9/11. It gives me insight into how an outsider views an issue I might consider important. Neil: We are pretty much apart when we write our own books, though not physically. I don't feel the need to examine her writing and make suggestions. I think writing is so personal that that would be a violation but also I'm sure she is capable of writing her own books.

Liz: Darn right I am! Hee hee... Neil: Well, that is true. I did say once "what if Oswald was alive". But the story is hers. We did discuss a few details but I didn't feel like I was responsible for the Oswald story. I wonder what sort of a story Neil would write about Elizabeth's Norma, seeing how he likes character transformations;)? Any chance of a spin-off?

Neil: Norma is a freak and I tend not to go that far into the darker parts of the mind. I don't really write "horror". If I wrote about Norma I'd probably ask her if she goes to the dentist a lot, since her teeth would have to be in good shape to rip out someone's throat. I don't foresee writing about anyone like that in the

near future. It doesn't do anything for me. Gosh, that scene was really memorable. I gulped it down, the ripping thing.

Do you believe in conspiracy theories? Your books reveal legal plots, bribery, corruption, lack of empathy in the entire legal system. Was that written consciously into your novels or not?

Liz: I do believe in conspiracy theories. I actually feel very strongly about government corruption and political cover ups, much more than Neil does I suspect. Although he does see the injustice in the legal system re: domestic violence and child abuse.

Neil: I don't see what I wrote as a conspiracy. Or maybe it's a tacit conspiracy to ignore things that we don't want to hear about. That conspiracy, including domestic violence and child abuse, is as old as time. It sets people apart and takes them out of "normal society". But no one agrees to be in that conspiracy; they just react. I meant covering up for a rich criminal.

Neil: Ah. Well we currently have a presidential candidate who discusses the horrible inequalities between the rich and poor. That is a real conspiracy in that people agree to lie or help other rich people, or take money to cover things up. I do believe in that kind of thing. We've had a lot of criminals get off here who had money and good lawyers. Same everywhere. Sad but true.

Neil, who is your favourite character in Elizabeth's novels? Elizabeth, who is your favourite character in Neil's novel?

Liz: Moskowitz was my favorite character in Neil's book. I wanted to smack everyone else in the head and tell them to get over themselves. I was particularly annoyed by Megan. I know that's awful but I wanted to forego all my belief in no spanking and put her over my knee for a good wallup. Awful, I know.

Neil: Oswald did not really come out as having a defined personality but Liv did and I liked her, especially the way she toughened up at the end and started to fight for herself. She even threatened those that were persecuting her and made the back off. She is cool. Liz: Oswald was hot. You're just jealous.

Neil: Yes, little rat faced men are really sexy.

Are you working on a novel together? What is that like? (Just a hint – ever thought about writing a book for children? Being grandparents and all;)

Liz: We have been working on this plot for over ten years but it keeps getting shoved to the back burner. It is, of course, a murder mystery. The characters are rather like us in real life I think. It should be fun and may be the start of a series if we ever get the first one done. Looking forward to that one. The dialogues should be fun. Slapstick style;)

Liz: My granddaughters and I are planning a children's book called The Walking Dogs based on The Walking Dead. They are Zombie Dogs. It will be quite funny I think.

OMG, that would be preteen?

Liz: Yes. It's not scary, more silly of course. Neil: I'm not sure I could write for children. I am too sarcastic. Though I did read a book about a little boy who could turn into a rusty nail if he was in a tense situation.

That seemed really funny to me. It would have to be for precocious children.

Do you ever read each other's stuff and wish it were you who'd written something like that?

Liz: I am terrible about taking advice unfortunately. I read Neil's book before he published and actually encouraged him to remove some stuff and one particular character and situation I thought detracted from the story. He is much friendlier about advice than I am.

Neil: I have never read a book by Lizzie and thought that I'd wished I wrote it. Her books are her books and we tackle different subjects. I don't feel that her books lack anything. I just don't think we want to write the same book.

What does the rest of your family say about both of you writing? Do they read your stuff?

Neil: You'd be surprised how hard it is to get your family to read you books. Some of them are not readers and some don't have the time. I think that they consider writing a mystery and don't understand what compels us

to do it. Oddly they are more enthusasitic about my music but that makes sense. Everyone likes music and listens to it.

Liz: My grandson's girlfriend and one of my son's girlfriend's read my books. I feel as though most of our family thinks we are crazy, which of course we are. Our daughter Alyssa hasn't read anything but she is very encouraging. Oh wait my sister read our books and she loved View, liked Riddle, and thought Neil's character drank too much. LOL

If you weren't writers, what would you love to do?

Neil: Play music😊

Liz: I have been fortunate enough to have done many of the other things I wanted to do. I was a preschool teacher for a couple of years, I was a counselor for over 13 years. I guess I would like to be a counselor again. I like helping people find themselves. I also love teaching. Other than that I would love to have been a forensic psychologist or behavior analyst for the FBI.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO READ MORE OF THIS INTERVIEW YOU CAN FIND IT AT THIS LINK
<https://anitashaven.wordpress.com/2016/02/13/the-newton-force-special-interview-with-authorselizabeth-h-newton-and-neil-newton/>

###Grandma Peachy's Reviews

A Merchants Tale by Michael Dellert

I enjoyed this novella. I still have problems with the names of people and places plus the use of local languages made me stumble through some parts of the story. The character narrating the story was developed through his personal observations, reactions, and dialog. I liked how the story was told as a tale told to another to inform the listener of the dangers of traveling to the area.

The group that traveled together with the merchant only had one other very well developed character, the acolyte. Even though he was a pretty well developed character and more likable than the merchant telling the tale there remains some mystery about him. The end was a bit short as it did not tell of their return trip which could have been another adventure. Still it ended at the conclusion of the travelers adventure on getting to their destination and concluding their business.

It is a well written short and I look forward to reading the next books on this series.

Enjoy! Grandma Peachy BUY LINK

###Rainne's Reviews

Life Sentence by Lily Luchesi (Paranormal Detectives Book Three)

Angelica and Danny are back in this third book of the series, along with a couple of new characters, Mark and Brighton.

This instalment gives us more insight into Angelicas history and helped set the scene, without detracting from the story which, as always, is crammed with action,

I am fully invested in the futures of the characters and am looking forward to reading more. I gave Stake-Out and Miranda's Rights, the first two books in the series, 5 stars. As I think this one is the best so far it really should have 6!!

###Poets Corner

Santa vs The Troll by R C Allen Jr.

One can never have enough socks.
Another Christmas has come and gone and he didn't get a single pair,
The thought was unfair, he pondered in his rocking chair,
"Not a fit, not a bit, nor match, or half of one to snatch",
"My feet are cold and how OH SO BOLD they hang them,"
Wishing they would all get mold,
He was a stocking snatcher – a giant with big feet,
And in the wintertime, he would never walk the street,
Because it was too cold for a grumpy old troll who traveled at night not to avoid a community scold,
He looked in the houses and saw stockings filled with goodies,
But all he could think of is how they would be great "footsies".
"They're stockings! Not grocery bags!" he said,
And he saw all colors-blue, white, and red,
He cared not for the colors or styles, though he admitted were neat,
All he cared about was having something to cover his feet
"I'll take them this year, and my feet will be warm, but how can I take stockings without causing
harm? I'm not a killer, a pillager - I scare easily! I don't even own a butter knife,
Maybe, just maybe I can talk to Santa, maybe his elves," he said as he pulled out his last pair of
socks from the shelves

So he traveled to North Pole, Inc. where the buzz was in the air,
Even the cute girl elves gave him a wink, but he didn't care,
He cleared security and walked through the door,
But couldn't find Santa on the main floor,
"He's in his office, we know you," an elf said.
"You take the Christmas stockings and we were going to sue."
"No reason for that, my feet were cold, I'm a simple troll and
I'm forced to be bold. The stockings are so warm and help me unwind.
I would like to speak with Santa, maybe he could help me this time."
The elves nodded their heads as he led the way.
He walked past reindeer and saw Santa's sleigh.
On the top floor was a door with a giant "S".
"It's up to you now my friend, you do the rest."
The elves left him there to go through the door,
As he walked in, Santa stood up, both the same height
"Old Troll I know who you are, and I know your plight.
I know you steal the stockings because of your cold feet.
You take them from the houses we visit and toss out the treats!
The chocolates, the candies, even the candy canes!
This is a shame! Where's Security! What's your name?
And now you visit ME to do the same?"
"No Santa," the Troll explained, "I'm come for your help. I know of your travels and your immense
wealth. I don't want to take them anymore, but my feet are so cold when walking to the store.

I'm a troll, not grumpy, but very sore.
If I could employ your services, help indeed, would you explore?"

