

Cooking Between The Sheets

by the Hard Shell Word Factory Authors

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**Hard Shell Word Factory
Authors**

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Foreward/Credits

Welcome readers to the Turtle Pond. Now you may be asking yourself why we talk of turtles so much. No, it's not because we have a taste for the delicacy but because the contributors to this book share one thing in common. We are all published authors with Hard Shell Word Factory - so named for its hard-backed mascot.

One day while relaxing in the Turtle Pond, Hard Shell Word Factory authors decided to trade a few recipes. Being a creative bunch the idea to compile and share our favorite culinary treats with our readers was quickly born. In this cookbook you will find a unique approach to the topic as you will get a glimpse of our character's favorite foods as well as a taste of the many towns our authors call home. And since it's just as important to feed the mind and soul as well as the body, we've included a few teasers for our many books. We hope this entices you to come take a dip in the Turtle Pond. The water is warm, the food is good, and the stories are guaranteed to spice up your life.

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Prologue: Breakfast Treats

Oatmeal Pancakes

Submitted by F. Jacquelyn Hallquist
Author of *Evil Wears A Bonny Smile*

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup regular oatmeal
1/2 cup all purpose flour
1/3 cup sugar
1/2 tsp baking soda
1 tsp cream of tartar
1/2 tsp cinnamon
pinch of salt
1 egg, beaten
Milk

DIRECTIONS: Mix dry ingredients. Make a well in center and add the beaten egg. Mix well. Slowly stir in milk until mixture is consistency of thick cream. Place spoonful of batter on a griddle or frying pan. Cook, turning once, until golden brown on both sides. Serve with syrup or jam or jelly. My Glaswegian grandmother favored jam.

Cooking Tip: Salt

Submitted by Shirley Parenteau
Author of Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

This is almost too simple to mention, but after awkwardly measuring salt from the spout of a large container, I poured some into a baby food jar (a small jelly jar would work). It's easy to dip a measuring spoon into the jar. No more spills!

Carrot Cinnamon Pancakes

Submitted by Michele R. Bardsley
Author of Bride In Training and Daddy In Training

Like most moms, Rory James, the heroine of my romantic comedy DADDY IN TRAINING, faces the challenge of getting her kids to eat vegetables. My solution: Sneak 'em in.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp salt
2 tbs sugar
1 tsp cinnamon

Mix all ingredients, then add:

1/2 cup to 1 cup shredded carrots

3 tbs egg whites

1 cup milk (2% or whole)

1 tbs vanilla extract

Optional: 2 tbs butter, melted

DIRECTIONS: Drop batter onto hot skillet, cook thoroughly, and serve warm to skeptical family. Tastes especially good with pure maple syrup drizzled on top (or, in the case of my children, soaked until it's soggy pancake soup).

Michael's French Toast

Submitted by Anita Gunnufson aka Anita Lynn

Author of Blood Fever

Michael, a Navajo doctor raised on the reservation, had lived on his own for awhile in the White Man's world while he went to college and medical school. To Peggy's surprise, he'd picked up a few recipes he enjoyed. He prepared his French Toast for Peggy the morning after she spend the night in his home so they could track the virus down on the rez.

INGREDIENTS:

8 slices of bread

4 eggs

4 tbsp of milk
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp cinnamon

DIRECTIONS: Mix all but the bread in a blender to make the batter. Butter the heated griddle, then dip bread slices into the batter so that both sides are moistened. Fry the battered bread on the griddle until golden brown on both sides. Serve with heated maple syrup and butter.

Breakfast Soufflè

Submitted by Liz Hunter
Author of Beyond The Shadow

In my romantic suspense, *Beyond the Shadow*, Holden cooks breakfast for Mara, the juror responsible for swaying the jury in his favor in a sensational murder trial. Though the breakfast he cooked was simple scrambled eggs and bacon, he may tackle something more elaborate someday soon. Here' are some easy recipes the author prepares for the annual Christmas brunch she hosts for her local writers' group. Enjoy.

INGREDIENTS:

One pound bulk sausage (roll sausage)
Six eggs, slightly beaten
One teaspoon dry mustard

One-half teaspoon salt
Two slices bread, cubed
One cup grated cheddar cheese
Two cups milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. Brown sausage, drain, cool and crumble.
2. Mix everything together.
3. Put in glass baking pan.
4. Refrigerate overnight.
5. Bake about forty-five minutes at 350 degrees.

Yummy Potatoes

Submitted by Liz Hunter
Author of Beyond The Shadow

INGREDIENTS:

Two packages frozen shredded potatoes
Lowery seasoning salt
One stick butter, softened

Three-fourths cup Half and Half
Three-fourths cup heavy cream

DIRECTIONS:

1. Thaw potatoes. Dump one package in nine by thirteen inch pan.
2. Spread one-half stick of butter over layer of potatoes.
3. Generously sprinkle seasoning salt over layer until you can see the red color.
4. Repeat first three steps for second layer.
5. Mix Half and Half and heavy cream and pour evenly over potatoes.
6. Bake at 350 degrees one hour or until top starts to brown.

Rancher's Oven Baked Omelet

Submitted by Melissa Ford
Author of His Friday Girls and Second Chance Cowboy

It's hearty but easy to make.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
1 can chopped green chilies, drained

2 cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1 1/4 cup milk
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
3 eggs
1 8oz. can tomato sauce, or 8 oz. salsa

DIRECTIONS: Layer cheeses and chilies in greased square 8x8x2 baking dish. Beat milk, flour, salt and eggs; pour over cheese mixture. Bake uncovered in 350' oven until set in center & top is golden brown, about 40 mins. Let stand 10 minutes before cutting. Heat tomato sauce/salsa until hot; serve with omelet.

Breakfast Skillet

Submitted by Shirley Parenteau
Author of Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

While it has no tie to my children's book, Blue Hands, Blue Cloth, this Breakfast Skillet will more than satisfy the hungriest of heroes and heroines.

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cup potatoes boiled or baked until cooked but firm, diced
1/4 cup onion, chopped

1/2 cup green or red pepper, chopped
1/4 cup sliced black olives
1 cup grated cheese, cheddar and jack combined
2 eggs, scrambled
1 cup ham, diced or in strips
1 cup mushrooms, sliced
1 avocado, diced or thin slices
sour cream
salsa

DIRECTIONS: Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in skillet. Stir fry ham 1 minute. Add green pepper, onion, potatoes, mushrooms. Stir fry 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in black olives, cheese, scrambled eggs. Heat through. Serve with avocado, sour cream, salsa.

Feel free to add or delete items according to personal taste (except of course for the potatoes, cheese and ham).

Breakfast Casserole

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

Coming from a rather large family always known to drop in for an occasion at anytime, learning how to prepare a feast quickly is important. My mom invented this dish when we were teenagers. The bonus of this meal is that it requires

little hands on preparation leaving you time to converse with your guests.

INGREDIENTS:

1 lbs. Bulk sausage roll
1 dozen fresh eggs
1 package frozen hash brown potatoes
Cheese
Milk
Salt
Pepper

DIRECTIONS: Break up sausage into ground pieces. Brown in frying pan. In separate pan, brown hash brown/shredded potatoes. In mixing bowl, scramble eggs & milk. Season all to taste with salt, pepper & Old Bay.

Take a casserole size baking dish. Layer hash browns along bottom enough to cover pan (about 1/4 - 1/2 inch thick). Layer sausage on top. Pour a layer of uncooked scrambled eggs. Layer cheese on top eggs. Repeat for 2 more layers.

Place casserole in oven preheated to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Cook for 15-20 minutes until eggs are cooked and top is browned.

Serves 8-10.

Company Breakfast

Submitted by Barbara Raffin
Author of Time Out Of Mind

He slid between the sheets beside her, snagged the package of cookies out from under her restless hands and tore open a corner with his teeth. He grinned at her then and dumped a row of dark chocolate wafers onto the pale sheet dipping between her legs.

"Eat up Angel. You're going to need the energy." -- From TIME OUT OF MIND

In TIME OUT OF MIND, Archer was always mindful of Samantha's blood sugar levels. But a woman can't live on Oreos alone. Something Archer might have cooked up for the morning after or when his large family visited would have been Company Breakfast.

INGREDIENTS:

1 box seasoned croutons
1 pound of any of the following:
sausage, Canadian bacon or ground ham.
1 pound of American cheese
3 cups of milk
6 to 10 eggs
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 cups cornflakes, crushed

1/2 cup butter or oleo

Optional ingredients: mushrooms, chopped onion & green peppers, or just about anything else you'd like. Mix these in with the eggs

DIRECTIONS: Grease a 9X13 inch cake pan. Sprinkle 1 box of croutons in the baking pan, cover with 1 pound of meat. If using sausage or bacon, fry and drain off grease first. Place single slices of cheese on top of meat. Mix together the milk, the eggs, dry mustard, and salt. Pour over top of cheese and meat. Cover with foil & refrigerate overnight.

In the morning, crush cornflakes and sprinkle over the eggs. Melt the butter/oleo and drizzle over the cornflakes. Bake at 350* for 45 minutes. Remove from the oven and let stand a few minutes before cutting.

Serves 8

Karen Sandler's Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Muffins

Submitted by Karen Sandler

Author of The Right Mr. Wrong

Like having oatmeal chocolate chip cookies for breakfast.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup oatmeal
1 cup milk
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 egg
1/4 cup oil
3/4 cup chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Grease a 12-cup muffin pan. Mix oatmeal with milk in microwave-safe dish. Heat in microwave for about 1 minute on high until oatmeal mixture is lukewarm. Mix together flour, brown sugar, baking powder and salt in small bowl. In medium size mixing bowl, beat egg with oil until well blended. Add oatmeal mixture and stir until blended. Add flour mixture all at once and mix until just blended. Add chocolate chips and stir until incorporated. Divide the batter evenly amongst the muffin cups (they should be about 2/3 full). Bake until lightly browned, about 15 minutes. Makes 12 muffins.

Many Meals Muffin Mix

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly
Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

Keep this in the refrigerator and use as you need it.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups sugar
4 eggs, beaten
1 cup Crisco
5 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups boiling water
1 quart buttermilk
5 cups sifted flour
4 cups All Bran
2 cups 100% Bran

DIRECTIONS: Pour boiling water over All Bran. Cream shortening and sugar, add eggs and buttermilk and 100% Bran. Sift together flour, soda, and salt together. Add all ingredients and stir just enough to blend. Store in refrigerator. Bake as needed in muffin tins lined with cupcake paper in 350 degree oven for 15 minutes. If stored in a tight container, this mixture will last 6 to 8 weeks.

Mari's Buttermilk Pancakes

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North

Author of Proud Mari

A recipe straight out my novel Proud Mari.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups flour
2 rounded tablespoons yellow cornmeal
1 teaspoon soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1-2 tablespoons sugar
2 to 2 1/3 cups buttermilk
1 egg, beaten
1-3 tablespoons oil

DIRECTIONS: Mix dry ingredients. Add beaten egg, milk and oil, which have been mixed. Stir just until dry ingredients are moistened and large lumps disappear.
Bake on medium hot, greased griddle.

Homemade "Maple" Syrup

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

INGREDIENTS:

2 cup brown sugar

1 cup water

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon maple flavoring

DIRECTIONS: Boil water and sugar, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in maple flavoring. Best served warm. Keeps well, refrigerated.

Chapter 1: Teatime & Treats

Tainted Tea For 56! OR Orange Tea On The Go

Submitted by Susanne Marie Knight
Author of Tainted Tea For Two

Simple and fast. That's the kind of recipe I like! Since my romantic suspense at Hard Shell Word Factory features tea-- as in TAINTED TEA FOR TWO, I thought this recipe would be ideal to share. You'll find it's perfect to serve when you're on a hike, camping out, or inside on a cold winter's day.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups Tang instant drink mix
1 cup Lipton diet lemon iced tea mix
1/2 cup Country Time strawberry lemonade mix
1 teaspoon cinnamon

DIRECTIONS: Pour ingredients into a bowl and stir. Store in a tightly covered container. To serve, place 1 tablespoon of mixture into cup and fill with boiling water. Enjoy!

Talk-Time Hot Cocoa for Two

Submitted by Melissa Ford

Author of His Friday Girls and Second Chance Cowboy

It's made the old fashioned way, so you have time to chat.

INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons sugar

2 tablespoons + 2 teaspoons cocoa

1 teaspoon salt

æ cups water

2 ° cups milk

DIRECTIONS: Mix sugar, cocoa and salt in 2-quart pan. Add water. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly. Boil and stir 2 minutes. Stir in milk, heat just until hot (do not boil). Stir in ° teaspoon vanilla if desired. Beat with hand beater until foamy.

Bailey's Irish Cream

Submitted by Barbara Phinney

Author of All For A Good Cause

This is a great Christmas recipe and we make it every year for family and friends. Everyone enjoys it with morning coffee.

INGREDIENTS:

8 oz (250ml) Scotch or Rye
1 tin Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk
1/2 pint (250ml) of whipping cream
1/4 tsp (1ml) coconut extract
3 eggs

DIRECTIONS: Blend at high speed. Keep refrigerated.

Coffee Liqueur

Submitted by Barbara Phinney
Author of All For A Good Cause

This recipe should be made well in advanced, so the flavours mellow.

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cups (375ml) hot water
2 cups (500g) sugar
1/3 cup (85g) good quality, fresh instant coffee
2 cups (500ml) vodka
1 vanilla bean, or 1 tsp (5ml) vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS: Heat water to boiling, add sugar and coffee. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Add remaining ingredients and simmer very gently for 30 min.
Pour into a sterile canning jar or glass bottle and let sit for 3 days. If using vanilla bean, strain before using.

Iced Tea Tip

Submitted by Susan C. Yarina
Author of Nora's Turn and Timerider

You know that exotic fruit and tea blends they serve in all the nicest restaurants? I'm sure Nora found this at the Regency Restaurant when Hayden took her for her first real date there.

The flavoring can be added to your fresh brewed iced tea for a scrumptious icy cold tea. The trick? Luzianne flavorings for iced tea. Comes in about six kinds. My two favorites are the raspberry and peach. They are unsweetened, so you can add sugar, or be really guilt free and add one of the sweeteners on the market. One little 10 ounce bottle will flavor up to 10 quarts of tea, but I just do one glass at a time, so there's no waste.

Peggy's Snack Mix

Submitted by Anita Gunnufson as Anita Lynn
Author of Blood Fever

This is the snack mix Peggy, my heroine in Blood Fever would make for herself when she needed a pick-me-up.

INGREDIENTS:

Chocolate chips
Chow Mein Noodles (canned)
Raisins
Almonds

DIRECTIONS: Mix together equal parts of chocolate chips, canned chow mein noodles, raisins (or cranberry bits), and almonds.

Potato Scones

Submitted by F. Jacquelyn Hallquist
Author of The Crystal Key

Of the various Scottish dishes my grandmother prepared, my favorite was always potato scones so I'd like to share this

recipe with you, too.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup all purpose flour

2 cups of mashed potatoes. (Leftover mashed potatoes are fine.)

Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS: Whip and mash potatoes until quite smooth. Add flour a little at a time and work into potatoes to form a stiff dough. Turn onto floured surface and roll into circle about 1/4 inch thick. Cut into triangles. Prick with a fork to prevent blistering. Brown both sides on griddle or frying pan. Split and serve warm with butter and jam.

Abby's Chocolate Chip Cookies

Submitted by Christine W. Murphy

Author of *At Your Command* , *Highlord Of Darkness* , *For The Emperor* , *Through The Iowa Glass*

Alex, the hero in *Through Iowa Glass*, Christine's romantic suspense, is a gourmet cook who specializes in Italian cooking. Unfortunately, Christine didn't learn a single recipe during the year she spent in Sicily. It's not on Alex's diet, but we'd like to think he'd try to steal one or two of Abby's favorite treats.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups vegetable shortening
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
2 tsp. hot water
2 tsp. vanilla
2 eggs
3 cups flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. salt
4 cups oat meal (quick-cooking type)
1 package chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 350°. Cream shortening and sugar in large bowl of mixer. Add water, vanilla and eggs. Blend. In separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, and salt. Add to with creamed ingredients and blend. Gradually add oat meal. Stir in chips and nuts by hand. Form into tablespoon-sized balls. Place on greased cookie sheet one inch apart. Bake for approximately 15 minutes, or until they turn golden-brown.

Makes about 5 dozen cookies, unless you have Abby at your house eating the dough.

Dream Cookies

Submitted by Jackie A. Bielowicz as Jackie Kramer
Author of The Bride Seeker

Here is the recipe I chose to go with my Time Travel Novella, THE BRIDE-SEEKER, from HSWF's MILLENNIUM MAGIC anthology. THE BRIDE-SEEKER finaled in the 2000 Sapphire Award Contest. Though my heroine, Sydney, didn't get to cook, I'll bet she would have made a batch of these cookies for our hero, Drake. I like this recipe because once they're in the oven, you turn it off, and go to bed...preferably with your own hero!

INGREDIENTS:

2 egg whites, whipped stiff
2/3 c sugar
1 pinch salt
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 c chopped pecans
1/2 c chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Whip together the stiff egg whites, sugar, salt, & vanilla. Mix in pecans and chips. Drop by teaspoons onto a foil-covered cookie sheet, place in oven, turn OFF heat, and leave in oven overnight.

Praline Biscuits

Submitted by Jackie A. Bielowicz as Jackie Kramer
Author of Coming To Terms

Again, my heroine Kate from COMING TO TERMS doesn't really bake these for the hero Jared, but it's the kind of "home 'n' hearth" recipe that would appeal to her...and him!

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 c butter
1/2 c packed brown sugar
1/3 c milk
1/3 c applesauce
2 c Bisquick (or commercial biscuit mix)
36 pecan halves
ground cinnamon

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 450. Put 2 tsp butter, 2 tsp. brown sugar, and 3 pecan halves in one of 12 muffin cups. Sprinkle cinnamon to taste in each cup and heat until melted. Mix Bisquick, applesauce, and milk until dough forms; beat 20 strokes. Divide mixture evenly into muffin cups. Bake 10 minutes. Invert immediately onto a heatproof serving plate. Best served warm.

Chapter 2: Sandwiches & Quick Eats

Deli-Style Wraps

Submitted by Shirley Parenteau
Author of Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

In Blue Hands, Blue Cloth, Iman is a young girl learning to dye with indigo in Gambia, West Africa. If she were a girl of today, she would love these easy Deli-Style Wraps, delicious as appetizers or a light lunch.

INGREDIENTS:

Strawberry cream cheese
Flour tortilla
Spinach leaves
Deli-sliced ham or turkey
Sliced tomato

DIRECTIONS: Spread strawberry cream cheese over a flour tortilla. Place fresh spinach leaves over the cream cheese. Place 2 layers of deli-sliced ham or turkey breast in the center third of the tortilla. Place tomato slices or chopped tomato in the center. Roll from one "thin" side, pressing together. Cut into 1" or wider slices and arrange on a plate.

Beef Jerky

Submitted by Elysa Hendricks
Author of Rawhide Surrender

In the old west the settlers, cowboys and Indians didn't have refrigeration so to preserve their meat they dried it using smoke and fire - making it into jerky. Here's my recipe for Beef Jerky.

INGREDIENTS:

3 lbs beef (an inexpensive cut such as chuck roast works well)

3 T Season salt

2 tsp Garlic powder

2 tsp Onion salt

° C Soy sauce

° C Worcestershire sauce

(You can vary the seasonings to taste. If you like spicy hot jerky add some chili powder or Tabasco sauce. Liquid Hickory Smoke adds a nice flavor.)

Food Dehydrator (These are available for under \$30. If you don't have one, you can use an oven set at its lowest temperature.)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Cut meat into strips no more than ° inch thick.

2. Place all seasonings in a bowl with meat strips. Stir then marinate for several hours or overnight in refrigerator. The longer the meat marinates the more intense the flavor of the spices.
3. Lay strips of meat on dehydrator drying racks. (If using an oven make sure you place foil or cookie sheets under the racks or your oven will get pretty messy from dripping fat.)
4. Let dry in dehydrator or oven for at least 24 hours or until meat is hard and rubbery. If you like a crisper jerky leave in dehydrator or oven until meat cracks when bent.
5. If kept cool and dry, meat preserved this way will last for years. If refrigerated in an airtight bag it will be around for your great-grandchildren, but since it tastes so yummy it won't last that long.

Pemmican

Submitted by Elysa Hendricks
Author of Rawhide Surrender

Pemmican, which was an important winter food of the Plains Indian Tribes, was made in the old days of dried buffalo meat, pounded up with dried berries and mixed with melted marrow fat. It was packed in rawhide bags, called parfleches or other animal skins until used. This sausage like food is reportedly a superb food and a good diet. Though I've never actually tried to make Pemmican here's the recipe. Sounds simple enough.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 C Ground Jerky
- 1 C Dried berries or fruits (cherry, blueberry, raisins, dates, apricots)

or your choice) Whole or ground.

1 C Unroasted sunflower seeds or crushed nuts of any kind

2 tsp Honey

° C Peanut Butter

1 tsp Cayenne (Optional)

(This version uses peanut butter and honey rather than melted suet or lard as the binding agent, which is more palatable for today's health conscious diets.)