Santa sat back down rubbing his beard.
This is not the troll his elves had feared.
He knew what his help was worth. "I will make you stockings each year, but for me you must work.
You must stuff stockings as I deliver the gifts- help me give Christmas an even bigger lift.
Do this and have your stockings made in the offseason.
These are my terms, Deny them? I see no reason,
The troll was delighted, oh so excited!
To work for Santa was dreams come true. "I've never worked for Christmastime, so I don't know
what to do."
"Never fear my tall friend; your training will soon begin.
But first a little magic and BOOM! Now you look like you're 10.
Now you don't have to worry about your big feet and nothing to wear, for you're now an
elf until Christmas is over.
When we're done you'll have all the stockings you want because you will return to being a troll.
But for now, enjoy being a Stocking Stuffer." The troll was instantly sold.
And so, each Christmas he stocks your stockings with all the nice goodies for you girls and boys,
from chocolates to itty bitty toys.
He doesn't steal stockings anymore, because
Christmas is about giving, yes, that's what it's for.

Summer Christmas

The tinsel twinkles in the light
The lights flash on and off on the living Christmas tree
It's a Summer Christmas here.
Not what you'd expect.
Santa in shorts with a bright flowery shirt – smiling
Handing out gifts to all in sight
On this our Summer Christmas delight.
Children squeal, ripping of the paper
Showing parents, with much laughter
The sun shines down
The BBQ is started
Children run around, greeting family
From near and far.
Lunch is ready, the smells are yummy
Sitting on deck-chairs with plates of food
Munching, chatting, singing Christmas Songs
The family Summer Christmas In New Zealand
Fun in a different way.
Don't forget the sunscreen

Poem by Claire Plaisted – copyright 2016

Christmas

Snow does glisten under the pale moonlight glow,
As lights in homes flicker on and children are called
To bed; trees wrapped in baubles and tinsel, lights
Do change and present piles grow,
Bells do jingle, and reindeer prance among the
Starlit skies; Santa shrinking to fit down chimneys
To fill childish stockings hung upon the mantel,
Munching on cookies, drinking milk and off he goes,
Morning does glow with sunlight's rise, birds do chirp
And children rush through their homes to jump upon
Their parents in joy, 'Santa has come!' they exclaim
As parents moan in mock pain,
As families descend the stairs, Santa takes to the skies
Once more, but this time to return home
As he does he lets out a jolly laugh, 'Ho, Ho, Ho!'
And revels in childish glee.

by Kyrena Lynch – copyright 2016

###Spotlight Author Reviews

View From the Sixth Floor: An Oswald Tale by Elizabeth Horton Newton

An Intriguing View!!! Review By Lexa Harpell

Fifty years on we are still fascinated by the stories which surround JFK's assassination – including myself. Much has been written and retold - yet 'View from the Sixth Floor: An Oswald Tale' is a story like no other I have read.

This compelling, romantic alternative tale held me from the beginning to the end. The author's brilliant imagination and writing skills weaves two main elderly characters Olivia and Bill into an intriguing plot and touches on age defying emotions. The love story was beautifully written without being typical.

I was enthralled with this new twist, which did not disappoint – the pace grew right to the end. Quite a talent and adventurous to write about this 'what if' subject and hold the reader with another view to ponder on this evergreen subject.

The Railroad by Neil Douglas Newton

A Highly Recommend Read!

This story pulled me in from the beginning, jumping into the action—and main theme—right away. From there it maintained a steady pattern of speeding up and then calming down, which I appreciated because several scenes in this story are intense. Of course the last few chapters are full speed ahead and worth every page!

The characters are well developed and believable. The writing was intelligent and engaging, and provided plot twists which kept me turning page after page. But the best part was the ending! I had a suspicion of who was

behind the “underground railroad” operation, but the way it was written still kept me glued to the pages until the very end.

I don’t like to “retell” stories in my reviews, so if you’d like to know specifically what the plot is about, read the blurb I’ve provided below, and then READ THE BOOK if you are ready for a thrilling ride!

If you enjoy a good “who done it” (even though, technically there isn’t much *death* to speak of in this story)

I highly recommend this one. It has murder, suspense, romance, and a familial tone to it. I will definitely be checking out future titles by this author!

Riddle by Elizabeth Horton Newton

Reviewed by Traci Sanders

I wish the late great Alfred Hitchcock could make RIDDLE into a movie! Reviewed By Mark Fine
They say judge a book by its cover. No kidding! The sumptuously designed cover for “Riddle” sucked me right in. And boy, this romantic thriller did not disappoint. In fact, it had me truly committed to carve out time in my busy days in order to read it.

From the first page I found myself channeling “The Master of Suspense” himself, Sir Alfred Hitchcock. I’m convinced he would have reveled in the psychological twist and turns, portrayed by the gifted Elizabeth Horton-Newton, in her small town of Riddle she so tellingly created.

I know the fiery sanguine-haired Norma would have delighted the great director (she certainly fascinated me). He also would have appreciated the ratcheting drama of Grace, trapped in Riddle by a car that betrayed her, by breaking down at the least opportune time.

But her car’s betrayal is nothing compared to the questionable justice meted out against Kort. Mr. Erikson had been jailed for the alleged killing of his girlfriend. Or, was he a victim of crude prejudice being the only Native American in bucolic Riddle?

As I read, the layers peeled back page-by-page revealing a narrative as engrossing as anything created by Alfred Hitchcock. I really wish the late great Master of Suspense was still alive, as I would have liked to see Riddle come alive as a quality motion picture. I strongly recommend this book!

Carved Wooden Heart by Elizabeth Horton Newton & Starla Hartless

High Octane Romance and a Twisty Adventure Reviewed By Mary Joy Phillipson

Carved Wooden Heart is a mixture of high octane romance and a twisty adventure that will keep you up at night wondering how the characters will all evolve. Having already read Riddle and View From The Sixth Floor, I knew Horton-Newton’s work very well. In collaboration with Starla Hartless, an author I wasn’t familiar with, I was glad to find the voice kept up with the traditional clipped pace I was used to.

Erotic romance is not a genre on my regular radar but I found this book to be suspenseful and humorous and very well written. Dani is a character you will want to root for. A mixture of naivety and passion at the outset, she quickly learns that the steely hearted man she has fallen for is not quite your traditional Romeo. The reader gets glimpses of his armored heart with hints of extraordinary charisma that provides a knot of tension throughout the book. But any coping mechanism Dani hopes to achieve gets swiftly tossed out of the window as Jesse takes her on another rollercoaster ride of emotions.

I must say, Dani is hard to outmaneuver and that's what I like about her. She's ready to accept the consequences of her actions even though she is relentlessly in pursuit of love. There are a few scenes of graphic intimacy which will convey a reader fairly rapidly to steamsville and many twists in the trail leaving her better equipped to deal with the next hurdle. And she does it all with such panache. The characters are intriguing and cleverly individual, from Doug the savior to Dani's parents, all the way down to a very believable and lovable boy called Dylan.

This book is not unputdownable – in fact you have to put it down in order to slow down a racing heart. But if you do put it down for too long you deprive yourself of the unique pleasure of unearthing the mysteries of Dani's sometimes vulnerable and intense journey. It has everything I have come to expect and enjoy in a Horton-Newton novel.

###A CHRISTMAS CAROL FAN FICTION ONE MORE CHANCE - BY C A KEITH

“Wake up Dad! It's Christmas Eve,” said Aaron.

“Mmm, what time is it? Oh my God Aaron. It is only six! Go back to bed. Give me one more hour,” Dan said.

“Ah, Dad. Why don't we get up and make Mom breakfast for a change?”

He was ten but acted a lot older and wiser than his age. Dan rolled over in his bed. He was a bit stiff from labour intensive work at a manufacturing plant; day in, day out. He was exhausted and wanted to sleep in for a change. He tugged the blanket up to his chin and nestled the pillow over his head to cover his eyes.

“Morning sweet pea, where are your brothers?” Annette said as Aaron bent down to kiss his Mom good morning.

“They're sleeping. They won't wake up either!” Aaron said disappointingly. He was so excited that tomorrow was Christmas Day. Later today they were going to visit Dan's parents; Steve and Louise. Tomorrow was what he was looking forward to. They were meeting their cousins at Mom's parents for supper then ice skating on their pond. It was frozen and Grandpa Clark, cleared all the snow yesterday. It was just the right temperature. Aaron was very excited because Grandma Betty and Grandpa Clark made such a big deal about Christmas. They would drink hot chocolate and marshmallows. Their Uncle James would always tease the children and they would laugh. They loved their silly Uncle James and Auntie Helen.