DIRECTIONS: Grind (or pound) the jerky into a mealy powder. Add the dried berries and seeds or nuts. Berries or fruit can also be ground or left whole. Heat the honey, peanut butter and cayenne until softened. Blend with meat, berries and nuts. Pour into a pan until about æ inch thick, or mold directly into bars. Wrap in foil. Refrigerated or kept in a cool, dry place pemmican will last for years.

Pimento Cheese Sandwich Spread

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

His eyelids drooping as he slowly chewed a bite of sandwich, Tristan leaned back in his wheelchair at the table in his bedroom. Afternoon sunlight from the French windows splashed across his strong features and his honey blond curls.

With a harsh mental admonition, Mara shook herself out of her besotted admiration of his beauty. Fortunately, he was too sleepy to notice her lapse. -- From STAR-CROSSED.

INGREDIENTS:

A small jar of pimentos

1 chunk of longhorn or medium sharp cheddar cheese (approximately 12 oz.)

Mayonnaise (Light version works well)

Splash of sweet pickle juice or squeeze of lemon juice

DIRECTIONS: Chop cheese into 1 inch cubes. Put a handful of cubes and a spoon of pimentos into blender or food processor. Process until chopped into small chunks. Remove and repeat process until ingredients are gone. Add just enough mayo to moisten evenly and add that splash of pickle juice.

HINT: This spread is excellent on a toasted cheese sandwich, on crackers, or on a spoon by itself.

Fallen Angel Egg Salad

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski

Author of Notorious Angel

INGREDIENTS:

6 hardboiled eggs

Mayonnaise

Deli mustard

Dill pickles
Celery
Salt
Pepper
Old Bay / Paprika

DIRECTIONS: Shell and dice hardboiled eggs. Add dice celery and pickles. Blend 3 tablespoons mayo for every 1 tablespoon deli mustard. Mix with eggs until the soft consistency you desire (add more mayo to increase softness). Season with salt, pepper & Old Bay.

Serve on bread for sandwiches or Ritz crackers for tea.

Chicken Salad w/dill

Submitted by Kate Douglas
Author of Cowboy In My Pocket , Honeysuckle Rose and On Wings Of Love

This is a great way to use up leftover chicken...sometimes I just boil a small one for broth and use the meat for a salad.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups cooked chicken, cut up
4 stalks celery, coarsely diced

4 green onions, including green stems, chopped
1 tablespoon dried dill weed
juice from one lemon
1-3/4 cup Mayonnaise
salt/pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS: Mix all ingredients and chill for a couple of hours to allow flavors to blend. Add more mayo if salad appears "dry."

Serve as a sandwich filler or side dish with sliced tomato and mixed greens.

Bacon Breadsticks

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

This treat is especially good for picnics, assuming you can make enough to stay on the table. For outdoor barbeques you can grill the breadsticks along with your hamburgers and hot dogs.

INGREDIENTS:

6 slices turkey bacon
1 cup Parmesan or Romano cheese, freshly grated

12 sesame seed breadsticks, medium thickness

DIRECTIONS: Slice bacon down the middle. Dip slices in cheese and wrap around breadstick, cheese against bread. Roll bacon-breadstick in cheese. Bake in oven at 375 degrees Fahrenheit until bacon is crisp. Serve cold or warm.

Plot-Solving Tortillas

Submitted by Shirley Parenteau
Author of Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

Stuck on a scene? Mix up a batch of homemade tortillas. Think out the story while you mix and knead. While the dough rests for half an hour, type out your finished scene. Then heat and serve tortillas as is or with a quick filling.

INGREDIENTS:

Mix 3 cups flour with 1 heaping tsp. baking powder.
Cut in 1 cup butter or margarine to make fine granules
Add 1 cup warm water.

DIRECTIONS: Mix into dough. Knead briefly until smooth. Cover and put in warm place at least 1/2 hour. Divide into 8 pieces Roll out into rounds. Cook one at a time on heated skillet to brown (about 1 min.) Flip and brown second side. Cover with kitchen towel to keep warm.

How to Serve:

Fill with heated refried beans and grated cheese

Fill with heated canned chile and grated cheese

Fill with marinated and broiled chicken breast

Simply eat as is.

Make Quesadillas

When first side of tortilla has browned, turn, sprinkle grated cheese on browned side. Cheese will melt while second side browns. Turn over one half to form half circle with cheese inside. Remove from skillet. Cut into wedges.

Tortillas can be refrigerated for up to one week. Wrap in paper towels, then place in plastic bag. Reheat in microwave or on dry, heated skillet. Fill and serve.

Chapter 3: Salads

Dump Job

Submitted by Louise Titchener
Author of Buried In Baltimore

Here's a recipe I call "Dump Job." There is a dump job in my mystery Buried in Baltimore, but it's nothing like this sweet and easy dessert. If my dyslexic amateur detective, Toni Credella, had time to fix dessert between adventures, this quick and easy recipe would suit her.

INGREDIENTS:

1 14 1/2 oz can apples
1 14 1/2 oz can pineapples (other fruit may be substituted)
1 stick shaved butter.
1 box Duncan Hines Butter recipe mix

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9 x 12" pan. Dump 1 can sweetened apples, 1 can pineapple, 1 box Duncan Hines Butter Recipe Mix. Sprinkle with one stick shaved butter. Cook for 1 to one and 1/4 hours.

River of Dreams Tropical Fruit Salad

Submitted by Sharon K. Garner

Author of River Of Dreams and Lokelani Nights

Pineapple, a relative of the bromeliad, grows wild in the Brazilian rain forest. The fruit is much smaller and more tart than its civilized cousin.

INGREDIENTS:

One eleven ounce can mandarin orange segments, drained

One eight ounce can Dole Tropical Fruit, drained

One eight ounce can pineapple tidbits, drained

One cup flaked coconut, toasted if you like

One cup miniature marshmallows

One-fourth cup chopped pecans

Eight ounces cream cheese, softened

One eight ounce fruit yogurt (orange, pineapple, lemon, your choice)

One-fourth cup sugar or to taste

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix first six ingredients in a large bowl.

2. In a second bowl beat the cream cheese, yogurt, and sugar until smooth.
3. Pour over the fruit mixture and stir gently.
4. Refrigerate for two hours minimum or overnight.

This dressing makes a good fruit dip also.

Rice Salad

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 C raw white rice, cooked, fluffed, and cooled.
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 C celery or green pepper, diced
- 1 green apple, unpeeled, cored and diced
- 1/2 C raisins (golden are prettier than regular)
- 4 oz. cashew nuts or peanuts

Dressing

- 2 tbsp cider vinegar

2 tbsp vegetable oil
1 tsp curry powder.

DIRECTIONS: Mix ingredients. Refrigerate until chilled. Add raisins and nuts. (Do NOT add raisins and nuts until right before serving.) Serve. I find that often I use more dressing than this, especially if this recipe sits awhile.

Waldorf Salad and Blue Cheese Dressing

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

INGREDIENTS:

2 C diced apples
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp sugar
pinch salt
1 C diced celery
1/4 C coarsely chopped walnuts
Lettuce
Blue Cheese Dressing

DIRECTIONS: Combine apples, lemon juice, sugar and salt. Chill 10 min. Add celery and nuts. Toss with lettuce. (If

you want to be fancy, you arrange the rest of the ingreds on the lettuce.)

Blue Cheese Sour-Cream Dressing

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

INGREDIENTS:

1 pint sour cream
2 tbsp vinegar
1/4 C mayonnaise
dash pepper, optional
1/2 tsp each celery salt & paprika
1/8 tsp garlic powder
1/2 lb. coarsely crumbled blue cheese (yes, half a pound)

DIRECTIONS: Stir all ingredients but cheese together. Add that last and blend. Makes nearly a quart. Keeps awhile in frig.

Spinach Salad With Bacon

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

INGREDIENTS:

Fresh spinach, cleaned and patted dry
4 slices bacon, microwaved until browned. Reserve fat.
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4 C red wine vinegar
2 T soy sauce
dash pepper
1 can sliced water chestnuts, drained
3 green onions, sliced

DIRECTIONS: Put everything, including bacon fat, but spinach and bacon in large glass measuring cup or other container and microwave until hot. Pour over spinach and sprinkle with crumbled bacon. Serve immediately.

3 French Dressings

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

In my new book, a collection of short stories tentatively entitled FARLEY BROTHERS' DRUGS AND SUNDRIES, by Kathryn AWE, the protagonist complains about the French dressing she is served in a restaurant. (I decided to start using my real name.) Here are 3 French dressing recipes. All different. All better than the bulk-purchased French dressing many restaurants use.

French Dressing #1 (Sweet & Sour)

(Sweet and sour, and thick. Large recipe.)

INGREDIENTS:

1 C red wine vinegar
1 1/4 C catsup
1 C salad oil
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp salt
1 small onion, grated
1 garlic clove, minced
1/2 C sugar

DIRECTIONS: Mix all ingredients except oil, adding that slowly, last. If you use a blender, the onion and garlic can be added in chunks, but turn the blender down to very low speed while adding oil.

French Dressing #2 (Traditional)

(An oil and vinegar French. Large recipe.)

INGREDIENTS:

1 C sugar
1/2 tbsp dry mustard
1/2 tbsp paprika
2 tbsp celery seed
1/2 grated onion
1 tsp salt
1 C vinegar
2 C salad oil

DIRECTIONS: Shake well or use blender.

French Dressing #3 (Sweet)

INGREDIENTS:

1 C sugar
1/2 C dark vinegar
1 can tomato soup

1 soup can oil
1/8 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp celery seed
1 tsp dry mustard
Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS: Mix well.

Chip or Veggie Dip

Submitted by Barbara Raffin
Author of Time Out Of Mind

(Makes a large portion)

INGREDIENTS:

1 quart Mayonaise (the real stuff, not Miracle Whip)
2 cups buttermilk
2 tsp. grated onion
2 tsp. onion salt
2 tsp. dried parsley
1 tsp. garlic salt

1 tsp. pepper
2 tsp. Accent

DIRECTIONS: Mix together. The consistency will be on the thin side.

Apple Dip

Submitted by Barbara Raffin
Author of Time Out Of Mind

INGREDIENTS:

8 ounces of cream cheese
1 cup brown sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 cup or more of chopped walnuts or peanuts

DIRECTIONS: Mix cheese, sugar, and extract until well blended and add nuts. Slice apples and dip in. Yummy.

Cashew Salad

Submitted by Barbara Raffin
Author of Time Out Of Mind

I don't really have a name for this salad. Texture is as important as taste in this dish.

INGREDIENTS:

Cube 1 pound of ham (1/2 inch cubes)

Cube 1 pound of turkey (1/2 inch cubes)

Red and Green seedless grapes cut in half

1 cup or more of cashews

Optional ingredients: apple pieces, chunks of cheese

DRESSING:

1 1/2 cups Miracle Whip

3/4 cup sherry wine, white

2 Tablespoons Dijon mustard

DIRECTIONS: Mix together and pour over meats, fruits, and nuts. This makes a large batch

Hold Back Time Salad

Submitted by Allene Frances
Author of Hold Back Time

Made with super anti-aging vegetables, this salad will help keep you young. **INGREDIENTS:**

2 cups mixed sprouts (sprouted sunflower seeds, mung beans, alfalfa seeds, garbanzo beans, lentils, radishes, and wheat berries)

8 cups organic mixed greens (do not include iceberg lettuce. It is hard to digest and can be constipating)

1/2 red/or green shredded cabbage

2 carrots, grated

1 zucchini, grated

1/2 pound broccoli, broken into flowerets, steamed

1/2 large or 1 small cauliflower, broken into flowerets, steamed (a good use of leftover steamed veggies)

1 cucumber, sliced

garlic, minced, up to 2 cloves

2 tbs granulated lecithin

1/2 cup hulled and unsalted sunflower and pumpkin seeds, as a protein source.

*If served with another protein dish, omit the seeds.

DIRECTIONS: Mix ingredients. Add the garlic, cucumber, lecithin, sunflower or pumpkin seeds and salad dressing. Serve.

Serves 4

Joy's Fountain of Youth Dressing

Submitted by Allene Frances
Author of Hold Back Time

*This is made with beneficial omega-6, or GLA oils to help flush fat from the body.

INGREDIENTS:

1/3 cup safflower oil
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 teaspoon tarragon
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
pinch of sea salt

For creamier dressing or a tangy dip, and 1/4 to 1/2 cup yogurt or 2 to 4 ounces of tofu to the recipe.

DIRECTIONS: Place all ingredients in a blender and blend thoroughly. Store the Extra Dressing in a glass jar in the refrigerator.

Serves 4

Mona's Ghostly Raspberry-Vinaigrette Dressing

Submitted by Allene Frances
Author of Hold Back Time

INGREDIENTS:

3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons safflower oil
1 tablespoon reaspberry vinegar
1 teaspoon umeboshi vinegar
juice of 1 lemon
Herbamare to taste
1 clove garlic, minced
1/8 cup fresh parsley, chopped
pinch of peppermint
dash of pepper

DIRECTIONS: Blend all in a blender. Store extra in refrigerator in glass container.

Serves 4

Frozen Cabbage Slaw

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

The slaw doesn't freeze into a mass so you can take out what you need when you need it.

INGREDIENTS:

1 head cabbage, grated

1 carrot, grated

1 bell pepper, chopped fine (red bell pepper is nice for color)

1 teaspoon salt

Syrup

1 cup vinegar

1/4 cup water

1 tsp. celery seed, if desired

1 1/2 cups sugar

DIRECTIONS: Let cabbage and salt stand 1 hour. Drain off liquid. Put in carrot and pepper. Boil syrup ingredients for 1 minute. Wait till lukewarm then pour over slaw and freeze.

Lime Gelatin Cucumber Salad

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly
Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

INGREDIENTS:

1 large package lime gelatin
1 1/2 cups boiling water
3/4 teaspoon salt
dash pepper
2 Tablespoons vinegar
2 teaspoons grated onion
1/4 cup celery, finely chopped
1 cup cabbage, finely shredded
1 carrot, finely grated
1 cup cucumbers, seeded and finely grated or chopped

DIRECTIONS: Mix gelatin and boiling water in serving dish. Chill until slightly set. Fold in other ingredients. Chill until set. The amounts of the celery, cabbage, carrots, and cucumbers can be varied to personal tastes.

Chapter 4: Vegetables

Mushrooms To Lure The Muse

Submitted by Shirley Parenteau
Author of Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

In my children's book, *Blue Hands, Blue Cloth*, Iman learns to value herself as she tries to create the most beautiful cloth in her village. Light cream cheese is the secret to these delectable stuffed mushrooms.

INGREDIENTS:

Mushrooms
Black pepper
Light Cream Cheese
Provolone Cheese
Basil

DIRECTIONS: Clean mushrooms and remove stems. Sprinkle with black pepper. Fill with Philadelphia Brand Light Cream Cheese. Sprinkle with dried basil to taste. Top with sliced provolone cheese cut to fit over the mushroom. Place in baking pan with a little water. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

Beans And Cheese

Submitted by F. Jacquelyn Hallquist
Author of The Crystal Key

After several days in the jungle living on stale tortillas and hope, my heroine Jessica loved these beans. Hope you will enjoy them, too.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (15.5 oz) can refried beans
1/2 cup shredded cheese (cheddar or Mexican four cheeses)
12 flour tortillas
8 ounces sour cream
2 tomatoes, diced

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spoon beans into 8x8 square baking pan or dish. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 15 or 20 mins. or until cheese melts. Warm tortillas and arrange on large platter. Have sour cream and tomatoes ready. When beans are ready, place on table and invite guests to "dig in" or you can do the honors, placing a spoonful of beans on a tortilla, top with sour cream and sprinkle on tomato. Roll and eat. They can be messy, but they are good.

Smashed Potatoes

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

Around Thanksgiving my family gathers to engage in the age-old debate: should mashed potatoes be soupy or lumpy? This recipe settles the argument and appeals to both preferences. As an added bonus, keeping the potato skins on makes for an easy to make and healthier dish. For a little extra pep, you may want to add a little Old Bay Seasoning. Either way, these are just as easy to make as the box kind and a lot tastier.

INGREDIENTS:

6-8 baking potatoes
1 cup milk
Salt
Pepper

DIRECTIONS: Chop potatoes in quarters for faster cooking. Boil until soft. Drain water and smash potatoes with potato masher. Mix milk and season to taste.

Serves 4-6

Murder By Potato! OR Buttered Potatoes And Carrots

Submitted by Susanne Marie Knight

Author of Tainted Tea For Two

In my romantic suspense at Hard Shell Word Factory--TAINTED TEA FOR TWO--not only was the tea suspect, but potatoes were as well! This is a perfect recipe to make ahead of time, and can be baked in the oven or outside on a grill.

INGREDIENTS:

4 potatoes, sliced 1/8 inches
4 carrots, sliced lengthwise
1 onion, sliced
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 cup butter
salt and pepper to taste
4 large pieces of aluminum foil

DIRECTIONS: Divide vegetable ingredients and place on the four pieces of aluminum foil. Sprinkle each with 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese, 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder, salt and pepper to taste. Place 2 tablespoons butter on top. Seal each package tightly at the top and sides. Heat oven to 375°. Bake for 25 minutes, then turn over and continue baking for another 25 minutes or until potatoes are fork tender. Be careful opening each bundle. Serves four.

Veggie Hashbrowns

Submitted by Michele R. Bardsley

Author of *Bride In Training* and *Daddy In Training*

My family's motto: If it has a potato in it, it must be all right to eat. Thus the veggie hash brown was born. As long as the vegetables have been shredded beyond recognition and squished between lots of potato parts, my family will consume these hash browns

INGREDIENTS:

3 medium potatoes, peeled and grated

3 medium carrots, peeled and grated

(you can substitute zucchini, yellow squash, or other veggie or mix and match)

1 small onion, peeled and grated

salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS: Combine ingredients. Heat a little extra virgin olive oil in skillet. You can make a couple of huge hashbrowns and cut into quarters or stand at the stove for the next aeon cooking itty bitty ones. Serve with a dollop of sour cream.

Carrot Soufflè

Submitted by Pauline B. Jones

Author of Missing You: Lonesome Lawmen #3

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb cooked and mashed carrots

1 stick melted butter

3 eggs, beaten

2 tablespoons self rising flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

3/4 cup sugar

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

1 teaspoon vanilla

DIRECTIONS: Boil carrots about 45 minutes. Put in food processor to mash. Remove from processor and mix in butter and eggs. Stir in flour, baking powder, sugar, cinnamon and vanilla. Bake in 9" baking dish at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes. After it cools, sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Asparagus Vinaigrette

Submitted by Jennifer Dunne
Author of Dark Salvation

This recipe wasn't used in any of my books, because I just discovered it, but I'm sure my characters would have eaten it had they known the recipe. It's quickly become a family favorite, working well as a side dish for beef or salmon, or even as a light supper on its own (just double the serving sizes). If there's one thing a busy writer needs, it's quick and easy suppertime solutions!

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb fresh asparagus, trimmed
4 green onions (just the white part), chopped fine
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp Dijon mustard
1/2 tsp sugar or 1/2 packet sugar substitute
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pepper
1/4 cup olive oil
4 cups spring greens
1/4 cup walnuts or almonds

DIRECTIONS: Snap off hard ends of asparagus and trim, then put in a steamer while you prepare the vinaigrette. Combine onion, vinegar, mustard, sugar, salt and pepper in a small mixing bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Divide greens onto four plates. Remove asparagus from steamer and arrange on greens. Drizzle vinaigrette over asparagus and greens. Sprinkle with walnuts.

Serves 4

Pierogie Stir Fry

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

One of many things I inherited from the Polish side of my family is my love of pierogies - potato dumplings. As my father tells it only his mother, who sadly died before I was born, could make pierogies from scratch the right way. Today you can find them in the frozen foods section of your local supermarket. Cooking directions are simple (first boil then fry) making them a tasty alternative to your usual potato side dishes. But in case you're looking for a quick, healthy treat you can stir fry this version to taste.

INGREDIENTS:

1 package frozen pierogies (I prefer the cheese & potato kind)
Vegetable oil
Garlic, chopped, to taste (about 1 tablespoon)

1/2 medium onion, chopped
Bacon bits to taste
Parmesan cheese to taste

DIRECTIONS: Boil pierogies in lightly salted water according to package directions. After draining, place them in a frying pan with the oil. Over medium heat, fry the pierogies. Add garlic to taste. Add chopped onions to taste. Finally add the bacon bits, regular cooked bacon or bits out of a jar. Usually the frying takes about 15 minutes, but this will vary depending on your crispy preference. The longer you fry them, the crispier they become. When finished, top with a few sprinkles of cheese.

Note: Vegetables can be substituted for the garlic, onion and bacon bits. Microwave some frozen mixed vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower or carrots) and add them to the pierogies instead of the onion mixture.

Serves 3 or 4.

Polish Sauerkraut

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

INGREDIENTS:

1 oz. dried mushrooms

1/2 cup water
3 tablespoons butter
1 large onion, peeled and diced
1 medium tomato, chopped
2 lbs. fresh sauerkraut
1 cup dry white wine
1/2 cup beef stock
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
Pinch of sugar

DIRECTIONS: Soak mushrooms in water for 30 minutes, drain and save water. Pour water through a fine strainer and set aside. Coarsely chop mushrooms and sautee in butter. Add onion and tomato, sauté until onion is clear. Add sauerkraut, beef stock, wine, mushroom water, and pepper. Bring to simmer. Sprinkle flour over sauerkraut and stir well. Cover pot and simmer for 30 minutes stirring occasionally. Add pinch of sugar for taste.

Garlicky Beans & Tators

Submitted by Barbara Raffin
Author of Time Out Of Mind

In my novel, TIME OUT OF MIND, Archer adds spice to Samantha's canned soup as well as her life. A vegetable side dish he might spice up for her at harvest time would be this.

INGREDIENTS:

A big pot of fresh green and yellow beans, boiled just until tender. (Can substitute canned beans)

New potatoes (quantity depends on you), boiled until tender and sliced. (Can substitute sliced, canned potatoes)

DIRECTIONS: In a large frying pan, melt butter on medium high heat (can substitute oleo or in combination with Canola or vegetable oil for the cholesterol minded among you). Add 3 small to medium garden fresh onions, sliced thin (or 1 large, dried, sweet one) and at least 3 fresh cloves of garlic, chopped. Dump your potatoes on top of the garlic and onions. Pile the beans on top of the potatoes. Salt & pepper to your taste. A dash or two of crushed red peppers (optional)

Watch the garlic so it doesn't burn. Once the onions are tender, turn the whole works and fry until the potatoes and beans are browned. The more beans and tators in the pan, the more turning they'll need.

Prissy's Tomato Pie

Submitted by Sabrah Agee

Author of For The Love Of Annie

A delicious side-dish.

INGREDIENTS:

1 deep dish pie shell
2 medium tomatoes, peeled and sliced
1 small onion chopped finely (or use dried onion flakes)
2 tbs. flour
Italian Seasoning

Topping

1 C. mayonnaise
1 C. grated parmesan cheese
1 C. grated mozzarella cheese
1 C. grated sharp cheddar cheese

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven at 350] F.
2. Bake pie shell 6 minutes and remove from oven.
3. Layer one half of the sliced tomatoes in the pie shell
4. Sprinkle with 1 tbs. chopped onions.
5. Sprinkle about 1 tbs. Italian seasoning (and a little basil if desired).
6. Top with about 1 tbs. flour (to absorb some of the tomato juice)
7. Repeat
8. Make Topping: Combine mayonnaise with cheeses, spread over top of pie and bake 30-35 minutes at 350] F until bubbly.

Chapter 5: Seafood

Shore Lunch Menu with recipes

Submitted by Kathy Awe as Kathryn North
Author of Proud Mari

In my novel PROUD MARI by Kathryn North, a fishing guide's shore lunch is mentioned. This is what a fishing guide prepares at noon for the people s/he's guiding. They use fish caught during the morning, so the first requirement is to catch fish!

Menu:

Bacon and onion sandwiches on white bread
Pan-fried potatoes
Fish fillets
Apples or candy bars

Yes, it IS a little high in carbohydrates and fat! This is not a diet lunch. Remember, these fishermen have been out in the fresh air all morning, telling lies about how many fish they caught LAST year. They've worked up appetites.

Guides usually carry portable propane stoves with two burners, and two cast iron skillets. The boat pulls into shore,

usually on an island, and the guide fillets the fish. Next the guide fries bacon strips and makes sandwiches of bacon and raw or fried onions. While the fishermen are munching on these, the guide slices cooked potatoes into one skillet and fries them in the bacon grease. In the other skillet, he fries the fresh fillets in hot oil. Apples or candy bars for dessert.

Most guides use a commercial batter to coat the fillets before frying, as this is easier. My husband cooks the fish in our home and this is his favorite recipe for coating.

COATING FOR FISH FILLETS

Saltines, crushed fine. (generally he uses the blender for this) 2 beaten eggs thinned with a splash of milk or water (you can beat more if you run out) salt and pepper to taste.

Dip the fresh fillets in the beaten eggs, then coat with cracker crumbs. Fry in very hot cooking oil until dark golden brown, turn over and repeat on other side. Fish does not take long to cook.

When it flakes, it is cooked. Salt and pepper if desired. Serve immediately.

Hint: To prevent fillets from curling during the frying, begin with skin side down in the pan. The skin side is the smoothest side of the fillet.

If freezing fresh fish for later use, we have the best result when we freeze the fillets in water. Pack the fillets into a freezer container, pour in water to cover them, put on a tightly fitting lid, and freeze. These will taste much fresher when thawed and eaten than fish which have been frozen dry.

Fish is never better than when prepared and eaten the same day it's caught.

Basic Maryland Crab Cake

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

Hailing from Maryland, garden state of the Chesapeake Bay, I learned the most important 5th food group: blue crabs. An idyllic summer afternoon is spent with family and friends picnicking on crabs and beer. The crab cake is as common a sandwich as hamburgers to native Marylanders. My father, an immigrant from places Northeast, prefers crab cakes because they don't require all that picking and cleaning of steamed crabs.

INGREDIENTS:

2 slices uncrusted bread
1 tablespoon Mayo
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon parsley flakes
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon Old Bay Seasoning
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 beaten egg
1 pound crab meat (real stuff is better, imitation is fish meat)

DIRECTIONS: Break the bread into pieces and moisten with milk. (This is only to help bind the meat together. My mom usually just skips that part as the egg binds well and we like our crab cakes meaty.) Add all the other ingredients. Form into patties/cakes. Fry in a pan with oil (vegetable or olive) until golden brown. Place fried cakes on a papercloth to drain excess oil.

The Old Bay is all the seasoning you need. Depending on how much you use the cakes are spicy or milder. I like my crab spicy. Serve in sandwiches like burgers with mayo or tartar sauce, sliced fresh tomato, and lettuce. Or serve with saltines as the "bread". Fresh corn and home fries are the usual compliment to crab.

Tips For Crab Meat

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

Several hundred years ago when English explorers settled the American Colonies, one of their most auspicious discoveries was the Chesapeake Bay. The bay is home to many creatures and has supported countless industries from shipping to fishing. Though crabs fished out of the Chesapeake are blue, once steamed they take on a delicious red hue.

Crab meat is bought cooked as it is always steamed in the crab. You can buy meat and freeze it for later use. But be careful not to overcook. Crab meat is white, sweet and juicy. There's a difference between types of crab meat and price. For soup you can use claw meat. You use backfin (body) meat for crab cakes, crab imperial and any dish where it's mainly crab meat being served. Maryland natives often get a couple dozen steamed crabs in-season, eat a few then clean

the rest and save the crab meat. You can use whole crab meat in soups. The important thing to remember is that for soups, claw meat alone is fine.

However you choose to cook your crab meat, the one essential ingredient is Old Bay Seasoning. Old Bay is a mixture of spices native to Maryland and produced by the McCormick Spice Company. You'll find it in the spice section of your local grocery store. Old Bay can be used to add kick to just about any dish.

Maryland Crab Soup (the easy way)

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

We had a running joke about my grandmother as we grew up. She used her oven to store salt and pepper and her dishwasher to hold the soda and beer. Needless to say, she wasn't a gourmet cook, but there was one dish she made better than anyone. Maryland Crab Soup is known for its reddish vegetable soup color. This dish is easily put together with store-bought soups and healthy doses of blue crab and Old Bay Seasoning.

INGREDIENTS:

20 oz. Beef Vegetable Soup (thin not gravy-like)
1 pound crab meat
6 tablespoons Old Bay
diced fresh tomatoes (one big one, a couple small ones, or as much as you like)

diced fresh potatoes (same as tomatoes)

Salt

Bay leaves

1 can beer

Any other fresh vegetables you want to add (green beans, corn)

DIRECTIONS: Mix the soup and ingredients cooking to a simmer. If you have a lot of fresh uncooked veggies, you'll want to cook longer until they are soft (particularly potatoes and green beans). You add the crab meat last because it is already cooked. Make sure you stir to evenly distribute crab meat and veggies. Maryland-style crab soup is supposed to be thin and reddish-brown, so if it gets gravy-like add beef stock to turn to a near watery consistence. Some recipes call for chicken stock, but my mom and I think the beef adds a richer taste. My uncle adds beer to spice up the recipe. If everything is cooked you only need to heat. Simmering for half hour or so will do. Crab soup always tastes better the next day once the fresh vegetables have a chance to fully absorb spices. Bay leaves are for cooking only, remove before eating.

Old Bay is used to season to taste. The more you use the hotter it gets. You can also sprinkle Old Bay on individual bowls if someone likes theirs spicier. (Usually what I do.)

Serve with saltines, ice cold beer or a cool drink.

Maryland Crab Imperial

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski

Author of Notorious Angel

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds backfin crab meat
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 teaspoons chopped pimento
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon Old Bay Seasoning
8 aluminum or ceramic scallop shaped baking shells
8 tablespoons mayonnaise
paprika for garnish

DIRECTIONS: Remove all cartilage from crab meat. (Even store-bought crab meat has little white shells in it from the inner walls of the shellfish.) Place crab meat in a large bowl. Mix mayonnaise, pimento, Worcestershire sauce, salt, and Old Bay together and blend well. Pour over crab meat and toss lightly. Divide crab meat between eight scallop shells and top each shell with one tablespoon mayonnaise. Sprinkle with paprika. Place shells on cookie sheet or shallow baking pan and bake for 20 minutes in 375 degree Fahrenheit oven. Serve immediately. Makes 8 servings.

Surf & Turf Burger (can be veggie burger if you like)

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

Cook your crab imperial with grated Sharp cheese added to the mixture.

Fry a burger, drain excess grease, top with the cheesy crab imperial and toast on a bun to serve. It's really tasty.

Crab Imperial Chicken (aka Chesapeake Chicken)

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

INGREDIENTS:

boneless chicken breast
your favorite breaded chicken recipe
2 pounds backfin crab meat
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 teaspoons chopped pimento
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon Old Bay Seasoning
8 aluminum or ceramic scallop shaped baking shells
8 tablespoons mayonnaise
paprika for garnish

DIRECTIONS: Fry the chicken breasts until tender and golden. Drain excess grease. Slice breasts down the middle to make a pocket and place crab imperial mixture inside - or place crab imperial atop chicken breasts. Bake until imperial is firm.

Maryland Steamed Crabs

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

In my mom's childhood, crabmongers traveled the streets of Baltimore hawking their fresh wares like the ice cream trucks of today. Buying a dozen live crabs and cooking them up in your home was a common occurrence on a Summer day. Today, we buy them already steamed or fish them out of the creek at my uncle's Eastern Shore farm. Though crabs fished out of the Chesapeake Bay are blue, once steamed they take on a delicious red hue.

INGREDIENTS:

1 dozen live blue crabs (harvested from the Chesapeake Bay)
12-24oz of beer (plain jane stuff, no fancy imports or dark malts)

salt
Old Bay
Vinegar
10-12 qt Steaming Pot

DIRECTIONS: Put your beer and vinegar in the bottom of the pot so you get a good boiling height. About 2 inches, I'd say. Use a rack to place a layer of blue crabs atop the boiling mixture. Sprinkle liberally with Old Bay, add another layer of crabs and sprinkle Old Bay again, etc. Steam until those blue crabs turn a nice reddish color.

NOTE ON EATING: Steamed crabs resemble spiders. To eat them, you'll need a knife, plenty of napkins and cold drink. Spread newspaper on the table and keep your clean up simple. Start with the legs and claws, pulling them off and eating any juicy meat that comes with them. Flip the crab on its back. Pull up the small tab down the middle (called the "apron") and crack the top shell open with your knife. Make sure you clean off the spongy lungs (called "the devil" since it tastes awful and was rumored to be poisonous). Cut the body in quarters, pick and eat the juicy white meat as you find it. Experts, like my cousin, are known to clean and eat a crab in under 3 minutes. But however long it takes you, eating steamed crabs is an enjoyable, low-fat way to spend an afternoon with friends and family.

Crab Dip

Submitted by Margaret L. Carter
Author of Dark Changeling

The "crab" motif dominates the cuisine of Annapolis, Maryland, where I live and where two of my books are set--a

vampire novel, *DARK CHANGELING* (Hard Shell Word Factory), and a werewolf novel, *SHADOW OF THE BEAST* (Design Image Group). Dr. Britt Loren, the vampire psychiatrist's partner and lover in *CHANGELING*, appears as the werewolf's therapist in *BEAST*. With her busy schedule, when Britt needs to entertain colleagues, she might serve this simple crab dip (specifically designed for canned crab, not fresh), which contains no garlic to upset her partner:

INGREDIENTS:

8 ounces cream cheese
5-ounce jar of sharp cheddar cheese spread
2 tablespoons margarine (I sometimes cut down on this)
2 tablespoons minced green onion
6 and 1/2-ounce can of crabmeat
2 tablespoons sherry (cooking sherry is okay)

DIRECTIONS: Melt together cheeses and margarine until smooth. Add crab, green onion, and sherry. Excellent both warm as a dip and cold as a spread for crackers. It's equally good without crab, as a cheese spread, which we sometimes like to spice up with canned chopped chili peppers.

She-Crab Soup Recipe

Submitted by Barbara Donlon Bradley
Author of *A Portrait In Time*

I've always lived near the ocean. In New Orleans, California, Brooklyn, Boston or Virginia Beach. And I love seafood.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cans of cream of celery soup
3 cups milk
1 cup half and half
1/2 cup butter
2 hardboiled eggs, chopped
1/2 tsp Worcestershire Sauce
1/2 tsp of Old Bay Seasoning
1/4 tsp garlic salt
1/4 tsp white pepper
1/4 cup dry sherry
1 can crabmeat, drained and flaked

DIRECTIONS: Combine the 1st 9 ingredients in a large dutch oven, bring to boil, add crabmeat and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally until thoroughly heated. Stir in sherry. Makes 2 quarts.

** you can substitute fresh crab for the can

Tuna Lasagna

Submitted by Jennifer Dunne
Author of Dark Salvation

This remake of the classic has the virtue of using fish instead of beef, for those watching their fat intake. It was a favorite of mine in college because tuna's not just good for you, it's cheap.

INGREDIENTS:

9 lasagna noodles
3 8 oz cans of tomato sauce with mushrooms
1/2 tsp basil
1/4 tsp salt
1/8 tsp oregano leaves
1 8 oz package sliced mozzarella (5 slices)
1/2 cup ricotta cheese
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
1 13 oz can tuna (or two 6 1/2 oz cans), drained

DIRECTIONS: 45 minutes before dinner: Cook the noodles. Meanwhile, combine tomato sauce, basil, salt and oregano in a bowl. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. In lightly greased 12 x 8 baking dish, arrange a lengthwise layer of 3 noodles, followed by layers of 1/4 cup tomato mix, 2 slices mozzarella, 1/4 cup ricotta cheese, 2 tablespoons grated parmesan

and the tuna. Repeat with 3/4 cup tomato mix, 3 more noodles, 2 slices mozzarella, 1/4 cup ricotta cheese, 2 tablespoons grated parmesan and 3/4 cup tomato sauce. Finish with the rest of the noodles and tomato mixture. Cut the last slice of mozzarella into narrow strips and place on top of the lasagna. Bake 1/2 hour at 375 or until the cheese melts. Remove and let stand before serving.

Serves 8

Salmon Pate

Submitted by Barbara Phinney
Author of All For A Good Cause

While this recipe has nothing to do with my novel, ALL FOR A GOOD CAUSE, it is a family favourite and any cooked flaked fish can be substituted.

INGREDIENTS:

1 envelope plain gelatine
1/4 cup (62ml) cold water
3 oz (90g) cream cheese
1 71/2 oz (213g) can salmon
1 tbsp (15ml) lemon juice
2 tsp (10ml) grated horseradish

2 tsp (10ml) grated onion
Pinch of salt
Pinch of pepper
1/4 tsp (1ml) hot pepper sauce

DIRECTIONS: Soften gelatin in cold water. Dissolve over simmering water on the top of the stove. Soften cheese and drain liquid from salmon. Combine all ingredients in a blender or food processor until smooth. Pour into mold or small loaf pan and chill until firm.

Serves 6
118g protein 9g fat 26mg cholesterol each serving

Betty Jo Schuler's Spicy Shrimp Stir-Fry

Submitted by Betty Jo Schuler
Author of Male Wanted

Only a novice like sexy Max in Betty Jo Schuler's book, MALE WANTED, would set his wok on fire making this main meal dish. You won't need the fire department, but this dish is spicy hot, so you will want to serve a chilled wine or other cooling drink.

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb. shrimp
1 cup onions
1 cup celery
1 cup snowpeas
1 cup sweet red pepper

Sauce

1 cup chicken broth
1 Tbs. hoisin sauce
1 Tbs. cornstarch
1 1 tsp. soy sauce
1 1 tsp. cooking sherry
1 tsp. sesame oil
1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
dash of sugar
8 oz. rice sticks

DIRECTIONS:

1. Cut vegetables into 1 inch pieces. Set aside while you prepare sauce. (You may substitute other vegetables for a total of 2 cups.)
2. Combine sauce ingredients and bring to a near boil. Reduce to simmer.
3. Stir-fry vegetables in 1 Tbs. hot olive oil, using a skillet or wok. When they're almost crisp-tender, add thawed shrimp, and when no longer transparent,

pour in sauce. Stir for a minute or two until blended.

4. Prepare rice sticks. Easy to fix, you bring water to a boil and turn it off. Put noodles in the hot water for a few minutes. When soft, drain them. (FYI: Rice sticks look like angel hair spaghetti but are made of rice.)
5. Serve stir-fried mixture over noodles. Yummy!

Chapter 6: Soups & Stews

Soupa

Submitted by Kate Douglas

Author of Cowboy In My Pocket , Honeysuckle Rose and On Wings Of Love

It's been a family favorite for 30 years and I can only thank the woman who DIDN'T end up as his mother-in-law! (Though I didn't actually get the recipe from her...I'm good but not THAT good!) The combination of ingredients may sound weird but it is absolutley mouth-watering yummy...and there is a history behind this dish, which is served at Portuguese festivals of thanksgiving. I may be wrong, but the way I heard it is when the people of the Azores were starving, (famine, drought, whatever) the British navy saved them with barrels of beef. It was pretty ripe by the time it got to the people, however, so the mixture of spices helped disguise the smell and taste. It's still served as a festival dish.

INGREDIENTS:

1 chuck roast or tri tip roast, cut into big chunks (3-4")
2 tbsp. pickling spice
2 tbsp. cinnamon
2 tsp. cumin seed
5-10 sprigs of fresh mint
1 14.5 oz. can tomato sauce
salt, pepper to taste
1 head cabbage, cut into wedges
loaf of really good sourdough French bread, cut in thick slices
You'll also need string and cheesecloth

DIRECTIONS: Brown meat chunks in a heavy Dutch oven sized pot--use just a small amount of oil. When it's good and brown, pour enough water over to cover the meat. Add the tomato sauce, salt and pepper. Wash the mint leaves and tie them in a bundle with string--add to the pot. Cut a piece of cheesecloth about a foot square...at least 'three thicknesses' of fabric. Get it wet and squeeze the water out (keeps the spices inside better) Dump the pickling spice, cinnamon and cumin seed (more or less...I never actually measure the spices) into the center of the cheesecloth then pull the corners up to make a bag and tie with string. Add to the pot. Simmer slowly, covered, for about three to four hours, until meat is tender and sauce has cooked down a bit. About half an hour or so before serving, add the cabbage wedges and cover tightly. Cook until the cabbage is tender.

To serve, put the bread on the plate, pile meat on top, then cover with sauce. Serve the cabbage off to one side. It's absolutely delicious.

Fast Chicken Soup

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Time After Time and Star-Crossed

"Most of the food in the refrigerator was over a week old and had perished long before, but Alexa found frozen homemade soup and frozen bread from her neighbor Mrs. Phillips. She applied microwave and toaster oven magic then doled the soup and bread into bowls and soup plates on trays." -- From TIME AFTER TIME.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup chunks of cooked chicken
3 cans of chicken broth or 1 quart homemade broth
1-3 sections of garlic, chopped
1 Tablespoon butter or vegetable oil
1 cup cooked rice or noodles
3 Tablespoons corn starch

DIRECTIONS: Start heating the chicken broth in a large pot at medium hot. Start cooking the rice or noodles. In small saucepan, saute the garlic until almost brown. Toss in chicken and stir. Remove from heat. When broth begins to bubble, mix a little water with the corn starch until smooth, then add to chicken broth while stirring. Continue stirring until broth has thickened. Lower heat and add chicken and noodles or rice. Heat through and serve.

HINTS: All ingredient amounts need not be accurate. This is an excellent quick soup to make when someone in the house is sick. Be generous with the garlic if that person has a cold. Raw chicken tenders can be used instead of cooked chicken. Slice them into spoon-sized bits and cook them first. Add the garlic when they are almost done.