Annette slipped into her pink fluffy slippers. She reached into the wardrobe for her ragged housecoat. She slid her arms into the sleeves. She wasn't willing to throw it out even though it could now be used as dust rags. She closed the bedroom door so her husband could get more sleep. Just one day she wanted to sleep in. She wished that Dan would say, “Stay in bed honey. Let me bring you breakfast in bed.” She shook her head and knew that would never happen, not even on Mother's Day. She paused a moment longer and she trudged down the stairs, one thud after another.

“It was too early!” she yawned. Aaron roused 8-year-old Kyle and 6-year-old Adam.

He picked up one random toy after another and tossed them in the closet, out of sight. Aaron picked up odd socks, tee shirt and jeans and chucked them in the washing bin behind the door. He didn't want to give his dad a reason to kick off. Aaron willingly sprinted throughout both bedrooms picking up loose toys, clothes and anything that could be spotted on the floor. Aaron opened the middle drawer forcefully and tossed things, in a heap, and slammed the drawer shut. He did a once over, satisfied that both rooms would pass a Dad inspection. Kyle was already staring wide-eyed where the tree used to sit. He was envisioning what his parents might leave him for Christmas. He knew it wouldn't be much because money was tight. He knew there wasn't a real Santa a few years ago.

Dan could hear chipper voices and clanking of pots, pans and cupboard doors. He rolled over again and slapped the pillow back over his head. His arms cradled another pillow nestled up against his chest. Dan made it clear that he didn't want his kids believing in some crap and left disappointed. Annette always took over the shopping as she knew that if it was up to Dan, a few bobs would be all they would get for Christmas. Annette and her family made a much bigger deal of holidays, birthdays, anniversaries.

"Bah humbug! Oh what I'd do for a few days to do what I wanted. I wish I could have a few days to myself. No wife, no kids, none of this responsibility. Just me..." and he drifted off peacefully again. His daydreams whirled like a merry-go-round.

He was a teenager at a game store recalling the new game he wanted to buy. Young kids were screaming to their dads, "I want, I want..."

"Pfft! Kids! Can't ever escape their bickering. So annoying!" and he walked out of the store. He saw himself sitting in his dad's old Chevy. Mmm, the smell of leather, petrol, case of beer, open bottles in the back. Back to pre-Christmas at his parents. No tree, no decorations. Dad storming through the house, "Fuck Louise! Why did you spend so much?"

Dan's head was whirling with crazy patchy memories. He sighed and tossed the other way in his bed. Pillows tightly readjusted; sighed again and memories took hold. Louise quietly lowered her head. A tear trickled down her cheek unnoticed by Steve. "We don't have the extra cash. I got them socks and pajamas. Why did you buy them skates?" he growled and clenched his jaw angrily.

"All of their friends are getting skates. They want to play hockey with them?" she said softly.

Dan could see himself peeking behind the door. He remembered that day. Dad came home from work angry again. Dan remembered walking on egg shells every day when his Dad came home from work or the pub. His mind whirled with one memory after another like snapshots from a camera. He startled and realized he was dreaming. Dan opened his eyes and jumped back when he saw someone at the foot of the bed.

"Who, who are you?" he stammered.

The eerie pasty white ghost suddenly floated and appeared above him.

"I am the ghost of Christmas past. Come now!" he demanded.

"I'm not going anywhere with you. Be gone, let me sleep! I am just dreaming. I am just dreaming?" Dan yelled repeatedly.

Pans clattered noisily in the background. The ghost grabbed Dan's night shirt and lifted him off his bed. Blankets fell back to the bed in a messy heap. Dan was dangling from the ghost's clammy skeletal fingers. In a blink, they were in front of a window staring into a scene before them. Snow dropped heavily on Dan's shoulders. Around him was a foot of fallen snow. It felt cold beneath him as he didn't have shoes or a coat on. His cotton pajamas didn't feel near warm enough. He blinked to clear the fog from his eyes and rubbed his arms briskly to shake off the cold and snowflakes. Dan peered through the window at his Grandparents old poky house in the country. He saw Granddad Bill shovelling coal into the fire. In a flash, they were inside the toasty warm house beside the fire. He missed his Nanna.

"Nanna! Wow I missed you!" Dan said and tried in vain to wrap his arms around her.

"They can't hear you!" the ghostly figure snarled and glared down at him.

"Why bother? Let's skip Christmas Carol. We can't afford it. It's a big sad waste of time and money," Granddad Bill said. He was wearing his work trousers with suspenders holding them up over top a white plain tee shirt. His hair was firmly slicked back in place.

"Well, if you didn't just spend every last bit on a few pints last night we could buy Steve some new boots for Christmas. Steve's worn clearly through them," Carol said firmly then with softness.

"Put extra socks on. Put a bag in his boots like I did when I were a wee lad. Kids are so bloody ungrateful these days. I trudge through every bloody day at work. Day in, day out and you guys still want more and more. All I want is a quiet pint or two after work and I get nothing but bitching and

twining. Why bother? I'm going to the pub. See you later," he grumbled and picked up his coat and hat from the rack, slipped his boots on and slammed the door angrily.

Dan's heart sank. He watched as his Nanna Carol wept into her hands. Her body shook. Dan ran to her and tried to put his hands on her. A tear fell from Dan's eye and he wiped it away. With a poof, his Nanna had disappeared, the tree disappeared, the house disappeared. Dan was back outside in the cold. Snow was coming in quickly and he saw his Granddad sliding down the back street in his old Chevy. After Dan, his Dad, Steve made sure Louise never got pregnant again. Daily he reminded Louise what a waste of space kids were. Dan could understand now why his Dad was a mean old man because his Granddad Bill, was just as mean and nasty. Dan's heart sank for his Mom and Nanna. He was doing the same thing to his dear wife Annette and their children. He did love her and his heart softened a little. He smiled and tears fell.

Violently he fell to his bed and shook. "Wow that was a bad dream!" he thought. He closed his eyes and seconds later he was roughly roused and saw another figure looming beside him.

"I'm the ghost of Christmas present. You will have one more spirit after me," the figure spoke. Dan grabbed the pillow and slammed it over his head. The figure grabbed him and they were standing in the mall. The kids were smaller and they were lining up to see Santa with Annette. "Do you remember this day?" the ghost said to Dan with fire breathing out at him. Dan felt an icy chill blow through him and his bones clunked against each other. He tried in vain to remember. He could see Aaron standing beside Annette. Ryan and Kyle were holding Annette's hands. She was anxiously looking at her watch then looked around. Her eyes darted from one end of the mall to the other. "Wait for it!" the spirit angrily yelled at him. His pointy skeletal finger poked him in the chest with force. Dan yelped and rubbed his chest. The ghostly spirit sneered and fire spewed from his nose. Dan could see himself storming towards Annette and the kids.

"I told you one hour. I've been waiting in the car for twenty minutes. It's poker night. You know that! Or are you too stupid to remember every Saturday night I go to the pub to play poker. What time does your watch say?" Dan snarled.

Annette put her head down. "Santa's late. Probably feeding the reindeers. Can you give us ten more minutes? We're second in line. I want a picture to give to my Mom," Annette murmured trying not to rile Dan.

Dan paced, tapping his feet on the floor; his hands folded angrily across his chest. "Fuck! Why bother? Come on let's go!" he glared. "Um, there's a lot of kids here. Careful what you're saying," she said nervously. Other parents anxiously awaited what was bound to transpire.

"I don't fucking care Annette. You know as well as me that Shaun from the Hardware store is dressing up as Santa this year. He's shite in my opinion. Let's go! Now!" he demanded. Annette knew better than to argue.

"It's Ok Mom," the eldest said carefully and took his Dad's hands in his and reached out to Ryan. "At least one person is smart in our house!" he angrily barked grabbing Aaron's hand. They took a few steps away from the long queue. "It's ok Mom. We will come another time," Aaron looked back at his Mom with a tear trickling down his cheek. Annette bravely grabbed hold of Adam and Kyle's hand.

"But Santa will be here in one minute. Daddy can we wait for Santa please? How will he know what I want for Christmas?" Kyle pleaded and held his spot firmly in the queue. Annette unwillingly inched forward to follow her husband. Many parents and kids looked nervously at both of them.

"For heavens sakes! There is no such thing as Santa. Suck it up. You are old enough not to believe in that crap anymore. If my dad were here he would have grabbed you by the ear and slapped you all the way to the car for embarrassing him," he screamed as others gasped and tried to reassure their children.

"NOOOO!" Kyle screamed as loud as he could and pulled his hand from his Mother's grasp. Annette gasped. Dan grabbed the little lad as everyone watched with mouth agape. Dan threw Kyle over his shoulder and he kicked and screamed.