Josh and Jacob's Ozark Chicken Soup

Submitted by Betty Craker Henderson
Author of Child Support

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs. boneless breast of chicken
chopped celery
chopped onions
pepper
salt
chicken bouillon cubes
1 package Wild and brown rice with herbs
1 can zucchini
1 can tomatoes
Garlic salt

DIRECTIONS: Simmer boneless breast of chicken with chopped celery, onions, pepper, salt and three chicken bouillon

cubes until tender. Cool. Chop into bite-size pieces and return to broth. Add enough water to make about six cups liquid, bring to a boil. Add one package commercial wild and brown rice with herbs and simmer over low heat for about one hour, stirring occasionally. Add one can mixed zucchini and tomatoes, one can tomato sauce and one can chili beans. Dust in a small amount of garlic salt. If you like you can add frozen or leftover vegetables of your choosing. Simmer another ten minutes, being careful to retain lots of liquid and stirring now and then. Serve with cornbread squares, green salad, peach cobbler with ice cream and lots of iced tea.

Ginny's McBlain's 5 Star Review Hamburger Soup

Submitted by Ginny McBlain
Author of Bear Hugs

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 lb. hamburger, browned and drained
1 can Veg-All
1 (8 oz.) can tomato sauce or 1 (16 oz.) can tomatoes
1 T. instant onion flakes
salt to taste
1/4 cup barley
1/4 t. pepper
1 beef bouillon cube
1 t. basil

DIRECTIONS: Mix together in 2 qt. sauce pan. Add water to fill the pan. Cover and simmer for 1 hour.

This recipe is easy to expand for a crowd. I've served it for as many as 50. I use canned beef stock in place of bouillon cubes for large quantities.

Brunswick Stew

Submitted by Margaret L. Carter

Author of *Shadow Of The Beast* and *Dark Changeling*

In *SHADOW OF THE BEAST*, the heroine Jenny's lawyer boyfriend attended my alma mater, the College of William and Mary. Since Jenny and her significant other both work for the Maryland General Assembly (my own "day job"), they're far too busy during the 90-day legislative session in the depths of winter to cook complicated meals. They can fall back on this easy, hearty winter stew, based on a recipe served by Chowning's Tavern in Colonial Williamsburg. I've simplified it with canned vegetables in place of some of the fresh ones and boneless chicken instead of all those messy bones and bits of skin.

INGREDIENTS:

3-4 pounds boneless chicken breasts
6 large potatoes, diced
2 large onions, cut into large chunks
2 teaspoons salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon sugar
Bay leaves and thyme to taste, if desired
2 cups canned butterbeans
4 cups canned chopped tomatoes
2 cups canned okra
4 cups canned corn

DIRECTIONS: Boil chicken in enough water to cover, until cooked. Remove from pot and cut in bite-size pieces. Boil potatoes and onions in broth until almost done. Add chicken, vegetables, and seasonings. Simmer until flavors are well blended. Long cooking time is the factor that rescues this dish from blandness.

Herbed Pork Stew

Submitted by F. Jacquelyn Hallquist
Author of *The Crystal Key* and *Evil Wears A Bonny Smile*

THE CRYSTAL KEY is set in Belize, a country of many ethnicities. However, since my heroine seems to always be eating Spanish or Mexican goodies, I hope you will enjoy these dishes as much as she did.

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs. pork cut into cubes

1 large onion cut into wedges
10 large garlic cloves, peeled and halved.
1 tblsp each Worcestershire, soy and Maggi sauce
1 lb tomatillos, husked
4 serrano chiles (more if you like really hot)
2 tblsp vegetable oil (lard gives a better flavor but is murder on the cholesterol)
1/2 cup each chopped parsley, cilantro, hierba santa, epazote
1 lb tiny new potatoes, cooked until just tender
Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS: Put meat, half the onion, four of the garlic cloves, and the seasoning sauces in large pot. Cover with water, Bring to a boil, then cover and simmer until meat is tender (30-45 min.) Meanwhile, place tomatillos, remaining onion, 4 garlic cloves, the chiles, salt to taste and water to cover in saucepan. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer until tomatillos are tender. Allow to cool, then transfer to a blender. Include cooking liquid. Chop. Heat the oil or lard in saucepan. Add tomatillo mixture and simmer about 30 minutes.

Add potatoes and tomatillo mixture to pork. Thicken the stew to taste by gradually adding flour paste. Grind chopped herbs and remaining garlic cloves to a paste. Salt to taste and add to stew. Serve immediately.

Trail Stew

Submitted by Barbara Hodges
Author of The Blue Flame

In The Blue Flame, Trail Stew is eaten by Regan when she is at last reunited with her sister Kelsey, after seven years of separation. In the midst of their war with Dirkk, the stew is prepared over an open fire, but I'm sure it would fare just as well prepared on a range.

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb. Beef round steak
2 carrots (sliced)
1 C. chopped onion
5 medium potatoes
1 C. sliced mushrooms
Seasoning Salt
Pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS: Cut the steak into cubes, season with the salt and pepper and brown in a Dutch kettle, or any deep, pot. When beef is brown all over, add just enough water to cover. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and let the beef simmer for an hour.

After one hour add the remaining ingredients and then cover all with more water. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat to simmer. Then let it cook for another two hours, checking every once awhile to make sure it doesn't go dry.

Serves 4. Trail stew is best served with crusty French bread, followed by purple cantaloupe beans. But hey, you'd have to go to Daradawn to get them, so follow it up with any of the wonderful deserts in this book.

Red Pepper Chili

Submitted by Christine W. Murphy

Author of *At Your Command* , *Highlord Of Darkness* , *For The Emperor* and *Through The Iowa Glass*

Chili is just one the mysteries of modern life that Maggie has to explain to the sometimes befuddled, not-so-evil jinn in Christine Murphy's paranormal romantic comedy, *At Your Command*. Here's the vegetarian chili recipe the warms Tom after a long afternoon of shoveling snow. In return he works some magic that does more than warm just Maggie's heart.

INGREDIENTS:

2 red peppers
1 large onion
2 cans tomato puree (29 oz)
1 can chopped or diced tomatoes (28 oz)
1 tsp. ground black pepper

1 bay leaf
3 cans dark or light kidney beans (15 oz.)
2 tsp. chili powder
salt to taste

DIRECTIONS: Seed red peppers and cut to lay flat on cookie sheet. Oven roast peppers and sliced onions until skin of pepper begins to turn black. Peel and slice peppers, and chop onions. Add peppers and onions to large Dutch oven and heat, uncovered. Add canned tomatoes, pepper, and bay leaf. Heat through. Add beans and spice, and simmer for at least 30 minutes. Salt only if needed. Serve in bowls with grated cheese and cornbread on the side. To keep the meal low fat, use part-skim cheese and make the cornbread using egg substitute and canola oil. This dish is also great on pasta. Reduce the number of cans of beans to 1 and add sliced mushrooms. Either way, you've got a great vegetarian, low-fat dish.

Chapter 7: Dinner Entrees

Marilynn's Marinara

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

Tristan cut off his security bracelet at the government central computer and walked as fast as his legs would allow him to the kitchen. He shoved open the door. Novia was processing tomatoes at the worktable. Shocked, she squeezed a tomato into mush in her hand and gaped at him. Her cheeks reddened with emotion. "You!" ---From STAR-CROSSED.

INGREDIENTS:

2 quarts tomatoes, mashed
3 Tablespoons olive oil
1 Tablespoon salt
2 small cans tomato paste
1 teaspoon ground red pepper
10-12 sections garlic, minced
1 T brown sugar

DIRECTIONS: Bring ingredients to slow boil. Simmer 1 1/2 hours. Stir occasionally. Makes enough for several generous meals for six. If desired, add butter to sauce before serving. Freeze unused sauce.

HINTS: To ease peeling the garlic, place the flat of the blade of a knife against each section and thump gently with your fist. The skin will pop loose.

To mince garlic in blender or food processor, add the olive oil in with the garlic. Process.

This sauce is an excellent ingredient for lasagna, a fast meat sauce, meat loaf, and as a pizza sauce. Drain the sauce in cheese cloth or a fine-mesh sieve if used for pizza sauce. I always keep some in my freezer for unexpected guests or a fast, but tasty meal.

Succulent Pork Ragu

Submitted by Judith Lynn

Author of Love Thy Enemy

He holds her father captive and threatens his life. She hates him; he scorns her. She will do what she must. He will make her do more--much more. Tora feels like a traitor when pulsing desire and sensual pleasure rock her each time the Norwegian Earl Magnus takes her into his masculine embrace....

Tora would never have had tomatoes or these spices to cook with, but in 1239, Norway, she certainly would have been familiar with the concept of cooking meat slowly for tenderness.

This recipe can be made in a crock-pot, on the stove or in the oven. Fantastic!

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds pork shoulder
1/2 cup olive oil
2 large onions, finely chopped
8 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup red wine
6 ounces tomato paste
1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
2 teaspoons dried basil
1 teaspoon dried oregano
4 bay leaves
1/2 teaspoon crushed (dried) red pepper flakes
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon (freshly ground) black pepper
1 pound Italian sausage (hot or mild, optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Trim any excess fat from the outside of the shoulder. Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a large roaster over medium-high heat. Brown the meat well on all sides. Heat oven to 300 degrees.
2. After meat has browned, remove it from the roaster. Pour off any fat. Add remaining olive oil along with chopped onions and garlic. Cook onions and garlic over medium heat until they are just beginning to color. Add wine and bring to a boil for about 5 minutes, or until the wine has evaporated and you're left with purplish onions. Add 1 cup of water along with tomato paste, crushed tomatoes, basil, oregano, bay leaves, red pepper, salt and black pepper.
3. Add the pork. Cover the roaster and place it in the oven for about 2 hours.

4. Remove the sausage from the casings and crumble it into the sauce. Cook for 30 minutes, until the sausage has lost all its pink color.
5. You may shred the pork shoulder into the sauce, or you may serve it sliced, as an entree. The tomato sauce ends up being a typical Italian red sauce, good as a sauce for the pork, but equally good as a topping for pasta.
6. Makes about 2 quarts of sauce and enough meat to feed at least 8 people.

Cooking Tip: Low Fat Cream Sauce

Submitted by Shirley Parenteau
Author of Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

I gleaned this from one of Diane Mott Davidson's wonderful culinary mysteries. In preparing a recipe with a cream sauce for an overweight friend, the caterer heroine used 1 cup of milk, then stirred in 1 tablespoon of dry powdered milk. I've used 2 per cent low fat milk with the powdered and find it works beautifully.

Savory Beans with Smoked Ham Hocks

Submitted by Barbara Hodges
Author of The Blue Flame

This second recipe is a hearty, satisfying dish. We add crusty bread and a salad to it.

INGREDIENTS:

4 ham hocks
1 lb. Small white beans
4 cloves garlic
1 C. chopped green onion
1 tsp of dried basil
1 tsp of dried marjoram
° C. of olive oil
Water enough to cover.

DIRECTIONS: Wash and soak the beans. Add oil to deep pot. Heat and add chopped garlic, onions and spices. Cook until onions are soft. Score the ham hocks well, and add to pot. Cover with water, bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 1 1 hours. Add white beans. Cover with water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 1 1 hours.

Spirit Lake's Supper Club Baked Pork Chops

Submitted by Christine DeSmet
Author of Spirit Lake

In my novel Spirit Lake, Cole brings a tad of trouble to the North Woods for Laurel, who is a wildlife rehabilitator. In the book, you'll find out what the bundle is in her arms, and the recipes she feeds her baby squirrels and owls. Hearty meals for animals and humans alike are popular in Northern Wisconsin, where there's outdoor work and play year-round, even when the temperature dips down to -20 F or the occasional -40 F in the winter.

Here's a meal Cole and Laurel enjoy at the local supper club.

INGREDIENTS:

4 medium pork chops
4 potatoes, sliced
Salt and pepper
1 cup cream of mushroom soup
2 garlic cloves, chopped fine
1 cup (or more to taste) grated cheddar cheese
2 medium onions, sliced

DIRECTIONS: Put the uncooked pork chops in a 9x13 pan. Season the chops with salt and pepper. (Laurel likes to go light on the salt if you use a lot of cheese, which already has salt.). Add the chopped garlic cloves. Then sprinkle 1/2 cup of the cheese over the chops. Top with layers of onions and potatoes. Lightly season again. Pour the soup over the chops, onions, and potatoes. Spread the remaining cheese on. Cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for 2 hours. In the final 15-20 minutes, take the foil off and let it brown. Tasty! In Northern Wisconsin you'd serve wild rice (tossed with butter-fried mushrooms or morels) with this, and add a side dish of cranberry relish.

Author Christine DeSmet's Lasagna

Submitted by Christine DeSmet
Author of Spirit Lake

Heres my favorite lasagna recipe - perfect to putz with on a snowy or rainy, cold weekend. Italian food is as popular as Norwegian and German food in northern Wisconsin. And of course, we're in Wisconsin, so bring on the cheese!

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds of ground beef (or your favorite lasagna meat)
1 teaspoon garlic powder (or 3-4 diced fresh garlic cloves, to taste)
2 teaspoons Italian seasoning
3 teaspoons salt
1 T basil
1 T oregano
1-1/2 T sugar
1 medium onion, chopped
1 can (16 oz) tomatoes
1 can (12 oz) tomato paste
12 oz water
4 oz parmesan cheese, grated fine
16 oz creamed cottage cheese or ricotta cheese

15 oz grated sharp cheddar cheese
1-1/2 pounds mozzarella cheese, thin sliced
1 small can of mushroom bits and pieces
12 oz lasagna noodles

In a large, deep-sided skillet, brown the meat and drain off the fat. Add the seasonings, onion, tomatoes, tomato paste and water. Simmer 20 minutes. Meanwhile, stir together the parmesan cheese and cottage cheese (or ricotta). In an ungreased, 9x13 deep dish pan (no wimpy cake pan with short sides, please), place a cup of the sauce and use it to lightly coat the bottom of the pan. Then alternate layers of noodles, sauce, cheeses, and mushrooms, ending with cheese on top. (If you're a cheese lover, you sometimes find you have to slice more cheese for the top!) Seal tightly with aluminum foil. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes to an hour. Let stand for a few minutes before cutting. Serves at least 12. This rich, hearty recipe freezes well in individually-wrapped pieces and can be reheated in the microwave in 3-5 minutes using medium-high settings. Be sure the center of each piece is defrosted.

Spinach and Feta Frittata

Submitted by Kate Douglas aka Kate Moore
Author of Cowboy In My Pocket , Honeysuckle Rose and On Wings Of Love

This one is a really good for brunch.

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cups Jack cheese, shredded
1 1/2 cups Cheddar cheese, shredded
non-stick oil spray
1 package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
3/4 cup feta cheese, crumbled
6 sausage links, cooked and thinly sliced
3 eggs
1/2 cup milk
3 tbs. Flour
1 clove garlic, minced
2 small green onions, finely chopped
salt/pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS: Spray oil in 10" pie plate. Layer s jack cheese, spinach, sliced sausage, cheddar cheese then feta. Mix eggs, milk, flour, garlic, onions, salt and pepper until flour is completely blended w/o lumps, then pour it over the mix. Bake at 350] for 30-40 minutes, until set.

***This can be changed in lots of ways--substitute ham and green chilies for the spinach and sausage, use canned artichoke hearts with sausage or ham, add sliced, cooked zucchini, chopped, cooked potatoes--any number of combinations with the basic cheese and egg mixture.

Justin's Cheating Chicken and Dumplings

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

"I hope you like chicken and dumplings." Justin handed her a large steaming soup bowl. Chicken and spice smells floated upward, and the meat and dumplings appeared homemade. "Love it." Alexa sampled the chicken. Heavenly perfection touched her taste buds. Even the dumplings were fluffy instead of gummy like hers were. "I'm embarrassed. You cook better than I do." From TIME AFTER TIME.

INGREDIENTS:

1 whole chicken or 1 package chicken thighs

1 Tablespoon poultry seasoning

1 bay leaf

Add to taste or by availability:

1-2 carrots, chopped

1-2 stalks celery, chopped

1 onion, chopped

1 small tube of refrigerated rolls like Pillsbury Grands

DIRECTIONS: Place chicken into large pot and cover with water. Add spices and whatever vegetables you wish. Bring to gentle boil then lower to simmer. Cook 1 1/2 to 2 hours until tender. Remove chicken, cool, and skin and debone.

Chop up meat. The chicken broth may be chilled to remove fat. About 45 minutes before serving, bring chicken broth to gentle boil. Open rolls. Gently peel apart each roll into thin layers and drop each layer in as you peel it off. If boil slows, pause until it returns to normal. Add layers until you feel you have enough dumplings. Add chicken chunks to broth and dumplings and serve.

Yield: 1 generous meal for 4.

HINT: If you wish to freeze this for serving later, mix chicken chunks and broth then freeze. Thaw and bring to gentle boil. Add layers of refrigerator rolls then serve.

Caytlyn's Chicken Fried Rabbit

Submitted by Susan C. Yarina
Author of Timerider and Nora's Turn

I have four recipes from Timerider. They represent the state of Arizona pretty well too. They can be done in 1882 or present day.

If you are the bold, self sufficient heroine type, kill, skin and gut a rabbit. If you'd rather your hero do it, that's just fine too. Remember to do this in cold weather only, as the Apache tell me warm weather rabbit in present day, can carry and transmit parasites. At any time, wear gloves and wash rabbit thoroughly. If you are a modern day heroine, rabbit can sometimes be found in specialty meat cases.

INGREDIENTS:

Rabbit

3/4 cup of flour

2 Tablespoons of Nature's Season's by Morton (Caytlyn uses plain table salt with gathered herbs)

1/2 teaspoon chili powder

Bacon grease or Cooking Oil

DIRECTIONS: Dredge rabbit pieces in flour, seasoning and chili powder. In hot lard, bacon grease or oil, fry until golden brown, turning frequently. Eat just like fried chicken.

If you are not concerned about being tracked, throw bones over shoulder. Coyotes will eat them. If you are concerned, bury bones deeply and cover with rocks.

*note-this recipe works equally well with chicken

Black Hawk's Roast Rabbit

Submitted by Susan C. Yarina

Author of Timerider and Nora's Turn

Gut, skin and wash rabbit. Rub with salt and seasonings, either gathered or obtained at trading post. (Nature's Seasons by Morton works well here too)

Rub with chili. Baste with mixture of honey and squeezed oranges and lime if you have it, and roast slowly, evenly over fire (or grill). If you are in present day you can use orange juice concentrate with a couple of squeezes of lime.

Caytlyn's Famous Apple Dipping Sauce

Submitted by Susan C. Yarina
Author of Timerider and Nora's Turn

Black Hawk loves to dip almost any game, fish, beef, swine or poultry in this.

Take two apples and bake either over fire or in oven. Peel. Mash them thoroughly, add 1/2 cup of honey or 1/2 cup brown sugar and 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon. It can be eaten just like that or cooked into syrup in saucepan.

This dipping sauce is particularly useful if meat is somewhat dry or overcooked.

Archer's Well Seasoned Steak

Submitted by Barbara Raffin
Author of Time Out Of Mind

In TIME OUT OF MIND, Archer has finished his chores for Samantha and she's about to send him packing. But he hasn't finished his real job, to complete their destinies as Fate dictates. The discovery of a hibachi grill gives him an idea

on how to delay their parting. But Samantha remains wary, resistant until...

He leaned toward her, just a little, just enough to block the brightest spot of the low-slung sun. The emerald eyes settled on her, their dark pupils flaring in the shadow of his face. "I'd do the cooking." -- From TIME OUT OF MIND
What woman can resist a man who'll cook for her? Here's Archer's recipe for a well seasoned steak. Though Archer used a porterhouse, you might try a romantic sirloin for two.

INGREDIENTS:

Steak

Salt & pepper to taste (Both sides. You must be thorough)

Garlic powder (If you both eat garlic, it cancels out the offensive odor, unless you're of Italian descent like me, then it's an aphrodisiac)

Worcestershire Sauce liberally splashed on.

Red Pepper (Optional for the daring lover, just don't get it on your fingers)

Rosemary (Optional for the lover with a truly sensual palate)

DIRECTIONS: Marinate for at least an hour or two, but all day is even better, or overnight. Oh yes! Grill or broil to your desired doneness. Sigh.

Shepherd's Pie

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

Though I'm half-Irish in descent, I find a lot of things to like about English culture. Perhaps that's why I enjoy setting my historical romances in Regency England. One of my favorite dinnertime dishes is a favorite of the English. Shepherd's Pie is fairly easy to make and a big improvement on our American meat loaf.

INGREDIENTS:

1lbs. Ground beef
Chopped onions
Mash potatoes
Carrots
Peas
Cheese
Salt
Pepper

DIRECTIONS: Fry ground beef with onions & season to taste. Cook mash potatoes. Defrost any frozen vegetables. Shred cheese & dice carrots. Mix ground beef & vegetables.

In casserole baking dish, layer ground beef & vegetable mix. Cover with potatoes. Layer cheese on top. Place in oven at 350 degrees Fahrenheit 20-35 minutes until top is brown.

Serves 4-8

Mom's Meat Rice Casserole

Submitted by Jennifer Dunne
Author of Dark Salvation

This was a mainstay of my childhood, a simple yet tasty meal that will have you going back for seconds or thirds, even if you don't have a vampire's overactive metabolism.