“Stop! You are embarrassing me. Wait till you get home. There is no Christmas this year. I told you that if you didn’t behave we wouldn’t have Christmas. Aaron sorry, but your brother just blew it for all of you!” Dan said viciously.

Dan stood there watching Annette bravely walk by him with tears welling. Everyone stood there in awe as Dan walked out of the mall. He was screaming. “See what happens when you don’t listen. Shopping is over! Christmas is over.”

Tears welled in Dan’s eyes as he watched himself storm off screaming at the children. A tear trickled down his cheeks. He wiped the stray tears with the sleeves of his pajamas.

“You remember? You cancelled Christmas! You pulled the tree down that afternoon and tossed it to the curb. Those children didn’t get to open their presents until the New Year. Poker night? Kids? You broke their heart. Your wife? You’re slowly destroying her. You better change your ways or you will lose them all!” The spirit declared vehemently.

Fire singed through the ghost’s ears and nose. The spirit slammed his foot on the ground and in an instant they were in the hospital. The furious spirit and Dan were standing beside Annette. Annette was holding the newly born Ryan. Aaron and Kyle were tucked up beside their Mom admiring their new brother. Dan looked at himself admiring his family. He was smiling boastfully. Dan watched himself reach down to scoop up the wee little babe. He cradled the baby in his arms and kissed his beautiful tiny mouth. Dan stood by the spirit and looked up at him. The ghost looked down at him with rage, “Look at your family! Look! See you did love them. Then you changed and became mean and nasty. You are slowly destroying them, you selfish man! I don’t care why, they don’t care why. Change or else you will lose them.”

Dan reached forward to touch Annette’s face. His heart warmed. He still loved her but life stresses got in the way. The spirit slammed his foot on the floor and the floor shook. Dan was thrown harshly to his bed. Dan’s night shirt was soaked with sweat. He wiped his brow. He tried to put the pillow over his eyes. He knew it would be but minutes before the final ghost would arrive showing him what his future would look like. He threw the pillow across the bed and sat up.

“OK, I get it! I need to change or they will hate me. Just leave me to think about it. I get it,” Dan screamed. Smoke slowly oozed under the door and an eerie chill came over Dan. The withered ghostly figure was before him. He was weighted down with chains.

“You know the story. Ebenezer Scrooge. Your life is no different. He was stingy; you are mean to everyone around you. You know why I’m here you selfish, selfless man. I am here to show you what your life will be like in twenty years if you continue on your path,” the hunched over ghost proclaimed. He looked like he wore his battle wounds on his shoulders for hundreds of years. The ghost slowly moved towards Dan. “I bear the weight of all my bad deeds, as will you. Don’t choose my path. You can change,” the ghost continued.

“I get it. I know I’m ruining their lives. I will change, I promise. Just let me go and I will change. I promise,” Dan pleaded. He tried to back away from the ghostly figure but it trudged closer to him. The ghost’s chains scraped the floor as it dragged behind him.

“No. You made your bed; you lie in. Look what has become of them!” the figure blasted at Dan. Suddenly they appeared in a poky small apartment. The furnishings were bare. There was a small settee and dining table in the room. Annette was sitting at the couch trying to read. She was about twenty years older and her grey hair scruffily hung from her shoulders. Stress had aged her.

“She was once a beautiful lady. How could she have let herself go like that?” Dan asked with sincere sadness with his shaky voice. Dan moved closer to look at her. “Where are our kids?” he said. “Why is she so sad? Tell me? Tell me?” Dan screamed with frustration.

In an instant, they were in a hospital. They were standing in front of a door and Dan peered in and saw a young boy in a flimsy gown. The boy seemed to be in his twenties’. There was only a bed and a night stand table in the room. Dan and the figure appeared before the young man who was rocking on his bed. He stared unblinking into space. Dan looked into his eyes. He knew that boy was his Ryan.

"Is he sick? What's wrong with him? Did he have surgery? Why isn't Annette here to help him get better? Where is Adam? Where is Aaron?" Dan pleaded again.

"We're in the hospital on the mental health unit? Ryan is getting treatment for severe depression. No one knows where Adam is. Adam ran away a few years ago. You did this to your family. You broke them until their spirit was completely broken!" the old ghostly figure declared with anger. In another instant, they were standing in a cemetery.

"I don't want to look! Don't make me look. Please I beg you. I promise I will be nice," Dan begged and pleaded on his knees to the ghostly figure before him. He screamed as he knelt before the gravesite and opened his eyes. There lie the stone of his beloved Aaron. "What did I do? What did I do to my little boy?" Dan screamed and cried. "I'm so sorry Aaron. Oh my little boy, what did I do to you?" Dan slammed his fists to the ground and sobbed uncontrollably. "What did I do?" he looked up to the spirit with regret.

"You continued drinking and berating all of them. They never felt like they could do anything right in your eyes. Everything they did was never good enough. You took away Christmas and never wanted to celebrate again. Just because your Dad and Granddad were miserable and nasty, doesn't mean that you need to be like that too. You choose your own path. Aaron was so sad he took his own life. Aaron's suicide crushed Adam and Ryan. Their big brother left them behind and they didn't want to live either. Luckily, Ryan was found on time. He was strung out on heroin dying in a ditch. No one's heard from Adam in a long time. You left town years ago, fed up with your disgrace of a family. You left Annette for a young girl named Susan, that worked in the office with you. You left Susan after she got pregnant. You are an alcoholic somewhere. Drinking in one random bar after another. Your Annette was totally gutted and every day is a struggle for her. That's what you did to your family!" the spirit scorned. The spirit turned away; chains scraping the grass behind him.

"No! I'm sorry baby. I'm so sorry. Look what I did to you." Dan sobbed.

Dan was suddenly weighted down with heavy chains on his hands and feet that clunked when he stood up. The metal scraped as they moved against each other. "This is the cross you bear. To be bound for life with the weights of the world on your shoulder for the torment you caused. You will have to live with what you have done," the spirit slowly turned around and walked away slowly dragging the chains behind him. He disappeared into the darkness as an eerie fog blanketed the ground. A cool breeze nearly blew Dan over. Dan was held to the grave site with the chains around him.

"No please. I want to go home. I promise I will do better. Please don't take my babies away from me. I promise I will treat them with respect. I will give them all my attention. Please give me one more chance. Please," and he slumped to the wet damp ground with a loud thud.

Violently, he crashed to his bed. "My bed, my bed. Oh my God my bed! Oh thank you, thank you. I promise I will change. You will see. I promise. I will not let that happen to my children. I promise I will love my wife as much as the first day I saw her at the ice cream store!" he smiled

He sat up on his bed. Wiped off the sweat off his brow. Fixed his hair. Took a deep breath. Dream or reality he was not ever going to hurt his family any more. "Aaron! Ryan! Adam! Get up here this instant!" he yelled. He laughed hysterically and tried hard to hold in his explosive excitement to his newly found freedom. Annette heard Dan's screams coming from upstairs.

Annette knew that tone. Someone likely didn't make their bed, or toys on the ground... toothpaste...

"I will be right behind you. It's Ok!" Annette shakily spoke and followed behind the boys nervously. Their hearts were pounding through their shirts. Ryan slowly creaked the door open and anxiously inched through the door scanning his Dad's facial expression.

"Yes Dad?" he wavered.

"Get in here! All of you. We have to talk. All of you sit your butts down here right now!" he screamed. Aaron, Adam, Ryan and Annette carefully sat on the bed with a good distance between their Dad. Annette was closer to Dan to protect her little babies. "Aaron here, Adam right here, Ryan there," he directed the boys to sit on each side of him. He reached forward and squeezed them so tight. "I love you boys, so so much. I'm so sorry I'm a crap dad. So here's what we are going to do. Annette did you

start breakfast?" he turned to her and she said she was cleaning up first. "Right then! Get dressed. We are going out for breakfast. Your mother shouldn't have to cook all the time. Then we are going to buy the biggest, bestest tree anywhere. We will decorate it and then pop in Grandma Louise's house and come back. Why wait till morning? Let's call Grandma Betty and Grandpa Clark to see if maybe they will let us sleep over tonight. We can wake up with them and go skating and open presents and have hot chocolate. From this day forward I'm going to be the best Dad ever. I promise. Pinky swear!" Dan declared and held out his pinky fingers to the boys. He reached forward and pulled Annette to him. "I'm so sorry baby. I love you with all my heart," he smiled and a tear trickled down both their cheeks. Dan's finger wiped up the tear and kissed her on the cheek. "OK, come on. Get dressed and one more thing, pack your bags we are going to Grandma's. Maybe Grandpa Clark will let us skate tonight. I hear Santa's coming tonight. I know I told you there is no Santa. I was wrong. There is a magic of Christmas and it's starting right here. Right now! Let's go for breakfast, we have some shopping to do!" Dan laughed as the kids scurried off. "I promise baby. I will try harder. If I ever belittle you again, please pinch me. You didn't deserve my mean spirit. I love you!" he said and kissed her harder. "Now, pack up. I'll call your parents. I know that's where the magic of Christmas is. Starts here," he said and tapped his heart.