INGREDIENTS:

2 Tbsp oil
2 Tbsp onion, chopped
1 lb ground beef
1 cup uncooked rice
1 tsp salt
garlic to taste (optional)
2 cups beef bullion or stock

DIRECTIONS: Heat oil in skillet. Add onion and sauté until transparent. Add ground beef and sauté until brown (or until it crumbles instead of sticking together, for those of you who are red-green color blind). Vampires may skip this step -- everyone else, make sure your meat's cooked thoroughly. Place onions and beef in casserole dish. Add rice, seasonings, and beef stock. Stir until all the rice grains are wet. Cover and bake at 350 F for about 40 minutes or until the rice has absorbed all the liquid.

Serves 4-6

Missouri Muleburger

Submitted by Susan C. Yarina
Author of Timerider and Nora's Turn

Muleburger featured in Nora's Turn at the Muleshoe Cafe and Truckstop.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound of 80% lean ground beef (yes, that's right, you don't really think we'd use mule, do you?)
2 Tablespoons chopped, dried onion (Dried is important because it holds in the natural juices of the meat)
1 teaspoon Nature's Season by Morton
1 teaspoon salt
Dash of Worcestershire Sauce
3/4 teaspoon garlic powder with parsley

*optional cayenne (See below)

DIRECTIONS: Muleburgers are made two ways:

With Kick: add 1/2-1 teaspoon of ground cayenne pepper

Without Kick: no cayenne

Put all ingredients in a large bowl and mix by hand you can see that the onions are evenly distributed though the meat. That means that the spices will be too. Divide into 4 equal sized patties and form with hamburger mold or pat to about 1/2" thick patty, large diameter. Grill or fry for the tastiest burger this side of heaven.

Cautionary note: Wash hands thoroughly after mixing and forming burgers.

Corned Beef and Cabbage

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski

Author of Notorious Angel

About a hundred years ago, my great grandparents came to America from Western Ireland making me at least half Irish today. One of the benefits of an Irish heritage, besides knowing how to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in style, is having a good taste for corned beef and cabbage. A century ago, cabbage was a mainstay for my Irish ancestors while the more expensive beef was a delicacy reserved for only the most special occasions. While cooking the cabbage may fill your house with a nose-cleaning smell your tastebuds will applaud the effort. So break out your green and enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

1 corned beef brisket with spice packet
1 lb. Irish potatoes
1 lb baby carrots
1 large head cabbage, cut into small wedges

DIRECTIONS: Place corned beef in large pot cover with water. Add the spice packet that came with the corned beef. Cover pot and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Simmer approximately 50 minutes per pound or until tender. Add whole potatoes and carrots, and cook until the vegetables are almost tender. Add cabbage and cook for 15 more minutes. Remove meat and let rest 15 minutes. Place vegetables in a bowl and cover. Add as much broth (cooking liquid reserved in the Dutch oven or large pot) as you want. Slice meat across the grain.

Meat Pie

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

During my novel NOTORIOUS ANGEL, the heroine Sera recalls one of her childhood delicacies. Meat pies were a treat almost anytime especially when they could be sneaked out of the kitchen as Sera's brothers often dared her to do.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound ground pork
1/2 cup beef broth
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 bay leaf
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 large potatoes -- peeled, cooked, drained, and mashed (3 cups)

Pastry Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup shortening
1 egg, beaten
1/4 cup cold water
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed

DIRECTIONS: Brown pork; drain off fat. Stir in broth, onion, garlic, bay leaf, ginger, cloves, salt, and pepper. Bring to

a boil; reduce heat. Cover; simmer about 20 minutes or until onion is tender, stirring often. Discard bay leaf. Stir in potatoes; cool.

Pastry: Stir together flour, baking powder, and salt. Cut in shortening until pieces are the size of small peas. Stir together well-beaten egg, cold water, lemon juice, and dried thyme. Sprinkle the egg mixture over flour mixture, 1 Tablespoon at a time. Gently toss with a fork. Form into 2 balls.

On lightly floured surface, roll out pastry to a circle 12 inches in diameter. Line a 9-inch pie plate. Trim to 1/2 inch beyond edge. Fill pastry shell with meat mixture. Roll out remaining pastry to a circle 12 inches in diameter. Cut slits in top crust. Place atop filling. Seal and flute edge. Brush with egg wash. Bake in 400-degree oven about 25 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand 20 minutes.

Serves: 6.

Epilogue: Dessert Treats

Lokelani Aloha Nui Loa Coconut Cake

Submitted by Sharon K. Garner
Author of Lokelani Nights and River Of Dreams

Stir up this tropical delight and imagine warm island breezes! Note: Homeowners in Hawaii have coconuts removed from their trees because falling coconuts are injury hazards. Ouch!

INGREDIENTS:

One-half cup Crisco
One-half cup butter
One box powdered sugar
Four egg yolks, beaten
One teaspoon vanilla
One cup sour milk (few teaspoons vinegar, fill with milk to one cup line)
Three cups flour
One-eighth teaspoon salt
Two teaspoons baking powder
One cup flaked coconut
Four egg whites, beaten stiff

DIRECTIONS:

1. Cream together the Crisco and butter.
2. Add powdered sugar. Mix.
3. Add egg yolks and vanilla then beat until light and fluffy. Add a little of the milk if necessary.
4. Stir salt and baking powder into the flour then add to the mixture a little at a time, moistening with the sour milk as you mix.
5. Stir in coconut.
6. Fold in egg whites last.
7. Pour into a 13 X 9 X 2 pan sprayed with cooking spray. Bake 325 degrees for 50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
8. When cool, frost with Cool Whip (refrigerate) or your favorite icing.

Note: This is a large, heavy-textured cake, not light and fluffy like a mix.

Tara's Green Tomato Pie

Submitted by C.J. Winters

Author of Moon Night , Sleighride and Right Man, Wrong Time

An old-time pre-frost autumn treat, Green Tomato Pie was heroine Tara's first, and almost only, culinary success in MOON NIGHT, the time-travel romance set in 1883 Arkansas, by C. J. Winters.

INGREDIENTS:

Pastry for double-crust nine-inch pie
One-and one-third cups sugar
Six-and two-thirds tablespoons all purpose flour
One-and one-third teaspoons salt
One teaspoon each nutmeg and cinnamon
Four cups green tomato slices, quartered
Four teaspoons cider vinegar
Four teaspoons butter

DIRECTIONS: Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In a small bowl, mix together sugar, flour, salt and spices. In a large mixing bowl combine tomatoes and vinegar. Stirring gently, sprinkle in flour mixture. Pour green tomato mixture into an uncooked pastry shell. Dot with butter. Cover with top crust. Seal edges, trim and flute. Pierce crust with fork to allow steam to escape. Bake 35 to 45 minutes, or until lightly browned. Serve slightly warm.

Peony's Baked Indian Pudding

Submitted by C.J. Winters

Author of Moon Night , Sleighride and Right Man, Wrong Time

A staple dessert at the 1811 Overbridge Tavern in Vermont, accessible by **SLEIGHRIDE**, the time-travel romance by C.

J. Winters.

INGREDIENTS:

One quart sweet milk
Teacup corn meal
One ounce butter
Four well-beaten eggs
Pinch of nutmeg
Half pound raisins
Fourth pound sugar

DIRECTIONS: Scald milk. While milk is at a low boil, slowly stir in corn meal. Remove from stove. Let stand until blood warm. Stir in butter, eggs, nutmeg, sugar and raisins. Bake in a moderate oven one and a half hours. Set in window to cool. Serve with fruit sauce, such as apple butter, blackberry preservers, or mashed spiced peaches.

A Taste of New Orleans: King Cake

Submitted by Pauline B. Jones
Author of Missing You: Lonesome Lawmen #3

I've always loved treats, so you can imagine that moving to New Orleans was like a viking reaching Valhala. Here's a couple of my favorite New Orleans desserts for you to try. Warning: You're entering a calorie intense zone.

This dessert is traditionally served beginning at Twelfth Night until Ash Wednesday. There are tons of versions of it in bakeries all over town, but this is my favorite. You can dress this up with even more calories by adding cream cheese and fruit filling after baking. Use a pastry tube to squeeze the filling in between the braiding and be sure you have napkins or wet wipes on hand.

INGREDIENTS:

2 packages of yeast
2 sticks of butter (or margarine)
4 eggs
5 to 6 1/2 cups of all purpose flour
Brown sugar -- powdered sugar
1 tablespoon and 1/3 cup granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
cinnamon
2/3 cup milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. Empty 2 pkgs of yeast into a bowl with 1/4 cup hot water (not so hot it kills the yeast!). Add 1 tbsp of granulated sugar to yeast mixture, put on top of stove until it becomes foamy. When foam appears, take off stove and add 4 eggs, 2/3 cup of warm milk, 1/3 cup granulated sugar, 1 stick of melted butter and vanilla and mix together. Add flour, one cup at a time, mix and knead for ten minutes. Put into greased pan on top of stove for one hour, covered with a cloth.
2. When ready, punch down, roll out on a floured table, cut into three strips and butter each strip. Put brown sugar and cinnamon on the strips with more butter on top. It's best to paint the butter on with a cooking brush, if you have one.

Roll each strip separately, until about 1/2 inch thick and then braid the strips together.

3. Put on a greased cookie sheet and cover with a cloth. (Some people shape their cake in a ring.) Let rise again for about 20-30 minutes.

4. Bake 20 minutes at 350 degrees.

Frosting

1/2 box powdered sugar

1/2 stick of butter

1/3 cup milk

1 teaspoon vanilla

(You may make it as thin or thick as you prefer.) Frost your cake, then top with:

Colored Sugar

granulated sugar

coloring: yellow, green and purple (red and blue)

Prepare one of each color to decorate your king cake by shaking sugar and coloring together in a jar until it is well mixed.

Put each color on a third of your king cake. If you have a plastic baby, you can insert this into the cake now, too. Be sure to warn your family or guests if you do add a cake!

A Taste of New Orleans: Bread Pudding

Submitted by Pauline B. Jones

Author of Missing You: Lonesome Lawmen #3

I hail from Wyoming, but moved to New Orleans 17 years ago. I love New Orleans for its food and its creative ambiance. Since moving to New Orleans, I've expanded my waistline and written five romantic suspense novels, including my Lonesome Lawmen series.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups of whipping cream

1 cup of milk

1/2 cup sugar

2 eggs

8 egg yolks

1 loaf of French bread (slice or tear it into 1/4 inch pieces, then dry in an oven)

DIRECTIONS:

1. To make the bread pudding you need to heat the whipping cream. In a double boiler, heat milk, sugar, eggs and yolks until they are warm. Blend egg mixture with heated whipping cream. Place your pieces of bread in a baking dish, then pour half the mixture over the bread and let it settle into the bread. Then add the rest of the mixture. Cover pan with foil and bake for an hour at 275 degrees, then remove the foil and finish baking for 15 minutes, until the top turns golden

brown.

2. Bread pudding can be topped with anything from rum sauce to brandy sauce, but my personal favorite is the white chocolate variation. To make it, you might want to add 10 oz of melted white chocolate to your whipping cream before adding it to the milk mixture, then finish as above. While its cooking, make a sauce by melting 8 ozs of white chocolate in a double boiler. When its melted, remove from heat and mix in 3 ounces of heavy cream. That's it.

3. When your bread pudding is done, just spoon it out of the pan and generously top with the sauce. If you're into the really fancy a few shavings of dark chocolate can be used for garnish.

Mrs. Matthew's Hickory Nut Cake

Submitted by C.J. Winters

Author of Moon Night , Sleighride and Right Man, Wrong Time

Served by the Reverend's wife to Susa and Bickford in the 1859 time-travel romance, "Right Man, Wrong Time," by C. J. Winters, who estimates it took the lady 160 evenings between supper and bedtime to pick out a quart of hickory nuts!

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups sugar

1 cup soft butter

6 large eggs, beaten

3 teaspoons baking powder

4 cups flour
1 quart hickory nuts (ground)
1 cup good Wiskey

DIRECTIONS: Mix as any other cake. Bake in moderate oven about one and one-half hours. Test for doneness with broom straw. Serve warm with a drizzle of honey or molasses.

Turtle Bars

Submitted by Patti Shenberger aka Amanda Brian
Author of Womb For Rent

INGREDIENTS:

1 14 ounce package of caramels
1/2 cup milk
1/2 butter, melted
1 cup finely chopped walnuts (any nuts will do)
1/2 cup shredded coconut
1 12 ounce package of chocolate chips
1 german chocolate cake mix

DIRECTIONS:

1. Unwrap caramels and combine with 1/4 cup milk in a saucepan. Cook on low until caramels start to melt. Stir frequently. After smooth, set aside off heat.
2. Combine butter, cake mix, nuts and 1/4 cup milk. Mix thoroughly. Grease a 13 x 9 pan and press half of mixture into pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 5 minutes. This will be your crust. As soon as done, remove from oven and sprinkle chocolate chips evenly over top. Spread melted caramels on top of that. Spread remaining cake mixture on top.

Wild Grape Dumplings

Submitted by Jackie A. Bielowicz

Author of Broken Pledge , Coming To Terms , and The Bride-Seeker

Here is a dish my heroine Caron in **BROKEN PLEDGE** from HSWF DID make, but she never gave my hero Seth a chance to eat any! **BROKEN PLEDGE** was a finalist in the first Booksellers' Best Award in 2000.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tbs. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbs. shortening
- 2 cups cleaned grapes (wild or domestic)
- 1 cup sugar or honey

DIRECTIONS:

1. Make dumplings: Sieve together flour, baking soda, and 1 tsp. salt. Add eggs and shortening. Stir into a stiff batter and set aside.
2. Cover cleaned grapes with water and boil for 15 minutes. Strain; add 1 cup of sweetening (sugar or honey) to juice, and return to a boil.
3. While boiling grapes, add dumplings a spoonful at a time. Cook for 10 minutes uncovered, then cover and cook for 10 minutes more.
4. Serve warm.

Luscious Going Away Cake and Creamy French Vanilla Ice Cream

Recipe by S. Joan Popek

Author of Sound The Ram's Horn

In SOUND THE RAM'S HORN Joshua's family was having a going away party for him. Since they were all very busy saving humanity, they didn't cook much. My dilemma was: What to Serve? Ah-ha! Drawing upon my own experience of How-to-cook-without Really-Cooking, I came up with a solution. The result was my recipe for "Luscious Going Away Cake and Creamy French Vanilla Ice Cream." This dessert is best topped off with fresh brewed (well...sort of fresh brewed) cappuccino.

INGREDIENTS:

1 Wallet or purse stuffed liberally with "lettuce." (That's cash to the novice How-to-cook-without Really-cooking-person.)

1 Means of transportation (This can be a car, truck motorcycle, bicycle, roller blades or just plain walking shoes depending upon what you have around the house.)

1 Local grocer or bakery (I prefer bakery because they offer a wider variety for the true connoisseur of Going Away Cake, but either will work.)

1/2 Cup of imagination and sparkling wit for design ideas for the topping

1 Package of instant cappuccino (any flavor)

1 Can of ground cinnamon

1 Can of whipped topping DIRECTIONS:

1. Pick up your container with the lettuce in it and using your preferred method of transportation, go to the grocer or bakery. Stride boldly up to the counter, peruse the sample of gaily decorated cakes and point to the one that catches your eye.

2. Wait until the attendant inquires, "Chocolate or vanilla?" then you can make his or her day complete by replying confidently, "Both! I'll have Marble, please--with strawberry pudding in the center."

3. Gently stir your imagination and sparkling wit together to come up with a catchy phrase for the top. Avoid clichés like "Bon Voyage" or other such banalities. Remember, this is *your* creation so come up with something really catchy. "Good Luck, Sucker. ope You Don't Drown on That Cruise Ship," or something equally cute and memorable is always a show-stopper.

4. Relate your topping choice to the attendant and ignore the look of contempt he or she might give you. After all, their job is not easy, and they don't often have a customer as innovative as you are. Sometimes, they just don't know how to react to a really good cook such as yourself.

5. While you are waiting for the order to be completed, stroll to the local coffee shop and have a double chocolate mocha with whipped cream. Pick up a package of instant cappuccino and ground cinnamon. On your way back to pick up the

cake, take a side trip by the frozen food counter and pick up a container of Creamy French Vanilla Ice Cream and a can of whipped topping.

6. Confidently carry the cake, the ice cream, the cinnamon, the whipped topping and the instant cappuccino to the check out stand. Take out your wallet or your purse and give the clerk some of your lettuce.

7. Once back home, boil water. To do this take a kettle or pan from the shelf under the counter. (You know where it is. It's where you stashed it last Christmas when your loving family gave you the new cookware set with that pitiful but hopeful look in their eyes.) Fill the kettle or pan with water and set on the burner on the stove. Turn on the burner.

8. While you are waiting for the water to heat, set the table with an attractive table cloth and put the Luscious Going Away Cake and Creamy French Vanilla Ice Cream on it. Set out Styrofoam cups, paper plates and napkins and some plastic spoons.

9. Measure 2 tablespoons of instant cappuccino into each cup, fill with boiling water and stir. Spray a decorative dollop of whipped topping into each cup, and sprinkle a dab of ground cinnamon on top of each one.

10. Serve while the coffee is still hot and the ice cream is still cold

Orange Blossom Cheesecake

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

After eating a slice of this cheesecake, one of my brother's friends offered to marry me sight unseen. My brother didn't consider him worthy enough to introduce us, though.

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
1/2 cup (1 stick) melted butter, cooled
3 Tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon grated or dried orange peel
3 8-oz packages (1 1/2 pounds) cream cheese at room temperature
1 cup sugar
3 eggs
1/2 cup (1 stick) melted butter, cooled
1/2 teaspoon orange extract
Dried orange peel (garnish)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine graham cracker crumbs, butter, orange peel and sugar. Press crumbs evenly onto bottom and about 3/4 in up sides of 9-inch springform pan. Refrigerate.
2. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Beat together cream cheese and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition. Blend in butter and orange extract. Turn mixture into springform pan. Bake for 15 minutes then check. It should be browning on top, firm, and beginning to crack slightly. Often, more than 15 minutes are needed to cook this cheesecake.
3. If using dried orange peel, sprinkle it on now. If using fresh orange zest (grated peel), wait until cool then garnish. Refrigerate.

Serves 10-12

Notes: Fresh orange peel changes color so I prefer dried peel for the garnish. I've successfully used low-fat cream cheese in the recipe, but I've never tried the no-fat variety.

World's Easiest Cheesecake

Submitted by Kate Douglas aka Kate Moore

Author of Cowboy In My Pocket , Honeysuckle Rose and On Wings Of Love

INGREDIENTS:

2 -- 8 oz pkgs cream cheese, softened to room temperature

2-- eggs

1 tsp. vanilla

1/2 cup sugar

graham cracker pie crust made with crushed chocolate crackers (or mint cookies)

1 cube melted butter

DIRECTIONS: Beat ingredients until smooth. Pour into crust and bake in 350 degree oven for 45 minutes. cool, refrigerate and serve with warm raspberry jelly or chocolate syrup dribbled over the top for garnish.

Light Strawberry Ice Cream

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

Tristan scooped out pink ice cream with the red kista fruit swirled through it and sampled. Closing his eyes, he rolled it around his mouth then swallowed. "That's wonderful. Almost like strawberries from home. Bless you, Mara." -- From STAR-CROSSED.

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cups pureed strawberries

1 cup 1% milk

1/2 cup sugar

DIRECTIONS: Mix ingredients. Chill. Add to canister of ice cream maker.

Peach-Prickly Pear Pie

Submitted by Susan C. Yarina

INGREDIENTS:

Prickly pears

Water

1 can peaches

1/2 - 1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

2 tbsp. sweet butter or lard

1-2 tbsp. lemon juice

Ready to bake pie crust

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pick prickly pears. They should be deep burgundy or deep pink. A good clue that they are ready is the birds will begin picking at them. Pears are usually ripe in mid to late summer, but you might find some as early as late June in a hot year. Take care as they contain painful cactus spines.
2. Transport in bucket. Handle with tongs or hunting knife. Boil a dozen Prickly Pears down until mushy, being sure to add water as you go and don't scorch. Strain with cheese cloth, to remove prickles. Add 1 can peaches obtained at trading post or sometimes deep in hidden canyons in mountains. These are protected by the Apache who love them, so do so at your own risk.
3. Add 1/2-1 cup of sugar if filling is still too tart and 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon if you have it. (Honey may be used.) Add two tablespoons of melted sweet butter or lard, butter being the better choice. Squeeze in 1-2 tablespoons of lemon juice from fresh lemon.
4. Add 2 Tablespoons of flour for thickening and stir together in sauce pan, cooking over stove or fire. Stir until the liquid of the filling clarifies.
5. Pour into unbaked prepared pie crust and top with another. Cut slits into crust to allow steam to escape and bake until golden. This filling is equally good on griddlecakes or biscuits. This pie is well worth the trouble, a glorious-red orange filling that equals the fiery color of the Arizona sunset. Enjoy!

Barb's Perfect Praline Recipe

Submitted by Barbara Donlon Bradley
Author of A Portrait In Time

INGREDIENTS:

one charge card or money order
access to internet or phone
working fingers to type or dial
Phone number or web page address

DIRECTIONS:

- 1.) pull charge card out of wallet. Rub across pants to warm up. (if using money order crinkle to get same effect)
- 2.) Flex fingers and get them good and relaxed for next part.
- 3.) If you are using the internet:
Turn on your computer (unless you're like me and it's on constantly)
Type in <http://store.cajuncreations.com/food.asp>
Don't drool on keyboard or it will cease to function
Click on Creole Delicacies-Box of 10 Pralines order at least one box.
Enter the quantity of at least one for the coffee next to the pralines. Cafe Du Monde is great!