The doorbell rang and Dan walked by to answer it. There was a parcel delivery. He took the parcel and stared at it with confusion. He didn't order anything; he wasn't expecting anything. He opened it up and read the card from his Mother.

"I'm sorry Dan. I let your Dad walk all over me and you. When you came by last night I saw what years of torment did to you, as your Granddad did to your dad. It has to stop. For years, I've squirrelled away this money that I made at my other job. I didn't tell your Dad about this bank account for fear he'd drink the money away. Please don't do what your Dad did to you. Do right by your children. I think it's time. I hope you will use this money in good spirits. Please buy nice things for your children and buy the biggest Christmas tree. Please do this for me, for Aaron, Adam and Ryan. It is time to change, Dan. I ask you one thing. Don't disappoint me OR the children and please do not mention one word to your Father!" the note from his Mother said. Dan stood in awe. He really was going to get his second chance. He stared down at the cheque for \$50,000.00. He was completely shocked.

When he went to his parent's house with the kids, he hugged his mother so tightly. "Thank you Mom. I've always loved you. I had the worst nightmare ever last night. I give you my word that from this day forward my family will come first. Thank you, thank you," he whispered and she smiled. Louise hugged her little boy tightly.

Shortly after Christmas, Dan's father past away. He died just as miserable as every day of his life. Even the few short days that he was in the hospital, he griped and complained and snarled at his wife and the hospital staff.

Life for Louise, was finally getting better and a light was lit in her heart. The Grandchildren started coming over more often and Louise couldn't be happier. She was glad to be the Grandma that she always wanted to be. Annette didn't know what happened the morning of Christmas Eve that changed Dan's attitude. She thought it better not to bring it up. She was walking on a cloud and didn't want to break the magic. They had the best family Christmas they ever had in years.

A few weeks later, Dan filled in Annette about his bad dream and about Louise's Christmas present. Dan was happy that he finally felt at peace. He was finally the father that he always wanted and needed to be. Aaron, Adam and Ryan finally had their Daddy back and they were glad.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope you enjoyed the story

###Introducing our NEW Reviewer JoDena Pysher

The Girl on the Train by Paula Hawk

I borrowed this book from my Dad to see what all the hype was about... He hands me the book and says "Give it a few pages and you'll like it!" Well to me, that means it will be a slow and hard book to get through. Honestly, I was glued to the book within the first 20 pages. I feel Paula Hawkins wrote this book very well. Since there weren't any chapters, I had to remind myself who was telling the story. I don't think that was much of a deal breaker for me.

Have you ever had so much to drink you don't remember anything that happened? Well that's what happened to Rachel. She was your everyday commuter, taking the same train morning and night. She would stare out the window the entire ride. Everyone she saw was doing the same thing every single day, until that one dreaded day. That day she couldn't remember anything that happened. The couple she watched, she named "Jess and Jason." Why, you ask? She never met this couple; the house that Rachel and her Ex-husband Tom lived in was two doors down. Rachel would always imagine her life through theirs. A few years ago Rachel and Tom got divorced because she was drunk every night after work and wouldn't remember a thing that went on between her and Tom at night. There was one specific day everything changed. There was a woman missing!! Throughout the story line Rachel took matters into her own hands. Would this get her in trouble? Would she be a credible witness for the case?

I was so in tune with the story, I finished the book in a total of 3 days. If you are looking an edge of your seat, who did what thriller, this is definitely a book for you. I would sit and read it again, also I would recommend this book for most fiction thriller fans.

###South Pacific Authors

The Night of the Moonflower by Poppy Mann

I would like you to meet the adorable Poppy Mann and her first book – The Night of the Moonflower which is set for release at the end of this year.

A Double Release for Joanne Ruth

The Unexpected One and Waking Fire.

These are the first two books in a new fantastic series – it pulls you in and doesn't let you put the books down. An amazing series from an amazing author.

Bot Wars by Ian J Miller

Walid Hasan has one aim in life: to make as many Americans as possible pay for the bombing of his home, and the killing of his family. James Grey, of Grey Capital, knows how to make money, but he wants more. One way is to make a massive short on a stock that will sustain a severe price drop. One way to make the price drop is to blow up major assets of the company. Grey plus Hasan is a marriage made in hell. Each need the other; Hasan to get things done, Grey to provide the means. The means involve the acquisition of an enormous number of robotic war machines, designed for the US Army.

John Maxwell wants a quieter life than that of providing security for the wealthy at a time when even law and order is being privatized. However, the experience of his company is needed to help counter the war machines, and soon he and a small team are all that stand between order and the total collapse of society.

###Karina Kantas - Indie Author Interview

Why do you write?

I write for closure, I write for pleasure and for my sanity.

How often do you read for pleasure?

I guess I must have a very pleasurable life, because I read every day. I'm on my 31st book since Christmas.

Has publishing your own book changed how you view the work of others?

I'm noticing the errors in best sellers now. *laughs* I published my first book over ten years ago when there wasn't so much competition, when there weren't price wars, Kindle and Nooks. Everything has changed now. Back then it was important to have smaller publications, such as articles, reviews and even poetry published before you attempted to publish your own novel.

Do you think your character or plot is more important to a good story?

If the novel is boring or has no plot, it's doubtful the reader will get to the end of the book. If the characters are dull, and the reader can not relate or care about the character the author shouldn't expect good reviews. Both are just as essential to balance the book.

What is your all-time favourite character and why?

Stone Cold YA supernatural thriller. I love it when Billy, who's possessed, starts killing off the bullies. Revenge is evil. Lawless Justice. Ice is a tough but likeable character. I think many will be able to relate to her battle of mind. Her decisions, although sometime wrong, just makes her more realistic.

What book changed your life? In what way?

The Outsiders by S.E.Hinton. It was that book and her following novellas that made me want to write. I love rebel fiction and there are not enough of them on the shelf. I wanted and still want to change that.

What to you, defines a successful author?

An author that has an agent and contract for further books and has sold the film, right to at least one of her novels. A huge fan base with websites and fan clubs dedicated to her work ... oops wait a minute that was the dream I had last night. Lol Okay, to me a successful author is someone that has a fan base of regular readers, good reviews for his/her titles, and is being talked about in forums and book clubs.

What inspired your (most recent) book?

My latest release Huntress which is published by MMP is a follow up to my first thriller In Times of Violence, although Huntress can certainly stand alone. I never thought about writing a sequel to I.T.O.V until my fans demanded one. I love the way it carry's on but with new characters. Huntress is raw, emotional and hardcore. I'm not afraid to tell the truth.

What was the best review you ever got?

My favourite reviews come from Lawless Justice, there are too many to pick just one, so take a look for yourself. I've used a few lines from them on my book trailer.

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Lawless-Justiceebook/dp/B005OD349W/ref=ntt_at_ep_edition_2_4?ie=UTF8&m=A3TVV12T0I6NSM

If you could be any author who would you be and why?

Umm probably Stephanie Meyers because of all the publicity her Twilight books have received and she got to be in the movies. I've always dreamed of being in that position. Lawless Justice on screen would be just awesome and as the author I'd demand a walk on part as a tough biker chick. *laughs*

If you could give one piece of advice to a novice author, what would it be?

Make sure your work is polished before you even think about publishing. Don't rush into it. You only have one chance. Oh, and don't sell yourself short by advertising your book for free or 99 cents. It's your blood, sweat and tears and your precious time that you've put into the book. It's worth more than that!

Why do you write in the genre you do?

I write urban thrillers, exciting novels about the unknown world of outlaw motorcycle clubs, because that's where my passion lies; motorbikes, rock music and bikers. I write YA because it's one of my favourite genres to read.

###Free & 99 cent Books

Revenge of the Zeeka by Brenda Mohammad

Zeeka and The Zombies : Revenge of Zeeka Book 1, is the first in a science fiction thriller series about futuristic zombies and their Master Zeeka, set in the year 2036.

It is the first story in Revenge of Zeeka : Horror Trilogy, which obtained a five-star review and five-star seal from Readers Favorite International in September 2016.

If you love zombie thrillers, futuristic zombies at that, with a subtle mix of love and romance, do not miss this PERMAFREE action-packed novella.