If you're feeling a little adventurous you can scroll down to the Pat O'Brien's Hurricane mix - enter own quantity

Telephone:

Dial: 1-877-694-4986

Follow instructions for internet (but no scrolling needed)

**Also phone has time limitation Mon-Fri 9:00 am - 5:00 pm central

4.) wait for delivery

**note: don't attack your mailman. Could ruin your already shaky relationship of having him/her keeping the bills at bay for as long as possible.

5.) lock yourself in a secure area

**note: if you ordered the beverages as well I highly recommend you mix those up before performing step 5.

6.) enjoy!

7.) repeat

Rainforest Rebellion

Submitted by Barbara Phinney

Author of All For A Good Cause

At the beginning of my book, ALL FOR A GOOD CAUSE, the heroine finds her nephews eating two unusual flavors of ice cream, hours before a wacky Medieval Fundraiser that would change her life. The ice cream flavors were, at the time, completely fictional, but with a bit of imagination, I've created them. They are kid tested and approved, thanks to my family.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups chocolate ice cream, softened
1/2 cup slivered almonds
1 cup pineapple tidbits, drained
1 medium banana, sliced
1 cup pistachio pudding, prepared

DIRECTIONS: Stir almonds, pineapple, and banana into softened ice cream. Gently fold the prepared pudding into the mixture, leaving ribbons of green throughout the ice cream. Freeze for about two hours.

Serves 6-8

Dinosaur Meteorites

Submitted by Barbara Phinney
Author of All For A Good Cause

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups vanilla ice cream, softened
several drops of green food coloring
1 cup large chocolate chips

1 cup cinnamon hearts candy

DIRECTIONS: Blend the food coloring evenly into the ice cream. Stir in remaining ingredients and freeze for one or two hours.

Serves 6-8

Anita Lynn's Scrumptious Carrot Cake

Submitted by Anita Gunnufson as Anita Lynn
Author of Blood Fever

INGREDIENTS: :

4 eggs
2 c. white or 1 3/4 c. whole wheat flour
2 c. sugar
1 c. oil
8 oz cream cheese
1/2 c crushed pineapple
3-4 cut up carrots
2 tsp. soda
1 tsp. salt

1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp vanilla
1 c. chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS: While oven is preheating to 350:

- 1) Blend together (in a blender) the eggs, oil, pineapple, carrots, and cream cheese
- 2) In large mixing bowl add the dry ingredients slowly to the carrot liquid. Beat 1 minute. Add walnuts
- 3) Bake 1 hour at 350 degrees F in a bundt or 13x9x2 pan (use a vegetable spray to prevent sticking)
- 4) frost as desired.

Notorious Angel Food Cake

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

INGREDIENTS:

3/4 cup cake flour
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 1/2 cups white sugar
3 (1 ounce) squares semisweet chocolate, grated
12 egg whites

1 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice
confectioners' sugar for dusting
Pint of fresh strawberries (de-stemmed and washed)
Whipped cream

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit. Line a 9 inch tube pan with parchment paper. Sift together the flour, cocoa and 3/4 cup of the sugar. In separate dish, mix 3 tablespoons of the flour mixture and toss with the grated chocolate.
2. In a large bowl, using an electric mixer set at low speed, beat egg whites until foamy. Increase mixer speed to medium, stir in cream of tartar and salt, and continue to beat until egg whites form soft peaks. Gradually mix in the remaining 3/4 cup sugar and beat until stiff peaks form. Stir in the vanilla and lemon juice.
3. Gently fold the flour mixture into the beaten egg whites, then fold in the grated chocolate, stirring until no white streaks remain.
4. Gently scrape the batter into the prepared pan. Smooth the surface of the batter and tap the pan lightly to remove any air bubbles. Bake in center of the preheated oven for 60 minutes, or until the surface springs back when touched.
5. When completely cooled, sprinkle with powdered sugar. Top with whipped cream and fresh strawberries.

Strawberry Soda Angel Cake

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

While others may live on coffee or tea, my favorite beverage in the world is strawberry soda. Of the all the kinds of tasted, I have to recommend Minute Maid's brand of strawberry soda as being the fruitiest in the bunch. This recipe combines a light angel food cake with sweet strawberry. For an added touch, decorate with fresh cut strawberries and a side of whip cream.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (18.25 ounce) package angel food cake mix
1 1/4 cups strawberry flavored carbonated beverage
1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup butter, melted
2 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
4 tablespoons strawberry flavored carbonated beverage
4 drops red food coloring

DIRECTIONS:

1. Prepare cake mix according to package directions, except substitute 1 1/4 cups soda and honey for the water. Bake as

directed. Remove from oven and set upside-down until cooled.

2. Meanwhile to prepare glaze, combine melted margarine, powdered sugar, remaining soda, and food coloring in a mixing bowl. Mix until smooth and drizzling consistency. Spread top of cooled cake.

No Bake Cookies

Submitted by Michele R. Bardsley

Author of *Bride In Training* and *Daddy In Training*

Susan McMillian, the heroine of my romantic comedy, *BRIDE IN TRAINING*, hasn't touched an oven since 1988, but even she can whip up a batch of No Bake Cookies using my Grandmother's recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups oatmeal

1/4 cup cocoa

1/2 cup peanut butter

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1/2 cup milk

2 cups sugar

1 stick butter

Optional: 1/2 cup coconut and/or 1/2 cup nuts.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Mix oatmeal and cocoa together. Set aside.
2. Prepare peanut butter and vanilla. Set aside.
3. Combine sugar, milk, and butter and bring to a boil.
4. Remove from the stove and add oatmeal/cocoa mixture, peanut butter, and vanilla.
5. Mix quickly and drop spoonfuls onto wax paper. Let cool. Hide about a dozen in your stash spot. Use the "Not Enough Oatmeal" excuse to explain cookie shortage; deny any accusations of cookie thievery with a gasp of outrage. (Hint: Wipe the chocolate off your mouth before claiming innocence.)

Apple Bread

Submitted by Jane Bierce

Author of COLD NIGHT BEAUTY, DEARLY BELOVED, ONCE AGAIN A PRINCESS and TIME OF POSSESSION

I don't write about food much, because I don't cook much. Husband is retired, and if I hadn't assigned him KP, he wouldn't do anything. One summer we had a failure of the zucchini crop and he had to changed to making apple-nut bread. It's very good. He also makes the world's best chocolate chip cookies, but won't divulge t he recipe, as it isn't perfected yet. We're still doing taste trials -- have been for a number of years. And the Seven-Can Casserole in THE FIRST OF SOMEDAY -- it was my daughter's idea.

INGREDIENTS:

3 medium raw apples, grated (a little more than 2 cups)
3 large eggs
2 cups sugar
æ cup vegetable (cooking) oil
3 tsps vanilla
3 cups sifted flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
3 tsps Cinnamon
1 ° tsps baking powder
° tsp Nutmeg
1 cup chopped nuts (walnuts, pecans or almonds)
2 loaf pans (4 x 8x 2 1 inches)

DIRECTIONS: Mix unpeeled, grated raw apples with eggs, sugar, cooking oil and vanilla. To this add the flour which has been sifted with the salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda and baking powder. Mix well. Stir in nuts. Bake in greased and floured loaf pans for 54 minutes at 350 F.

If batter is a little stiff, a bit of fruit juice (such as cranberry) can be added. This loaf is much improved if kept in the refrigerator, where it will keep up to two weeks. (Maybe longer, but ours never lasts that long.)

Pumpkin-Pine Nut Bread

Submitted by Connie Vines
Author of Whisper Upon The Water

INGREDIENTS:

2 c. flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/2 c. sugar
2 c. cooked pumpkin
3 eggs, beaten
3/4 c milk
1/2 c oil
1 tsp. vanilla
1 1/2 pine nuts, roasted

DIRECTIONS: Heat oven to 350 degrees. Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl. In a medium size bowl, mix eggs, milk oil and vanilla. Stir until blended, add pumpkin. Fold in dry ingredients, add pine nuts. Pour batter into two greased 5 x 9-inch loaf pans and bake for 45 minutes.

Indian Fry Bread (reservation/pow wow style)

Submitted by Connie Vines
Author of Whisper Upon The Water

INGREDIENTS:

3 c. flour
1 1/2 c. warm water
1 1/4 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
Enough cooking oil for iron skillet.

DIRECTIONS: Mix flour, baking powder and salt. Add warm water and knead until dough is soft, not sticky. Stretch and pat dough until thin. Tear off one piece at a time: poke a hole in the center. Drop into skillet of hot cooking oil. Brown on both sides. Serve hot. Very good with honey or dusted with powdered sugar. Also may be topped with taco fixings (You will find this at pow wows) and sold as an Indian Taco.

Plain Pizelli Cookies

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

When my sister-in-law (the inspiration for my heroine Sera's sister-in-law Beryl) joined our family about 7 years ago, she brought a concern for family, a sense of humor and a plate of these cookies to our Christmas Eve table. Though my sister-in-law is Irish, this Italian cookie recipe was an old family favorite of hers. The cookies are sweet, light and known to disappear quickly from any dish. Today it is my chosen dish whenever we gather with the kids to bake cookies for Santa. This is the simplest dish, but the many varieties that follow are inventions of mine and my sister-in-law.

INGREDIENTS:

6 eggs
1 cup sugar
2 sticks butter or margarine
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon extract for flavoring (lemon, orange, peppermint)
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder

DIRECTIONS: Beat eggs and blend with sugar and margarine. Fold in flour and baking powder. Add extracts last. Mix until consistency is gooey and sticky.

Heat Pizelle iron and spray with Crisco. Using a tablespoon, spoon a dollop of batter on center of iron cookie form (usually there are 2 cookie forms per iron). Close lid tightly and count to 10. Lift lid and remove cookie with spatula. Cookie should be mostly white with just a tinge of golden brown. Be sure to place cookie on flat plate until it cools and hardens.

Makes approximately 2 dozen cookies.

Almond Pizelli Cookies

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

While plain pizellis have a mild vanilla taste, this variety is an invention of my sister-in-law's. They are the second favorite cookies of all we make every Christmas.

INGREDIENTS:

6 eggs
1 cup sugar
2 sticks butter or margarine
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract for flavoring
1 cup almond slices (not chunks)
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder

DIRECTIONS: Beat eggs and blend with sugar and margarine. Fold in flour and baking powder. Add extracts and

almond slices last. Mix until consistency is gooey and sticky.

Heat Pizelle iron and spray with Crisco. Using a tablespoon, spoon a dollop of batter on center of iron cookie form (usually there are 2 cookie forms per iron). Close lid tightly and count to 10. Lift lid and remove cookie with spatula. Cookie should be mostly white with just a tinge of golden brown. Be sure to place cookie on flat plate until it cools and hardens.

Makes approximately 2 dozen cookies.

Chocolate Almond Pizelli Cookies

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski

Author of Notorious Angel

While baking the annual cookies with the women of my family, I decided to get creative. Since chocolate is my favorite flavor, I wondered how to incorporate that into my favorite cookie. After many attempts with various forms of chocolate, this one is the winner. Be warned, batches of these never last long. Even the finickiest of eaters grab them before they ever have a chance to cool.

INGREDIENTS:

6 eggs

1 cup sugar

2 sticks butter or margarine
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup cocoa powder
1 cup almond slices (not chunks)
2 teaspoons baking powder

DIRECTIONS: Beat eggs and blend with sugar and margarine. Fold in flour, cocoa powder and baking powder. Add almond slices and extracts last. Mix until consistency is gooey and sticky.

Heat Pizelle iron and spray with Crisco. Using a tablespoon, spoon a dollop of batter on center of iron cookie form (usually there are 2 cookie forms per iron). Close lid tightly and count to 10. Lift lid and remove cookie with spatula. Cookie should be mostly white with just a tinge of golden brown. Be sure to place cookie on flat plate until it cools and hardens.

Makes approximately 2 dozen cookies.

Dessert Cookie Shells

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

INGREDIENTS:

6 eggs
1 cup sugar
2 sticks butter or margarine
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon extract for flavoring (lemon, orange, peppermint)
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder

DIRECTIONS:

Beat eggs and blend with sugar and margarine. Fold in flour and baking powder. Add extracts last. Mix until consistency is gooey and sticky.

Heat Pizelle Iron and spray with Crisco. Using a tablespoon, spoon a dollop of batter on center of iron cookie form (usually there are 2 cookie forms per iron). Close lid tightly and count to 10. Cookie should be mostly white with just a tinge of golden brown. Lift lid and remove cookie with spatula. Place soft cookie in a small ice cream bowl and allow it to cool in that shape. Once cookie hardens, you may remove it to fill with ice cream, or whipped cream and fresh fruit. Cookie will be brittle, so be careful when handling.

Makes approximately 2 dozen cookie shells.

Chocolate Nut Snowball Cookies

Submitted by Jennifer Kokoski
Author of Notorious Angel

A few years ago, I started a cookie exchange with a friend in Colorado. My friend is of the male persuasion and therefore not known for his culinary talents. Our exchange was more like a challenge. Every year we tried a new recipe and saw how it turned out. Rejects become tree ornaments for Christmas. I'm happy to say this was one of my favorite discovered recipes.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup powdered sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 1/4 cups flour
1/2 cup chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped pecans
Extra powdered sugar

DIRECTIONS: Blend sugar, butter and vanilla extract. Add flour and salt, mixing thoroughly. Fold in nuts and chocolate chips. Cover and chill dough in refrigerator for 1 hour. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Shape into 1 inch balls

and bake for 8-10 minutes. Do not brown. Cool, then roll in powdered sugar.

Chocolate Cream Cheese Cake

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly

Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

A cake for special celebrations.

INGREDIENTS:

2 3-oz. packages cream cheese, softened one may be lowfat, don't use the no-fat version

1/2 cup butter or margarine

1 teaspoon vanilla

6 1/2 cups (1 1/2 pounds) sifted powdered sugar

1/3 cup milk, at room temperature

4 squares (4 oz.) unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled

4 Tablespoons butter or margarine, softened

3 eggs

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

1 1/4 cups milk

DIRECTIONS: Cream together cheese, 1/2 cup butter and vanilla. Alternately beat in sugar and 1/3 cup milk. Blend in chocolate. Remove 2 cups of frosting; cover and refrigerate. Cream together remaining chocolate mixture and butter. Add eggs, beat well. Stir together dry ingredients. Beat into creamed mixture alternately with remaining milk. Turn into two greased and floured 9 inch cake pans. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool in pans 10 minutes. Remove and cool on racks. Remove frosting from refrigerator 15 minutes before frosting cake.

Apple Dapple Cake

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly
Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

This is an approximation of my grandmother's recipe which she never wrote down. She baked hers in a wood stove.

INGREDIENTS:

3 eggs
2 cups sugar
1 1/2 cups vegetable oil
3 cups plain flour
3 cups apples, chopped
1 cup pecans, chopped

1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon vanilla

Topping

1 c brown sugar
1/4 cup milk
1 stick margarine
nuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS: Mix well and pour into 13 x 9 x 2 inch pan. Bake one hours in 300 degree oven. Mix topping ingredients. Cook 2 1/2 minutes and pour over warm cake.

Yellow Cake

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly
Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

This recipe is so moist and rich the cake doesn't need frosting, and it's an excellent base for strawberry shortcake.

INGREDIENTS:

2/3 cup butter, softened (margarine not recommended)
1 3/4 cups sugar

2 eggs
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
3 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/4 cups milk

DIRECTIONS: Cream butter. Add sugar gradually and cream until light. Add eggs and vanilla then beat until fluffy. Sift dry ingredients together. Alternating with milk add the dry mixture, and beat until just mixed. Beat at medium for one minute. Bake in a greased and floured pan at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes.

Key Lime Cake

Submitted by Marilyn Byerly
Author of Star-Crossed and Time After Time

INGREDIENTS:

1 package lemon cake mix (not with pudding)
1 (3.4 oz.) package instant lemon pudding mix
4 eggs

1/2 cup water
1/2 cup key lime juice
1/2 cup vegetable oil

Glaze:

2 cups powered sugar, sifted
1/4 cup key lime juice (Use 1/2 cup if you like a tart cake)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a 9x13 in pan. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Beat for 2 minutes at medium speed with an electric mixer. Pour into prepared pan. Bake for 35 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool cake in pan on a wire rack.
2. Combine sugar and juice. Drizzle over cake.

Second Only to Sex Dessert

Submitted by Judith Lynn
Author of Love Thy Enemy

INGREDIENTS:

1 stick butter 1/2 C. of lg. container Cool Whip
1 C. flour 1 can cherry OR blueberry pie filling

1 C. chopped pecans 1 (3 oz.) vanilla instant pudding

1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened DIRECTIONS: Mix and pat into 9 x 13" pan: butter, flour and pecans. Bake at 350°F for 20 minutes and cool. Blend cream cheese and 1/2 C. cool whip. Spread on cooled cookie base. Cover with pie filling. Mix one 3 oz. Package vanilla instant pudding according to package directions. Spread carefully over pie filling. Top with remainder of the large container of Cool Whip. Sprinkle top with chopped pecans.

Glossary I: Literary Treats - Book Blurbs & Excerpts

A Portrait in Time

By Barbara Donlon Bradley

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-657-1; ISBN paperback: 0-7599-0266-6

[EXCERPT]

"Trey Dalton, I'm going to kill you," Alex screamed at the top of her lungs as she flew down the wide path. "How do I stop this thing?"

"Try using the reins," he shouted back.

She stared down at the pieces of leather in her hand. Gripping the flimsy straps, she pulled, hard. The poor mare skidded to a halt so fast she found herself face down on the dirt road. She came up sputtering. As she dusted herself off, she heard the pounding of Trey's boots coming toward her. Just before he touched her, she spoke. "Don't you dare lay a hand on me."

Although she didn't look at him, she held herself stiffly, pulling away whenever he tried to move closer. He anger was so strong it acted like a shield around her.

"Alexandra," he said.

"Don't you Alexandra me," she snapped. "You knew I didn't know how to ride a horse."

Trey looked away.

This was one time when she wished she didn't have good peripheral vision. When she saw him look away, she knew he felt guilty. It fired her anger more. "So! You thought to trick me by putting me on a horse! You didn't believe me

when I told you I couldn't ride? Of all the insufferable . . ."

All For A Good Cause

By Barbara Phinney

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0242-9; paperback: 0-7599-0613-0

www.hardshell.com

[EXCERPT]

Janet tugged on her hand. Did he think she was stupid? Those years in Ottawa had taught her a thing or two about men, especially men with the gift of a silver tongue. Like Hank, the good ol' boy from Calgary. His western drawl and sun-faded jeans had attracted her once. Not any more.

And this man looming over her was just the same. Except he appeared as comfortable in leggings and leather as Hank had in jeans and a sports jacket. Janet cleared her throat. Just the same? That kiss hadn't been the same, not by a long shot.

"Come on, Auntie Janet," Robbie called out.

She tore herself away, glad for the distraction. "I'm coming, but remember, first one to act up is not allowed in the sword fight."

She couldn't believe she said that. 'If you misbehave, I won't let you slice anyone in two.' That makes a lot of sense. With the boys' bag in hand, Janet followed the youngsters and peered at the indecipherable placard, hoping this was their tent.

"Did you hear me?" she asked the twins when they didn't answer.

"Yes, Auntie Janet."

"Yes, Auntie Janet."

"Yes, Auntie Janet."

She whirled around, finding her handsome medieval misfit still tagging along. Didn't he have a tent to pitch?

Ignoring his wide grin, she shooed the boys into the tent and chucked the small bag in after them.

The man leaned forward slightly and Janet recalled the fresh minty taste of his mouth. He asked, "Will you spank me if I misbehave?"

She stepped back, finding him altogether too close to her. "No, you'd enjoy it too much."

"Then will you marry me instead?"

At Your Command

By Christine W. Murphy

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0420-0; paperback: 0-7599-0423-5

At Your Command, 2000 PEARL finalist for best fantasy/magical romance Is Maggie Yates suffering from a complete nervous breakdown or is a naked jinn offering to grant her three wishes? The only alternative she's willing to consider is she has a nut in her bedroom. In either case, it's time to panic!

Tom has had more names than he can remember and several masters he'd like to forget. The only thing he hates more than granting wishes is returning to the obis to wait for another fool to call him. When he meets his latest master, however, he discovers wishes have their charms, but he can only grant three before his curse separates them forever.

Can Tom trick Maggie into forgoing her third wish until she's an old woman? Or maybe, just maybe, has he found the one person who loves him enough to risk setting him free?

Bear Hugs

By Ginny McBlain

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-636-9; paperback: 0-7599-0403-0

Never again...

Paige Holbrook needs help to bring her son out of a coma. In desperation, she turns to Bidwell Bear, young Jamie's TV idol.

From their first meeting, Paige and Hunter Blackwell, the man inside the Bidwell costume, each experience an attraction neither can ignore.

Hunter is about to realize his life-long dream -- to become a singing star. Glitz and glamour aren't Paige's thing, not after what she's been through with her playboy ex-husband.

Is Hunter's love worth the glare of the spotlight?

[EXCERPT]

Prologue

He didn't sound like a bear. His voice, whiskey smooth and low, curled her toes, and when he sang his little ditties shivers crawled along her spine. His voice conveyed sexy, his words portrayed caring. Her imagination conjured breath-stopping handsome.

Chastising herself for such a schoolgirlish notion, Paige stuck her head around the family room door. "Jamie, put your shoes on. Daddy'll be here in a few minutes."

"Mo-om, Bidwell's on."

And nothing on earth, not even a trip to the zoo with his father, would keep Jamie Holbrook from his daily date with Bidwell Bear.

What did the man under the fuzzy bear costume look like? The question nagged every time she heard the Bidwell Bear theme song. So often voices didn't match the mental image they proclaimed. Good old lovable Bidwell was most likely a balding fellow, whose paunch was camouflaged by his costume's thick artificial fur.

"You can put your shoes on and watch Bidwell at the same time."

A toe-tapping rhythm emanated from the television set. "Mom, watch this! Bidwell's gonna dance and do a flip. Watch, Mom. He's way cool."

Intrigued in spite of herself, Paige perched on the edge of the couch, her gaze trained on the screen. How could anyone wearing a bulky suit move with such grace? Bidwell sang, bidding his young fans to share and play fair while he executed a terrific soft-shoe and emphasized his lesson by turning a back flip. His electric blue, Greek fisherman's cap dropped to the floor. The long vest slid up to his armpits. How he kept from getting tangled in the poppy red garment,

she'd never know. The image of a well-honed athlete flashed through her mind.

"Didya see him, Mom?" Jamie's eyes, blue as the Nebraska sky on a clear summer day, sparkled.

Not for the first time, Paige thanked her lucky stars that Jamie had chosen such a lovable, worthy idol. The Bidwell Bear Show was fun, fast-paced and informative, geared to the limited attention span of a pre-schooler. In Jamie's mind, the TV character's word was gospel.

Jamie shook her knee. "Mo-om! Didya see Bidwell flip?"

"Sure did. Now, please put your shoes on."

Jamie shoved his feet in battered sneakers and pulled on the laces. "I make rabbit ears, right?"

"That's right--" The doorbell chimed.

* * *

That afternoon, Paige made her way through the crowd of proud parents and excited graduates looking for her favorite students to tell them good-bye.

"Ms. Holbrook!"

The Vice Principal's voice sounded urgent. "Yes, Mr. Bentley?"

"Your father called. There's been an accident. Jamie's hurt badly. They've taken him to the Med Center."

Beyond the Shadow

By Liz Hunter

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-549-4; paperback: 0-7599-0392-1

Genre: Romance

Guilty or Innocent?

Even after the sensational trial of St. Louis builder Holden Sawyer, the answer to that question haunts marketing consultant and juror Mara Taylor. All Mara wants is to resume her normal life But because of the lengthy, notorious trial, her business is in ruins. Her roommate is gone along with Mara's boyfriend. Then a series of 'accidents' convinces her that someone wants her punished for setting Holden free.

And the former defendant wants her help in solving the murder!

Pushed beyond endurance and determined to regain her life, Mara sets out to solve the murder on her own. Every clue embroils her more deeply into the life of one prime suspect, Holden Sawyer, the defendant she helped acquit.

What was Holden's relationship with the beautifully erotic murder victim? Why does a mysterious gold necklace help Mara tap into the victim's mind and the secrets a television evangelist religiously protects? In the midst of the front page backlash her investigation generates, is Mara falling in love with the man she helped free, or the allure and excitement that surround him?

Which is more important, knowing the truth . . . or trusting her heart?

[EXCERPT]

The idea of being linked with an acquitted murder defendant brought chills to Mara's spine. They were both targets, and though some whacko might not be able to broach Holden's defenses at home, hers were virtually non-existent. She swung away, her anger erupting. "How could you do this to me?"

"I didn't do anything, at least not intentionally."

Her life was in danger from some vigilante zealot, and Holden denied any involvement? A brutal wind drove the first sheets of rain at them. "Son of a-- Why can't this whole nightmare just be over?"

"It can't," he yelled. "Not on its own. That's why we have to stick together on this."

"Stick together!?! I'm calling the police again." Cold rain lashed at her face. She took off at a dead run.

He nabbed her, his hand remorseless, choking off her escape as well as the blood flow in her wrist. "What would you tell them?" he demanded. "That someone may be after you? Has anyone threatened you directly? Do you have proof your life's in danger?"

She wanted to scream at him but realized he had a point. She'd heard of people being denied protection until an actual attempt had been made on their lives. The authorities wouldn't act on the basis of a few letters. "What do you suggest I do?"

"Work with me. Help me investigate the murder."

"You're out of your mind!"

Twisting her arm free, she took off, running blindly in the wind and rain. Sirens pierced the air, warning that tornadoes had been spotted. Pea sized hail stung her back, pelting her arms and shoulders. She tripped, scrambled against bare pavement, sobbing with pain and frustration.

Holden wrapped strong arms around her, and she wanted to give in to his superior strength, stay within the aura of his seductive embrace.

Blood Fever

By Anita Lynn (aka Anita Gunnufson)

ISBN e-book 1-58200-093-X; paperback 0-7599-0065-5

A mysterious infection is killing the Navajo on the reservation in Northern Arizona.

Only the need to stop the spread of the infection and save his people makes Navajo Doctor Michael Begay agree to work with epidemiologist Peggy Sanders. But time is running out.

They must overcome their mistrust and different backgrounds to find the source of the deadly infection because more is at stake than either could imagine.

[EXCERPT]

Only the animals witnessed the event.

Two men, walking single file, entered the national forest behind the San Francisco Peaks. The taller heavysset one, who led the way, wore a well-worn pair of coveralls, a blue chambray shirt, and brown work boots which had never been polished and probably never would be. His gray hair was pulled back into a ponytail that hung limply past his shoulders. The other, following about five feet behind, wore a green polo shirt and stylish jeans with a logo on the back pocket. His almost-new running shoes had the distinct mark of their manufacturer, and his blond hair was styled and razor-cut.

The tall, ponderosa pine trees, their reddish brown trunks scattered no more than four feet apart, allowed no vehicles through except a motorcycle. The sky, which had begun as an unpolluted clear blue, slowly began to fill with the heavy gray clouds, signaling the coming of the daily southwestern summer rains the locals called monsoons. Within the forest, the shadows from the trees darkened ominously as the sunlight disappeared.

The blond man, who carried a thermos, stopped to glance at the wilderness surrounding them, then spoke to his companion.

The larger man answered, frowning, and prodded the blond man along by a wave of his hand. Hugging the thermos

cargo closer, the reluctant man started walking again, though more slowly than before. Every few seconds the larger man would turn around as if to make certain his companion followed him.

They continued like this until they came to a small stream, then the larger fellow held his hand out in request. The blond man hesitated, then turned as if to leave. The larger man pulled a gun from inside his pocket, pointed it at his companion, and shouted.

The blond man stopped, his eyes widening in shock when he saw the gun and the accompanying snarl on the rugged face of its holder. With trembling hands, he handed over the container.

The larger man nodded, then smiled in satisfaction. He immediately opened the container and spilled its cloudy contents into the clear mountain stream. As the current carried the substance downstream, it spread itself wider, like fingers of an opening hand. Soon, it became impossible to differentiate the water from what had been added.

The blond man hung his head, shaking it from side to side, as if he knew.... The nightmare had begun.

Blue Hands, Blue Cloth

By Shirley Parenteau

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-042-5

Reviewed as "A book every girl should read," Eppie winning Blue Hands, Blue Cloth takes readers to Gambia, West Africa, for the story of Iman, a young girl who discovers her own self worth as she works to develop the most beautifully-patterned indigo-dyed cloth in her village. Vibrant illustrations enhance descriptions of tie-dying methods.

[Excerpt]

"Iman," said her father when she stopped to watch him weave, "have you thought of a design yet? Will it be like the scales of a snake?"

"No," said Iman. "The women make a design like snake scales already." She remembered the way her grandmother pinched the woven cotton cloth in tight folds and sewed it with tiny stitches. The dye couldn't get under the stitches. When Iman helped open the material to dry, it looked so much like snake scales, she thought it might slither away into the forest.

Bride In Training

Michele R. Bardsley

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0058-2; paperback: 0-7599-0601-7

ReB1100: 0759903964

www.daddyintraining.com

EXCERPT:

"You may be wondering where my shirt is," Ross surmised. "I was trying to wash my hands. I couldn't find a paper towel and then the soap squirted-"

"Doesn't matter, cutie pie." She grabbed his arm.

"But my shirt," he said, as she dragged him between cables, chairs, and people roaming through the television studio.

"You'll do fine," the woman chirped, pulling him along behind her. Ross noticed the smooth pink skirt stretch across a nice, round behind every time she took a step. "Women in the audience will love a half-naked man," she added.

Women? Audience? "Whoa," Ross said, stopping so suddenly, the woman stumbled. He automatically tried to

steady her. She swung around; her momentum brought her solidly against him. Her fingers rested on his ribcage as she stared at him with wide eyes. She took a deep breath, which pushed her breasts into his heated skin. He stifled a groan as his body reacted to her soft femininity.

"You had a question?" she asked.

"I did?"

Her gaze connected with his and he couldn't remember what he had wanted to say. He noticed her skin had an orange tint and remembered that people who worked in front of the television camera wore pancake make-up. So she worked for his Uncle George, who owned this television station in Little Creek, Oklahoma.

"We don't have much time," she said, stepping away. "So move it."

He blinked. His injured eye felt as dry as sawdust. "Move where?"

"To those nice little chairs we set up for the bachelors. You're Bachelor Number Five, remember?"

"No, I don't think--"

"Good," she interrupted. "Don't think at all. Women adore a man who doesn't think."

Broken Pledge

by Jackie Kramer (aka Jackie Bielowicz)

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-109-X; ISBN paperback: 07599-0602-5

<http://www.hardshell.com>

Seth Medlock has come to purchase the small Oklahoma pediatric hospital where Carin Holcomb is assistant director of nurses. Once he had been the center of Carin's life. Had he returned just for the sale or did he have a secret agenda?

Carin had never forgotten her life with Seth, nor had she forgotten how ruthless he could be in getting his way. Was he really back in her life to reunite or was he simply using their past relationship to parley for a better deal?

While both of them still have a passion for their professions, had time and distance taught them that in the final negotiation, only love counts?

1999 Finalist Booksellers' Best Award

Buried In Baltimore

By Louise Titchener

ISBN e-book: 07599-0039-6; paperback: 0-7599-0042-6

Published by Hard Shell Word Factory

[EXCERPT]

"Toni!" Alice's voice whined through the open window.

"Who's that?" My sister Sandy stalked across my guest bedroom and peered down at the street below. Wild-eyed, Alice stood on the stoop. She wore a grimy pink sweatsuit, tight in all the wrong places. Clumps of matted gray hair festooned her shoulders.

"Toni, please! I ain't got no place to crash. I feel sick. Think I'm gonna puke."

Sandy shot me a horrified look. "Don't tell me she's a friend of yours."

"She's a street person around here. She lives on handouts."

"Toni, have a heart. Let me in."

Sandy's eyes widened. "Don't tell me you've ever let her into your house!"

"Once or twice on super cold nights."

"Are you out of your mind?"

I pushed the sash up and leaned out. "Not tonight, Alice."

"Toni, please, please. There's people trying to kill me."

"Sorry Alice, I've got company."

"Okay, Toni. You'll be sorry for treating me so bad." Head sagging into her shoulders as if she were a weary old turtle, Alice slouched into the darkness Sandy asked, "What did she mean about people trying to kill her?"

"It's a delusion." I stared after Alice. "Ever since I've known her, she's talked about an assassin trying to get her."

"Jesus! How long have you been chummy with this nutcase?"

"About three months. I met her just after I moved in. She panhandles for drinks around here. Poor old gal. Except the homeless shelters, she really doesn't have any place to go. Maybe I should have let her in."

"Is there something wrong with my ears? Toni, for God's sake, get away from that window before another piece of human trash floats up to your door." My scowling sister had her arms crossed over her chest. Normally, Sandy wouldn't set foot in my house. But she'd just had a row with Al, her husband. Since, according to her, she couldn't stand being under the same roof with him now, her choices were few. "So, where are the kids?" I asked.

"I left them in Little Italy, with the folks."

"Won't that interfere with Mom's life of drudgery? How can she stir the Credella Cauldrons with your three underfoot?"

Sandy snorted. "When will you get it through your thick head, Toni? Maybe we didn't like growing up as kitchen slaves in the family restaurant, but Mom likes to cook. Though how she'll manage this weekend with Billy, Matt and Alex, I'm not sure."

I agreed with that. Sandy's three boys are just like their thick-necked dad--noisy, bad-tempered and pig-headed. Maybe I'd better tell you about myself. My name is Toni Credella and I'm twenty-nine and dyslexic. Four years ago I shot and killed my husband Nick with his service revolver.

Child Support

By Betty Craker Henderson

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-617-2; paperback: 1-58200-617-2

What happens when a woman who has enjoyed twenty years of easy living is betrayed and dumped by her husband? Although Cheryl Foster finds the situation tough to handle, she's positive Paul will see the light and come crawling back...until he actually weds Belynda.

Now, Cheryl screws-up big time. One little overnight mistake equals one humongous mess. Trying to fix job problems, mend shaky relationships and decide what she will do about this pregnancy at the same time all join together to force her to take a good hard look at herself. Like it or not, now she is going to be making her own choices, and she'd better be a fast learner. Can Cheryl learn to deal with this new life, or will she crumble from the effort?

[EXCERPT]

Jake pushed open the screen door, and we watched, fascinated, as he picked up a long whip-like stick from behind a pile of books and magazines and expertly slid it through his fingers. A circle of heavy twine about eighteen inches in length was attached to one end of it. He picked his way through scrubby clumps of weeds to a sagging wire gate set

between worn wooden posts. Near the gate stood a covered container. Opening the lid, he reached inside to lift out a coffee can of feed. Hungry chickens flopped squawking and clucking against his scrawny legs as he fought his way through the flock. Sprinkling feed on the ground, he stepped back and waited patiently as the chickens began fussing and fighting over the scant offering. The loop lay in the dust, a circle innocent of malice, until a sleek white rooster stepped inside.

A quick twist of the wrist, and the chicken dangled upside-down and helpless from the now-tightened loop of twine.

He hoisted it high in the air and looked it over carefully. Then he nodded in approval. "Yep," he said, satisfied. "You'll do."

He left the chickens to their fussing and fastened the gate behind him. Then, holding the feet beneath his arm, he released the rooster, took its head in his free hand, gave it a hard spin several times round, and tossed it to the ground. The chicken's dead body flopped in the sunshine, feathers ruffling and feet jerking, as the nerves ceased to operate.

He returned to the house. The only sound in the silence was the slamming of the screen door. Stunned, I fished my knife from the pan before me and began peeling a potato.

There was nothing for me to say. Never in my life had I dreamed of such an approach to a meal.

"My word." Mother Kate's admiring voice brought me back to reality. "Ain't seen nobody kill a chicken thataway in years and years."

My own voice was weak. "Beat you," I gulped. "I've never."

The dead rooster lay quiet, a small dusty pile of dull and lifeless feathers, ready for plucking and cleaning. Well, that was one way to do it.

Coming To Terms

by Jackie Kramer (aka Jackie Bielowicz)

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-611-3; ISBN paperback: 07599-0602-5
<http://www.hardshell.com>

To inherit his family's business, Jared Rutledge needs a wife for one year and beautiful, spunky Kate fills the bill perfectly. But what will happen when his need to succeed clashes with Kate's need for a "home-n-hearth" husband?

Kate Lawson needs funds to provide a kidney transplant for her ailing son, David. But after a lifetime spent with a "company man" father and husband, is she willing to get involved with another workaholic, even in a marriage of convenience, for the sake of her child?

As Jared and Kate fall in love, she teaches him that there is more to life than the next contract. When they come to terms, Jared learns love is the best deal of all!

[EXCERPT]

"Honey, I've waited for this a long time." Jared lifted her in his arms and strode up the stairs, feeling like a conqueror. Her slight figure curled trustingly in his arms, her face snuggled against his throat. He could feel her heart pounding against his chest. A few tendrils of her jasmine-scented hair tickled his jaw.

In the doorway of their bedroom, he halted. Here for the past six weeks had been his place of torture. Here he had had to share a space with Kate, her scent permeating the air; her lingerie next to his underwear in the dresser; her things scattered around, always reminding him of her. But the main tribulation had been the beds.

Those damned over-sized twin beds his grandmother had selected when Bertram proved to be a restless sleeper.

For too many nights, Jared had slipped into his lonely bed after Kate had fallen asleep and listened to the sound of her gentle breathing.

Too many mornings he had awakened before her, and had to resist the sight of her lying in her bed, sleep-tousled amid the tumbled bedding, to combat his craving to kiss her soft, pink lips. No, no doubt. Those were the beds from hell. But all that was about to change.

Jared glanced at Kate, and saw her staring at the beds as if they were torture devices. An unaccustomed tenderness touched his heart. He stepped into the room, closing the door behind them with his hip. He nuzzled her cheek with his nose until she turned her attention to him, then smiled into her deep, pansy-brown eyes.

"Your place or mine?"

Cowboy in My Pocket

By Kate Douglas

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-634-2; paperback: 0-7599-0126-0

If you like your cowboys sexy, your heroines forgetful and your marriages convenient, this gentle parody of cowboy romances will leave you with a smile on your face and a sigh on your lips. Discover romantic comedy at its best in this captivating tale of a woman who finds her one true love and the cowboy hero afraid to give his heart.

Romance author Michelle Garrison is on a mission to learn more about the American West. Her books are no longer selling and her editor has given her an ultimatum--learn what cowboys are really like, then write the next bestseller.

Tag Martin is desperate for a bride. If he doesn't marry before his 40th birthday, his grandmother will sign away the deed to the ranch he's worked and managed for his entire adult life.

Coop Jones has been Tag's sidekick since Tag was barely kicking. Almost 80, he's been pining for the love of Tag's grandmother since she was only 17. An avid romance fan, he's concocted a fantastic plan to stage an MOC--a marriage of convenience for the uninitiated--in order to save the ranch for Tag.

Lenore Martin at 78 is a widow with a mission. Get that grandson married and his hard-headed cowboy sidekick to realize she's not too old to romance. There's sizzle left in the old gal yet.

Add a little amnesia, a few white lies, a flop-eared dog, the requisite white stallion and a love too hot to handle, and you've got a rowdy romp on the wild side with COWBOY IN MY POCKET.

[EXCERPT]

TAG STOOD next to the kitchen table arranging plates and silverware on woven place mats. Lee studied his strong back and broad shoulders for a moment. He appeared so engrossed in his domestic task he was unaware she'd entered the room. She watched him take a loaf of sliced bread out of the basket, then arrange a couple of platters of sliced meats and cheese and a bowl of fresh fruit in the center of the table.

He paused a moment, grabbed a bouquet of flowers off the sideboard and set them off to one side of the table, appeared to study the arrangement, then moved them closer to the center.

"It looks nice."

Tag spun around the moment she spoke. He stuck his hands in his rear pockets, like a small boy who'd been caught touching things he shouldn't. Or a man decorating a table for a woman's appreciation. He'd changed into a worn pair of jeans and a red flannel shirt that hung unbuttoned and open from his shoulders. His chest was magnificent, broad and muscled, smooth except for a pattern of dark hair surrounding his navel and trailing downward to disappear beneath the

waistband of his jeans.

Lee caught herself mentally following the trail and shifted her gaze to the floor. His feet were bare, like hers.

Why did that feel so intimate, the fact they were both barefoot? Lee almost turned around and ran back into the bathroom. If she was already noticing such irrelevant things, it was going to be a long night. She'd be better off noticing the table, especially since he'd obviously arranged it for her benefit.

"Would you like champagne?" Tag held up the opened bottle. Two champagne flutes, one empty, the other half full, sat on the place mats. He seemed hesitant, unsure of himself. Lee hadn't pictured Tag as awkward in any situation, but she found his unpolished demeanor oddly attractive.

"I would have waited," he said, "but under the circumstances I..." He grinned at her, shaking his head from side to side, then let out a deep whoosh of breath. "I really don't know what to say. Can you imagine a bigger mess?"

"I don't know. I don't remember." Lee returned his grin. "And yes, I'd love a glass of champagne. I'd also like some of that food. I'm starving and it looks delicious." Tag pulled Lee's chair out for her, then sat in the one across the table, opposite hers. He poured champagne into the extra glass and handed it to her. Lee raised the crystal flute in a silent toast. Tag did the same.

"Are you ready to delve into your past?"

Daddy In Training

Michele R. Bardsley

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-901-5; paperback: 0-7599-0601-7

ReB1100: 1582002835; Palm Pilot: 0740805045

www.daddyintraining.com

EXCERPT

"Hello, Dr. Stone."

Susan's voice jolted Rory. Susan had stood and turned her back to greet the other guest. All Rory could see above Susan's perfectly groomed head was a shock of dark hair against a tan forehead. She peered around her friend and saw one muscled leg encased in gray slacks. Then Susan shifted positions and Rory's only view was her friend's fuschia behind.