Will O Witch by Bekka Abbott Scene Two in LINK

Wilhelmina and Wilhelm Warrick run a witchy shop in a New Zealand city. They sell crystals, herbal remedies, and occultic books. Mina will do a psychic card reading or a house blessing for you, and Will offers Reiki sessions or personalised bindrune charms. They are born witches, and if you're in any kind of psychic or spiritual trouble, they can probably help you.

However, what sets them apart and makes them unique in their practice is that Mina and Will share the same body.

Dissociative Identity Disorder is a label with no fictional heroes, only tired tropes describing serial killers, insanity or comedy. No fictional heroes, at least until now.

<https://willowitchwww.wordpress.com/willowitch/scene-2/>

Virtual Strangers by T E Hodden for Author Café

I had been ground down to a paste by a long week at work. I had aches in places I didn't know I could ache. I dragged myself on the train, slumped against a window, and drifted into in my Head Space. The implants in my eyes glowed to life. They could not rid the carriage of the claustrophobic crowds, but they painted over the scuffs and graffiti. The murky evening beyond the city was painted over, first by a smiling, beautiful, woman who promised I could meet singles, and play great games, at a virtual casino. Then by montages of happy families, in exotic locations, having more fun than me. Did I know how small the world was with bargain flights?

###Brian McKinley – Indie Author

What type of books do you write and do they fulfil your reader's needs?

I call my books Paranormal Thrillers, because the emphasis is on the characters and the situation they find themselves in rather than on producing "scares." So far, most of my readers have responded very favourably, so I think I'm on the right track.

Would you like to feature a book, if so which one? Tell us about it?

Well, my second novel, Drawing Dead just won the Authors Talk About It 2016 Horror Novel contest. I'm very proud of that, because it really confirms that I'm not delusional and that my writing is good.

How long does it take you to write your first draft?

It depends. So far, a year or more is the average. I did Ancient Blood in under a year, but Drawing Dead took me several years to complete. I'm nearly finished with a sequel to Ancient Blood and that's taken about two years (off and on) to get done.

Do you plot or not, if so why?

Oh yes! I outline thoroughly and try to work out as much of the story elements as I can before I start writing. I don't trust myself to improvise and have the plot make any sense. I'm very comfortable with my characters, but plot is my weak point, so I work especially hard to make sure I've got a story that's consistent, plausible, and maintains a good pace.

How do you edit your work? Do you leave your draft alone for a while or edit as you write?

I do a bit of both. I usually can't help myself from going back and fixing things as I write, but I also have a critique group that reads my chapters for me. I take their comments and keep them for when it comes time to edit the manuscript. Then I go through with the comments and relatively fresh eyes and try to fix the issues that were pointed out.

What type of people/readers do you market your books to?

It's really hard to define them, but I imagine that my readers are people something like me. They read authors that they like and seek out interesting new novels. I am very picky in my reading habits, and I tend to avoid books that look like the same things I've read before (which is an issue in the paranormal genres). I like to think that my readers do the same and don't want another vampire romance novel or urban fantasy monster mash.

Do you self-publish or have you worked with an Agent/Publisher?

After several negative experiences with publishers (and con artists pretending to be publishers), I have struck out on my own and begun publishing my own books. With all the tools available now and a lot of the stigma

disappearing from POD books, I really think that traditional publishing is going to undergo a major transformation soon or go extinct entirely.

What bought you to the world of writing?

I've always been a writer from my earliest age. I didn't always have the talent to back up my desire, but I always had the desire.

What is your first book and what do you think of it now?

My first unfinished book is called The Chermasu and I still love the idea. I plan to rewrite it soon and publish it. My first finished book was Ancient Blood: A Novel of the Hegemony, and it's a book I still enjoy and am proud of. Some of the writing could be improved if I were to write it today, but it fits the character telling the story, so I don't sweat it.

How do you promote your writing?

I'm trying various avenues that I hear about from other writers. I do interviews and use social media to promote, but the hardest part of the business is still trying to get noticed in a sea of books. Once people read my work, they're usually impressed, but bringing it to their attention is still a battle.

Where can we buy your books?

Primarily through Amazon.com, but I also sell physical copies whenever I do an appearance.

Who are your favourite authors?

Stephen King, Thomas Harris, Jim Butcher, P.N. Elrod, George R. R. Martin, and Kim Newman.

Links

<http://brianmckinleyauthor.com/> <https://www.facebook.com/BPMcKinley> / www.twitter.com/BPMcKinley

These Merry Christmas greetings are heading fast your way

They come ahead of Santa, flying in his sleigh.

After months of preparation and work by his merry elves Santa's Christmas warehouse has overflowing shelves!

With a "Ho! Ho!" here and a "Ho! Ho!" there he samples Christmas pies; His wife gives out a caution; "Dear, remember to watch your size!" Santa replies with his jolly laugh; "But it's only once a year..."

Then sits in front of the fire; sipping his Christmas cheer!

"Whatever is she thinking of!" Santa grumbles into his beard "I've never heard the likes of it..." as she gently, persevered. "After Christmas time has been and gone I promise to watch my diet";

Though watching is the operative word;

"You're cooking; I must always try it!"

His merry eyes, they twinkled; He loved his wife so dear

She always stood beside him; Year, after year, after year.

Mrs Christmas understands him; she really and truly does:

He's the jolly old man all dressed in red; Setting the world abuzz!

"Ho! Ho! Ho and a Merry Christmas!" To each and every one Santa and his merry, cheery elves are preparing the Christmas run.

Be sure that you've all been good; and grownups are included;

Santa watches everyone; you don't want to be excluded!

###Book Teaser

Bosses and Blackjacks by Linda Stern

Smith pulled a large white monogrammed square from his breast pocket and dabbed his broad face. "This damn August heat! How about a drink, Dave?" "Sure, why not." "Lemonade, or something stronger, perhaps?" "As strong as you've got, sounds good." Tom Smith stood at the golden oak credenza across the room from his desk where several bottles of liquor, a silver ice bucket, and crystal glasses sat at the ready. "Scotch?" "Fine." Dave leaned back and closed his eyes as he listened to ice clinking into glasses and the splashing of the Scotch as it hit the cubes. He'd been drinking one thing or another every day for the past couple of months, and today would be no different. Direct from the bottle or in crystal, made no difference. Blurring his senses was all that mattered

Plaisted Publishing House is now into year three of business. As a supportive business for Indie Authors and Small Indie Businesses we have released new package deals for you to peruse. Each package deal means we are helping other Indie Businesses get more work and maybe a liveable wage in the not to distant future.

We would all like to welcome you to Plaisted Publishing House and their Indie Business Associates. For those who already have cover designers and editors we still offer FORMATTING Services. You can find out more about us at:

www.plaistedpublishinghouse.com

SUPPORTING PLAISTED PUBLISHING MEANS YOU SUPPORT OTHER SMALL INDIE BUSINESSES OUT THERE WHO HELP YOU GET PUBLISHED ONLINE.

###Breaking News

Plaisted Publishing House Sponsorship Program will be announcing the release date for their first winner of this competition – which was held in conjunction with Limelight Literature and Fantasia Covers. The book is Sci-fi with strong female protagonists. A story you will all enjoy

Discovery by J B Taylor – OUT SOON

###T P Keane - Indie Author

Tell us a bit about yourself.

A terrible student, I was never seen to be the literary type, but my imagination and determination, saw differently. The Paladins of Naretia is my debut novel. An avid lover of science fiction and fantasy, I found myself drawn into a world that sprung to mind one night, in a dream. Naretia holds many secrets and adventures, of which, The Paladins, is only the first. This was followed by my children's book, Dear Bob, The Misadventures of Petunia Pottersfield.

What brought you to the world of writing?

I've always been fascinated with stories, often losing myself in them, ever since I was a young child. But I was a terrible student and the teachers who had the misfortune to have me in their class can attest to that. It didn't dawn upon me that I could be a writer until I was much older, not until I was an adult. That was in large part due to a lack of self-confidence. But being old enough and ugly enough to take any criticism now, I decided to give it a go and I'm quietly surprised by what people have been saying about it.

What type of books do you write and do they fulfil your reader's needs? I consider Science Fiction and Fantasy as being two distinctly different genres. Each one has their own following and own set of rules. But they both have one thing in common, they don't necessarily follow the same rules of reality as we know it. For instance, the sky doesn't always have to be blue and there doesn't always have to be only one moon. While Science Fiction still must adhere to certain principles, such as the law of physics (for the most part), Fantasy has the added advantage of being able to bend these rules using magic.

It's the bending of these rules and the ability to explore strange worlds that draws me to Science Fiction and Fantasy. The genre allows me to interact with new concepts and truly escape the mundanity of life. You'd have to ask my readers if it fulfils their needs, but most seem to like it.

Would you like to feature a book, if so which one?

Tell us about it? The Paladins of Naretia is my baby, plus it's also free. I could tell you the plot and the characters behind it, but that can be read on the cover. Behind the scenes, however, is a more complex story.

While Olórin, an aged wizard, is set the task of saving the kingdom by also saving his adopted son from his real father, the dark god Dantet, this isn't the crux of the story. The Paladins of Naretia is about love. It examines, on three fronts, the bravery, bitterness, and destructiveness that love can bring.

Firstly, we have the broken love between Dantet and Edwina, the two ruling gods. They are the divorced parents, if you will, caught up in the hatred of each other and using their children, the people of Naretia, as pawns.

Secondly, we have the false love between Olórin and his adopted son, Aramus, who he hopes against all odds will have inherited some humanity from his mother's side. But Aramus, like Dantet, is incapable of truly loving anything. In the end, Olórin must face the truth of what this means.

Our third, but not last, portrayal of love, is true love. Through the novel, we begin to hope, to pray, that Aramus falls in love with the tyrannical queen, Aria, who must put aside her demons to help them. Olórin hopes that love between them would help Aramus stay away from the darkness.

But there is only one true love in The Paladins of Naretia, and that is between Aria and her seven-year old brother Pearan. Her love for him is unconditional and fearless. In the end she will make the ultimate sacrifice to save his life.

How long does it take you to write your first draft?

Usually six months, depending on the length of the book.

Do you plot or not, if so why?

My books are usually trilogies, as is The Paladins, and I can't comfortably write just the beginning without knowing the end.

Do you write in 1st or 3rd person, or have you do both?

For The Paladins it was third person in two POV's. In my current work in progress, I'm writing in first person.

How do you edit your work?

Do you leave your draft alone for a while or edit as you write? I do both. After the initial draft I edit, then leave it for a couple of weeks and come back.

Do you self-publish or have you worked with an Agent/Published?

I've self-published my first two novels. My current work in progress is being considered by literary agents, though. I'm not sure they'll say yes, but it's a new experience for me.

Where can we buy your books?

My books are currently being sold on Amazon. There are also a few book stores which carry them.

Who are your favourite authors?

I try to read every day. At the moment I'm powering through a multitude of indie-authors books. Although she isn't an indie-author, NK Jemisin is slowly becoming my favourite. Among other things, she wrote The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms series, and I'm in love with her writing skill. Patrick Rothfuss is another favourite.

Link

www.tpkeane.com

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.

Helen Keller

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.

Mark Twain

###Spotlight Author Recipe

Christmas Wassail

Ingredients

2 quart apple cider 2 quart sweet red wine (moscato, muscadine) 1 (46 fluid ounce) can pineapple juice 32 fluid ounces cranberry juice cocktail 1 orange, thinly sliced 5 cinnamonsticks 1 tablespoon allspice 1 tablespoon whole cloves (optional) can (6 ounce size) frozen orange juice concentrate

Directions

Pour apple cider, wine, pineapple juice, and cranberry juice into a stockpot. Place orange slices, cinnamon sticks, allspice berries, and cloves in a muslin pouch or directly into the apple cider mixture. Bring apple cider mixture to a boil; reduce heat and simmer until flavors have blended, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove orange slices and spices before serving hot. This can also be moved to a crock pot to serve hot for large gatherings.

Pavlova Recipe from New Zealand with Love

Ingredients

3 Egg Whites 3 Tablespoons of Cold Water 1 Cup of Caster Sugar 1 Teaspoon of Vinegar 1 Teaspoon of Vanilla Essence 3 Teaspoons of Corn Flour

Directions

Pre-heat the oven to 150 C or 300 F

Beat egg whites into a ceramic or glass bowl (don't use plastic). Beat thoroughly until the egg white stays in peaks. Add the cold water. Add Caster Sugar gradually while still beating the mixture. Slow beater and add vanilla essence, vinegar and corn flour. Beat until the mixture is stiff and doesn't slide around the bowl.

Put greaseproof paper on an oven tray and place mixture in the middle so it is a few inches thick. Cook on 180 c for 45 minutes. Once done turn off the oven and leave pavlova inside to cool.

Once cold, take out of the oven, place on plate and decorate with whipped cream and fresh fruit of your choice. In New Zealand we use strawberries and kiwifruit.

###Michael J Elliott— Indie Author

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I'm a first generation Aussie from a British family. I live in the State of Victoria in a bayside suburb. I enjoy drawing, reading (naturally!) cooking, entertaining and I'm a massive Whovian (Dr Who Fan)

What bought you to the world of writing?

I've always written stories since my early school days. I always wrote about monsters etc and had a love of horror from an early age.

What is your first book and what do you think of it now?

Portraits of Dread was my first collection of Short Horror Stories published on Halloween 2015. I was really worried about how it would be received. I was pleased to see that it contained stories readers enjoyed. I think it is still a good first effort.

What type of books do you write and do they fulfil your reader's needs?

I write horror/ thrillers. I don't write unnecessary blood and gore. I prefer to chill readers with their own imagination. I think subtle is always better. Readers have told me how much they enjoy the chill of my stories which I'm very grateful for.

Would you like to feature a book, if so which one? Tell us about it?

My newest collection, Choice Cuts-A Bite from The Dark Realm is out now. It contains a number of short horror stories ranging from dystopia to flash fiction to pure old fashioned horror.

How long does it take you to write your first draft?

It depends on the story. Each one is different. Some just literally write themselves, others may take longer sometimes up to a month.

Do you plot or not, if so why?

Yes, I do plot. When I come up for a theme for a new collection of shorts I always jot down what the stories are about etc. As I come up with story ideas I write a brief outline, character names and of course the endings lol.

What type of people/readers do you market your books to?

I've created a term for my followers/readers. I call them Darkrealms. They are readers who like horror and the offbeat, the quirky, the unusual. Fans of traditional horror writers like H.P Lovecraft and their modern equivalents.

Do you self-publish or have you worked with an Agent/Published?

I self-publish.

Where can we buy your books?

Smashwords, amazon my author site

Who are your favourite authors?

Dean Koontz, James Rollins, Stewart Bint, Rocky Rochford, Margaret Atwood, DM Cain and virtually everyone in my writing group #The Awethors lol

Do you have any more information you'd like to share with us?

I'm very excited to now have my own You Tube Channel, the Dark Realm Diaries. On my channel I have horror book and movie reviews, myths and legends from around the world. Trivia about vampires, werewolves etc. It's a fun site where horror and thriller fans can chat to me in the comments and maybe learn a few interesting things too :)

###Recently Released Books

Daddy's Angel by Steve Evans

I had a happy life, A beautiful little girl and a smiling and content wife,
All that was torn from me in a single night. Now all I have is an empty house that I loathe. I have a plan, a way to make it all stop. The horrible nightmares that plague me when I sleep and when I am wake... This must stop!

I need to Sleep!

Drunken Bliss!

It will bring me peace, my final peace if I play it out just right. If the demoness will leave me be. Others have different plans for me, but what of my plans? What of my Oblivion? Just let me sleep!

I had a happy life, I had a wife, and Daddy's Angel to give me hugs to make it all just right...

Little Miracles by T E Hodden

Christmas has become complicated for sisters Caroline and Sara. Sara just slept with Caroline's boyfriend. Sara's boyfriend was there, just to make the humiliation complete as two relations crashed and burned like meteorites hitting the atmosphere. Now both are heading across Europe to seek refuge at their parents. For one it will be a journey of self-discovery, for the other a journey of redemption. Neither has a clue what is waiting for them on the way. Told by a cold and sometimes brutally honest narrator, this story is written in a style that intends to emulate, and pay homage to European romantic film.

The Truth Will Out by Karen J Mossman

Kelly needs to escape from her abusive and controlling boyfriend, but she's terrified to leave. She's then given a chance to start a fresh, but is the cost for her freedom too high? Sarah is happy in her life. She has a dream job and a perfect roommate. But when a brick is thrown through the window, followed by a letter containing razor blades, her life starts to spin out of control. Detective Ryan Andrews is on the case and the two quickly form a close bond. Will Kelly pay that price for freedom? Can Sarah's secret past be kept from Ryan? In the end The Truth Will Out.

MicroFish– A School of Short Stories by R C Allen Jr.

Enjoy this collection of micro-stories that pack a punch in 300 words or less! If you're a lover of flash fiction, then you'll love this! MicroFish looks to expand the realms of micro-literature and hopes you are there for the ride.

The Undead Case Files by Markie Madden

Fang and Claw: Lieutenant Lacey Anderson of the Dallas Police Department heads up a elite new squad dedicated to solving crimes involving Immortals like herself. Lacey, a Vampire left for dead when her family was slaughtered by Werewolves, still has nightmares about the attack.

Souls of the Reaper: A rogue Reaper is on the loose in the city of Dallas. Su Xiong is a sociopath with no care for human life. He steals souls whose numbers are not yet up in order to become a more powerful Immortal.

Blood Lust: On the back cover: Is the man Lacey loves really a murderer?

A Circus of Emotions by Shefali

A Circus of Emotions' is a poetry collection and a window to the poet's journey into disillusionment. From the bliss of innocence to the pangs of adulthood, the poems contain a subtle hint of the harsh truths and realities of life. The imagery is stark, appeals to your senses, and whispers in your ears the disenchanting incantations of the world.

The poems talk of love, hate, indifference, hope, dreams and everything in between – it takes a unique stance at the essence of our existence.

This collection might make you uncomfortable or shatter your complacent view of life!

Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection.
Winston Churchill

A Clowns Journey by Paul Anthony Williams

A Clown's Journey is the second poetry book from the Fantasy and Fiction author Paul Anthony Williams, and consists of more works revolving around his life, past and present, and looks to the future as the years fly past and the era of old age looms upon the horizon...

Various aspects of a thirty-eight-year journey upon this planet, through the different battles that he has took and some of the battles he has lost.

Love, life and heartbreak mixed with friends and life's greatest battles, from alcohol to depression, from losing a friend at a young age...from a hatred towards his father to the hatred of two that broke his heart so viscously...a mixed bag of poems from here to there...

Upon a Clown's Journey...

The Shadow of Narwyrn by Tom Fallwell

Baric has already failed once to stop the horror of the dragon, Doomrage, who continues his attacks against the people of Hir from the realm of shadows. Baric and his new found companion, Ramura, the Lord of the Lions, must journey to find an artifact of great power created by an ancient race from a previous era of Hir.

Still hoping to save the soul of his lost love, Whisper, from the monster's shadowy prison, Baric doesn't realize that Doomrage now has full control and has sent Whisper's simulacrum to slay the very man in whom she once placed her hope, and the deadly assassin now tracks the Rangers on their quest to find the ancient relic they need to defeat the equally ancient dragon.

Amstel Girl – Playing with Destiny by Marco Marek

It's a quiet life in the Amsterdam's canals, but Wesley didn't know what to expect, just released from being unfairly locked away at Haan Psychiatric Hospital.

He met Megan right after, a beautiful but quirky girl, with passion for a high-risk life.

Together they will be involved in lots of spy intrigues, adventures, and they begin to flirt with each other, will they fall in love? And will Wes succeed in solving all the troubles these criminals have involved him?

The world of Hir now stands on the brink of war with the demonic Manenase and their massive horde of Morok minions. The armies of the civilized races of Hir come together and gather to meet this threat from the Great Divide, as Baric, Ramura and the Zumarian, Sainsha, journey to the haunted Ghost Swamp to find the lost Amulet of Thiranor, which holds the key to stopping Doomrage, once and for all.

In the epic conclusion to the Shadows Trilogy of the Rangers of Laerean series, much lore from the ancient past is learned, and the history of the ancient magical creatures known as the Mythica is discovered, while the shadow of the great Dragon Spirit, Narwyrn, looms over them all.

Legends by Mara Reitsma & Mark McQuillen

Banished from the Order, for breaking their most sacred law and saving the life of another, Navina remembers nothing; but the visions that plague her. Written on pages were the words of days past, and those yet to come. That book, and the visions recorded inside, were but a journal; and Navina, was the key. Lync, had no family

and knows nothing of where he came from. He does know, that his female is something special. He knows that she harbors a dark secret, but his love for her is stronger than ever, and he would die before letting his Navina suffer. 'Write it all down...' He'd told her. 'Let it come...' Together, with the help of a Witch, a smooth talking Demon and his mate, a Valkyrie with a mission of her own, they will find the answers they are looking for; even if it takes them beyond the Rift. The stories contained within that book, could guide them to places they could only imagine; and unlock the mysteries surrounding Marena, and the enemy from the other side.

Time's Hostage by Brenda Kuchinsky

Time's Hostage is a multifaceted thriller that delves into important social issues while exploring the dark realm of self-destruction and mental instability.

With the art world and South Beach as a backdrop, challenges faced by the LGBT community permeate the book. First, turmoil results for both Sophia, the protagonist, and her husband after his homosexual encounter with a friend's son and his ensuing difficulties sorting out his unclear sexual preferences. Then—their daughter comes out as a lesbian. The woman she marries subsequently becomes pregnant by a man, forcing the couple to deal with a double-edged sword—the infidelity and its heterosexual nature.

Gramma Mouse Tells a Story by M E Hembroff

Gramma Mouse is visiting and relaxing when her grandbabies beg her to tell them a story. Tiny, Gramma Mouse, tells them about her trip across the old garden to visit Cousin Mouse. Tiny struts off staying out of sight at first. Then she pops out to look around and immediately forgets Ma and Pa's advice. She stops to visit and look around. She receives warnings of approaching danger that she ignores. Tiny is having fun playing and investigating and forgets to watch for danger. She has a few narrow escapes but does learn valuable lessons along the way.

###Gina Moray - Indie Author

Greetings! My name is Gina Moray and I'm an indie horror writer living in Tennessee with my husband and two kids. I started writing in 2014 when I finally realized that my creativity needed a more productive outlet than nightmares. I've had a passion for horror since a young age, and if I had to pick two of the most influential authors in my career, I would have to say Stephen King and Edgar Allen Poe. My stories range from mildly spooky to extreme horror, but my ultimate goal is scare the crap out of you. The one subgenre of horror that I can't see myself writing is erotic horror. I get all weird when I attempt to write erotica and my inner demon muses usually just sit around and laugh at me. That's why you'll rarely encounter sex in my books.

I published my first novelette, Cemetery at Devil's Bend, in 2015. The story is more of a spooky tale rather than extreme horror, and I got great feedback on it. The story is about a cemetery that grows up on a forsaken piece of land near the town of Pine Creek. Without giving away too much, let just say that the cemetery is hiding some secrets. My first novel, The Guardians, was published earlier this year and is a heartier horror than Devil's Bend. The story centers around a strange visitor to Runner's Mill, a small farming town in Kansas, and the desperate measures that one farmer employs to save his livelihood. Currently, I am working on Candy Man, my scariest writing to date. In order to have the perfect antagonist, I created an entire folklore tale around a fictitious creature when I didn't find a suitable existing one. This one's going to be awesome!

Along with writing, I'm an avid reader. Currently, I'm tackling Bazaar of Bad Dreams by Stephen King. My TBR list is a mile long, and I enjoy reading just about any genre. I also have a passion for animals and hope to start a permanent shelter for hard to adopt cats and dogs.

The best thing I love about being an author is getting to know other indie authors. I have encountered so many amazing people with great talent. They have become my support group and friends when I'm blowing through a book, or stuck in the middle of a bad writing streak. I also love talking with people who've read my books. I appreciate my fans and I love it when they enjoy the stories I write for them. If anyone wants to contact me, you can find me at the following links:

www.facebook.com/ginamoray

www.twitter.com/Gina_Moray

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###Authors Supporting Charities

LOOKING INTO THE ABYSS WITH PAUL WHITE

Now here is a story and a half. Paul White is an author extraordinaire and also a man who is involved with Saving the Black Rhino – 'Boots on the Ground' Charity. With this in mind Paul decided to compile an Anthology from authors around the world who would donate a short story.

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Yes, I am one of those authors. It was an amazing journey and I can't wait to read the book. My story is for children ages 3 – 8 years. It will one day be Book Three of my children's series of Charity Books 'Girlie Adventures.'

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What can be said of Hell, when at its most quiet, I was most terrified? The explosions that had rocked every fiber of my being and made my bones feel like they could simply shatter like tempered glass still resonated. I looked over at the wounded, wondering if I had the same haunted look in my eyes, and thought I probably did. In this war, no one leaves.

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We are family. We are Indie Authors and Small Businesses who assist Indie Authors. We help each other to grow, learn and push ourselves forward for a better future.

I would like to thank every one of you for participating in this newsletter, which has now grown into a monthly magazine. Thank you all for read, thank you for sharing with your family, friends and fans.

Remember the more you share and participate the bigger arena your work will be seen by. Get marketing and share each issue, and don't forget to submit new books, links, interviews and ideas to share.

Thank you once again, and I wish you all a happy holiday. Please make sure you all stay safe. See you next year.