Great. She would be discussing her views on child discipline with a doctor. He'd probably written some best-selling book on kids and had twelve angelic children. She thought of her own brood at home with Rosa. They were all probably piled around the television, getting ready to watch her make a fool out of herself. Just an hour ago, they had been begging to go with her. Andrea and Mike had been disappointed when she'd said no, but Sylvie had merely asked for her not to do anything embarrassing. "Okay. I'll pick my nose when we're off the air," Rory had said. Remembering the look of horror on Sylvie's face lessened the anxiety now roiling through her.

"Okay, let's go," said a disembodied voice as bright lights flashed onto the area where she, Susan, and the mystery doctor sat. Rory went blind for a moment, then tiny yellow dots danced before her eyes.

As the dots disappeared, she turned toward Dr. Stone. Two blue eyes pierced her with cool arrogance. She grinned and waved. He raised his left eyebrow in obvious disdain. The gesture reminded her so much of Sylvie's I've-been-cursed-with-an-alien-mother expression that Rory did what she always did when Sylvie raised her pencil-thin eyebrow-she crossed her eyes and stuck out the tip of her tongue. The look of astonishment on his face almost made her laugh.

Take that, Mr. Humbug.

Dark Changeling

by Margaret L. Carter

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-121-9; paperback: 0-7599-0096-5

Psychiatrist Roger Darvell suffers from a dark thirst--and a very strange midlife crisis. At the age of 40, he discovers that vampires are real, that his own ancestry is not what he believed, and that a renegade vampire is stalking him, his patients, and his newfound lover.

[EXCERPT]

Calming herself, she said, "You never, never betray one of us to ephemerals, no matter what he's done."

In no mood to cater to Sylvia's fantasy, Roger said, "You know I don't believe there is an 'us.' And even if there were, I'd feel no obligation to protect a killer."

"You still need convincing? Well, stand by to be convinced."....

Sylvia lifted her face to the sky, spreading her arms to test the wind. With her back to Roger, he could see her muscles undulating beneath the skin as the outline of her body blurred and re-formed. The glow of her aura intensified, and the energy she radiated ruffled the hair on Roger's arms. Her skin color darkened from white to glossy blue-black, sprouting velvety fuzz.

Petrified with disbelief, burrs clinging to his trouser cuffs and gnats buzzing around his head, Roger stared at what unfurled from Sylvia's back.

She had wings.

Dark Salvation

By Jennifer Dunne

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0367-0; paperback: 0-7599-0401-4

Awards won by Dark Salvation:

Romance Writers of America Golden Heart (Paranormal category), Finalist

Silver Heart (Single Title category), Winner

Desmond Lacroix was cursed for his father's sins, and will do anything to prevent the curse from claiming the life of his young daughter, including kidnapping reporter Rebecca Morgan. Soon he wants Rebecca to stay for his sake as well. But can he trust the secret of his 150-year curse to a woman who exposes secrets for a living?

"DARK SALVATION is the bittersweet chocolate of fantasy romance - dark, delicious and impossible to put down!" -
- Claire Cross, author of Love Potion #9

[EXCERPT]

Golden warmth ran through Rebecca, spreading out in waves from Desmond's touch. She tilted her head to look at him. His eyes shone a deep green, warm and welcoming. Did he feel the sparks between them, too? If he wasn't holding his daughter, would he kiss her?

He opened his mouth to say something more, and the kitchen timer pinged. He smiled again, the wry smile more familiar to her.

"Dinner's ready."

She followed him back into the kitchen. No signs remained of the recent struggle. He woke Gillian up and strapped her into a booster seat, then pulled out a chair for Rebecca.

Gillian tugged lethargically at her napkin, pulling it out from under her rubberized silverware to cover her plate. Ignoring his daughter's silent protest, Desmond removed a casserole dish from the oven. He set it on the table and lifted the cover, releasing a cloud of steam that was fragrant with the scent of beef and onions. Rebecca's stomach growled.

"That smells terrific. I thought you said you didn't cook."

"I don't," he answered, dishing out servings for the two adults. "But Mrs. Waters is a wonderful cook."

Rebecca nodded, lifting a forkful of the ground beef, onion and rice mixture to her mouth. The meat was a little rarer than she liked, but still delicious.

Gillian watched them eat for a minute before sweeping her napkin off of her plate, and demanding to be served. Desmond put a small helping on her plate and she attacked it with her blunt-ended fork, using her left hand, the arm that hadn't gotten the shot.

What she lacked in skill, she made up for with enthusiasm. About half of her food ended up smeared on her face or clothing, with another quarter decorating the kitchen table. Very little food seemed to actually make it into her mouth. Even so, she was finished and playing with her silverware before either adult was done.

Rebecca couldn't help staring as he took a third helping for himself. Where did he put it? The turtlenecks and clinging silk shirts he favored would have ruthlessly exposed the least ounce of body fat, had he possessed any. Which he didn't.

Evil Wears A Bonny Smile

Jacquelyn Hallquist

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-525-7

books@hardshell.com

(Set in a run-down old castle in the Scottish Highlands, this book is) spooky, romantic, difficult to figure out and

shocking when you do! Print books simply do not make such wonderful gothics anymore. Highly recommended. --
Joseph Fitch, Huntress Book Review

[EXCERPT]

...the door swung open once more and a tall broad-shouldered man strode into the hall. Though Maggie's attention was fixed on the newcomer, she was aware that Geordie had risen to his feet. The man had stopped just beyond the circle of light so that Magie could not see the expression on his face, but his tone, when he spoke, was cold.

"So you've returned."

Quickly, Jeannie intervened, "And just see who he has brought with him."

Slowly the man moved forward, into the light, and now his face was clearly visible. Though a strong family resemblance lurked in the curve of the brow, the set of the nose, this man's hair was midnight black as were his eyes, and there was nothing boyish in his expression as there was in Geordie's. Rather, this man's features bore the stamp of pain and sorrow.

Abruptly filled with confusion, Maggie wondered if she should leap to her feet and curtsy in the grand manner, in the end she did nothing for in that same instant she became aware that the man had stopped, gone rigid, while his eyes, huge in a face suddenly grown pale, stared at her as if she were an unholy apparition.

For the Emperor

By Christine W. Murphy

ISBN e-book:0-58200-026-3

An EPPIE 2000 Science Fiction Finalist.

Jameelah was always prepared to die for her cause. Now, unless her plan to gain the attention of the Triden Emperor succeeds, she may have to kill for it as well. But peace has one last chance. She plants a smoke bomb at the royal wedding reception. After the explosion, Jameelah is betrayed by one of her own, and finds herself stranded in a runaway escape pod. She is not alone. One of the party goers lies bruised and bloodied at her feet.

Jameelah knows Alec is a Triden officer, ruthless minion to an evil Emperor. Alec knows Jameelah is an Imsada terrorist, a threat to everything he loves. But Jameelah isn't just any terrorist -- she is the one person her people will follow on their road to peace. And Alec isn't just any Triden lieutenant -- he is the Emperor's only brother and heir to the throne.

Jameelah's image of Alec shatters when he uses his special talents to help her people, but she sees no future for Alec and herself -- he cannot understand the Imsada and she cannot abandon them. One look in those liquid brown eyes, and Alec realizes he must change the galaxy to make things right between them.

When the war swirls to a close around them, a happy ending ceases to be an option. To save Jameelah's life Alex must brand himself a traitor and send the woman he loves out of his life forever.

For The Love Of Annie

By Sabrah Agee
<http://www.hardshell.com>

In the spring of 1889 Alabama Sheriff Cooper Matthew's life is abruptly changed from that of a freewheeling bachelor to the single parent of a baby girl named Annie. Reeling from shock, Cooper at first thinks it best to find a family to raise the child. But by the time such a family is found, Cooper has fallen in love with the blonde, blue-eyed pixie. Though not a child of his blood, Annie is his daughter in every other sense of the word. She is the child of his heart.

When Mary Louise Markham learns that her late brother had a child out of wedlock, she is determined to find the child and her mother and bring them to the family plantation in Tennessee so the baby can be reared as a Markham. After several months of searching, Mary Louise learns that the child's mother succumbed in the yellow fever epidemic that killed her brother, and that the child is being cared for in Alabama. Certain that Sheriff Matthews will be happy to be relieved of the responsibility of the child, Mary Louise travels to Alabama to retrieve her niece. But she soon discovers that her plan is not going to be as simple as she'd believed.

What follows is a custody battle between two equally headstrong contenders, FOR THE LOVE OF ANNIE.

[EXCERPT]

When Cooper walked into the front office, he spied a man he assumed was Mr. Wheeler and groaned inwardly. From the looks of things, Mr. Wheeler had brought his entire family with him. Seated on a wooden bench beside the timid looking little man was a large, scowling woman holding a baby. Cooper supposed this was Cooper's wife, though the two were grossly mismatched. The woman was enormous, at least twice her husband's girth and a head taller. He was surprised that two such dissimilar people ever got together. But there was little doubt that they did get together, and quite often, judging from the six, stair-step children lined along the bench.

Wanting to get the matter over and done, Cooper turned to the little man. "I'm Sheriff Matthews, Mr. Wheeler. My

deputy said you needed to see me."

The little man jumped to his feet as if shot from a cannon. Then, shifting nervously from one foot the the other, he twisted and untwisted his sweatstained hat. "Yessir, me and Mabel is movin' down to Mo-bill, so Mr. Atkinson, he give us some extry money to drop the chap off with you."

Cooper blinked in confusion. Chap? What in the hell was he talking about? "Who is this Mr. Atkinson?"

"He's Miss Etta's lawyer up in Memphis. 'Fore Miss Etta up and died -- rest her soul -- she tol' Mr. Atkinson what to do about the chap."

"You've completely lost me, Mr. Wheeler. Who is Miss Etta? What's this chap you mentioned? And more importantly, what does any of this have to do with me?"

The bench groaned in what sounded like relief when the large woman heaved herself off it. Cooper watched as she shifted the child to her other arm and smacked Mr. Wheeler on the back of the head. The little man flinched. "Ow, Mabel, you didn' have no cause to do 'at."

"Sit down Horace and shut up." She snorted in disgust. "I'm mighta knowed you'd get everthang mixed up. " She lumbered across the room until she was standing nose to nose with Cooper. "What my man wuz tryin' to say, Sheriff, is that we wuz hired to brang yore young'un to ya." And with those words, she shoved the baby into Cooper's arms.

Flabbergasted, Cooper almost dropped the child. "Wait a minute!"

Mrs. Wheeler turned toward the bench and crooked a finger at one of the children. "Randy Lee, brang that there poke you got and give it over to the Sheriff."

The tallest of the Wheeler Children dragged a nearly filled flour sack to Cooper and dropped it at his feet. Immediately, Mabel Wheeler clapped her hands and shooed her family toward the door. "All right, kids, y'all don't dawdle. We done what we come to do, so let's us git back on the road to Mo-bill."

The Wheelers had already begun filing out of his office before Cooper was able to find his voice. "Wait just a darned minute!" he croaked. "There has to be some kind of mistake. I think you must have me confused with somebody else, because this baby *can't* be mine!"

Mrs. Wheeler stopped just outside the door, spat a stream of liquid snuff into the dirt, and glared at Cooper as she wiped her mouth with the back of her hand. "You sayin' you ain't got no wife named Etta Blake?"

"Etta Bla--Do you mean, Marietta Blake?"

The woman shrugged. "All's I knowed was Etta. She was one'a them actress women up on Memphis. You sayin' you ain't her husband?"

Cooper swallowed. "Well, no . . . I . . . Marietta is my wife . . . but--"

"There's a letter from Mr Atkinson pinned to the young'un's blanket. I don't know what it says, I ain't never learn't to read. Alls I knows is that Mr. Atkinson paid us to brang that chap to you and that's what we done. You got a problem with it, you'd best take it up with him."

"B--But--"

Mabel Wheeler didn't wait to hear more. While Cooper watched helplessly, she herded her husband and six children into the dusty street and ordered them into the heavily laden buckboard. Then, as the creaking wagon rolled away, Cooper dropped his gaze to the child in his arms. A baby! Why in God's name had Marietta sent him a baby?

Highlord of Darkness

By Christine W. Murphy

ISBN e-book: 0-58200-586-9

Highlord of Darkness, EPIE 2001 Science Fiction Finalist Narragan is supposed to be bad. It's expected. On Orgon, it's the religion. But he doesn't feel like the latest incarnation of evil. He's just an average guy who doesn't get along with his father, has thirty sisters to protect, and writes really bad poetry.

If he doesn't learn how to be bad soon, if he doesn't figure out how to become the Evil One, then everything and everyone he loves is doomed. If Narragan doesn't want to be responsible for the end of civilization on Orgon, he has to become the Highlord of Darkness.

His Friday Girls

By Melissa Ford

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-640-7 (\$5.00); paperback: 0-7599-1000-6 (\$10.95);

- Best-selling Young Adult Romance

As if having a hopeless crush isn't bad enough, high school sophomore Megan Linders has just been assigned a huge career project that her teacher claims will get her ready for the "real world". Problem is, Megan doesn't know if she wants to get ready for the "real world"-she'd rather think about a hunky guy with green eyes.

"HIS FRIDAY GIRLS is a tale of friendships and young love. The characters are typical high school students living through the ups and downs of teenage life. The story is well written and held my interest until the last page was turned.

Any young adult would love HIS FRIDAY GIRLS!"--Carol Durfee, Romance Reviews Today

Hold Back Time

By Allene Frances

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-125-1; paperback: 0-7599-0158-9

Publisher: Hard Shell Word Factory

A foggy San Francisco coast, an abandoned lighthouse, a handsome veterinarian, all lead Joy Mitchell, successful sales manager for famous cosmetics house, Fountain of Youth on the chase of her life. She must stop the new Vice President from introducing a product that may maim millions of trusting women. With intervention from the spirit of dead movie star Mona Stewart, Joy discovers Mona's diary. There she learns Mona's death wasn't in the fire of her estate as everyone thought, but from terrifying anti-aging experiments. Some of the same ingredients as proposed in the new product are mentioned in Mona's diary! Ominous new clues point to her new love, Eric Ross. Could this handsome veterinarian be the death of her? Read this thriller, romance, gothic. "A real page turner," a reader from Texas.

Honeysuckle Rose

By Kate Douglas

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-589-3; paperback: 0-7599-0123-6

For Pennsylvania career woman Rose DeAngelo, a Monday morning from hell is the better part of her day. By nightfall she's broken her engagement to a man she doesn't love, wrecked her car and been fired from her job. Now she's in the front seat of a diesel truck headed for California with a man she suspects is behind the series of violent hijackings plaguing Rose's clients.

If only he weren't so attractive...

Department of Transportation investigator Mike Ramsey can't believe his good fortune. The beautiful woman he's

rescued from a burning car, the same woman who has agreed to travel cross-country with him, is his prime suspect in a hijacking ring preying on long-haul truck drivers. Posing as a trucker with a valuable cargo, Ramsey has set himself up as the gang's next target...a terrific plan if he doesn't fall victim to the promise in Rose's eyes.

Suspicion and passion are a potent combination. Stirred with danger and stoked with desire, the mix can be deadly...especially when you're falling in love with a killer.

[EXCERPT]

Almost defiantly, Rose loosened the heavy twist of hair and let it fall, long and slightly waving, almost to her waist. She plucked a single gray hair from just above her right temple, then stuck her tongue out at the image in the mirror.

"You about ready in there?" Ramsey asked, following his question with a quick rap against the door.

Rose felt her skin flush, thankful the door was shut and Ramsey hadn't caught her making faces in the mirror.

"Yeah," she said, crossing the small room and opening the door. "C'mon in."

The spicy scent of Chinese food wafted ahead of Ramsey as he entered her room, his arms filled with paper bags and cardboard cartons.

"I sure hope you like Mandarin," he said, carrying the packages to the small round table next to Rose's unmade bed.

"The guy at the front desk said the take-out from this place is a lot better than the diner here at the motel."

"Do you think you bought enough?" Rose asked sarcastically, eyeing the wide array of foods Ramsey was arranging on the tiny table. Cartons of shrimp, fried rice, chow mien and a variety of vegetable dishes covered the surface, enough for at least a half-dozen large appetites.

"We can always get more, Ms. Piggy." He handed Rose a paper plate and set of wooden chopsticks, then pulled the vinyl covered chair back from the

table so she could sit down.

Rose sat with her back to the bed, facing Ramsey across the small table. Their knees bumped. When she moved her legs to avoid his, they bumped again. "Excuse me," Rose muttered, at the same time Ramsey said, "Sorry."

"Small table," he said, not meeting Rose's eyes.

She grinned, recognizing the sudden restraint between the two of them for what it was, an awareness that had merely been lurking in the background since they'd met. Still smiling, Rose served herself small portions from the steaming cartons.

"Tastes good." Rose took another bite of shrimp. She looked up from her plate, expecting to catch Ramsey's gaze. He was looking beyond her, his eyes dark gray pools beneath heavy lashes. Staring at her unmade bed. A heated flush spread across Rose's chest and up her throat. She licked her lips, watching Ramsey, wondering at the thoughts behind those dark, dark eyes.

Lokelani Nights

By Sharon K. Garner

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-578-8; Large Print paperback 0-7089-9847-X

<http://www.hardshell.com>

[EXCERPT]

"He must have gone out the back while we were coming in the front. Paul and I will have to check the planes carefully." He turned on his flashlight, telling her to turn off the lights.

They were halfway to the small door when they heard it. She jumped and felt Kit freeze beside her in the thick blackness that pushed against the small beam of his light.

She had heard chanting for the first time in The Shell in Kapiolani Park in Honolulu. A Malama-sized woman knelt on a woven mat. She slapped a hollow gourd with her hand then thumped the gourd on the mat to create a primitive rhythm. She chanted lovely Hawaiian words to that beat in a voice that changed by only a few notes. It was nice.

This chanting wasn't nice. This was a man's voice, low and echoing, that came from everywhere and nowhere. Each hair on her neck, arms, body, and scalp stood straight up on its root.

Kit moved first, jerking the light around to where he thought the sound was coming from, but the acoustics in the hangar fooled the ear. The beam wasn't too steady and it got worse as he swung it around in a wide arc. It finally settled, steady as his Aunt Patty, on a walking arrangement of teeth. Casey heard herself say a word that was sadly out of character for a personal assistant from Kahana Temps, and it came out sounding like someone was strangling her.

Puhi had a Hawaiian man's brown-skinned, hairless, well-muscled body that glistened in the light. Circlets of green maile leaves wound around its wrists and ankles. It wore a gray malo cloth, like baggy underpants. Those were the good parts.

Where its head should have been was a horrible mask that bristled with large black shark teeth, as big as the one she'd found on the pali. The shiny dark eyes above fixed them with an icy cold stare. Around its neck, if it had one, was a necklace of smaller shark teeth with blood-red stones threaded between them. From somewhere behind all those teeth, it chanted. Then it took a step toward them.

Love Thy Enemy

By Judith Lynn

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-620-2; paperback: 0-7599-0336-0

[EXCERPT]

1239 Norway. Tora and Earl Magnus have married, despite their dislike for each other. Tora has just bathed in a forest pond. Proud and stubborn, she struggles with Magnus's domineering ways and her bewildering longing for his caresses.

Magnus' eyes narrowed at her biting reference to their marital arrangement. "Sarcasm doesn't become you, Tora," he admonished.

"Then I shall use it more often," she quipped. "Well, you've gotten your way, now give me my clothes!" She approached Magnus and reached for her gown.

He whipped her garments behind his back, his eyes daring her to take them from him. "'Tis very tempting to keep them," he said, his voice rumbling with laughter. He grinned at her. "You look angry enough to kill me with the daggers in your eyes! I am glad you are not a man, Tora. Especially at a time like this." He admired her feminine curves. A warm tingling built deep within Tora's belly and spread under his caressing eyes.

He held out her clothes to her, but grabbed her when she reached for them. He drew her to him, holding her cool, wet body against his hard warm masculine one. He kissed her deeply and at length, leaving her breathless and trembling. He released her and loosened his clothing. Tora shivered, every nerve poised to flee, but Magnus's steady gaze kept her mesmerized. He drew her down onto the bank with him.

"I should have taken you out here before. The sunlight makes your skin glow as it caresses the curve of your breasts and hips," he murmured in appreciation. His hands and mouth followed the path of the sun and soon Tora lay quivering, her hands clutching his shoulders as he brought her expertly to that exquisite edge of supreme pleasure.

Male Wanted

by Betty Jo Schuler

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-488-X (\$5.50); paperback 0-7599-0615-7 (\$12.95)

(Double Delights #16: Male Wanted by Betty Jo Schuler & Prize Pupil by Micky K. Osburn)

Hard Shell Word Factory

Genre: Romantic comedy

When Taylor Gayle advertises in The Town Crier for a male to date, Max Stuart misprints her ad to indicate she's looking for a "somasochistic male to mate" and includes her address. To atone for his mistakes, Max becomes her live-in protector. Now, who's going to protect this high school librarian from the unbelievably sexy newspaper editor? And who's going to save Max from this feisty Plain Jane's charms?

Missing You: Lonesome Lawmen #3

By Pauline B. Jones

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0525-8 (available 3/2002); \$6.00

Trade Paperback: 0-7599-0526-6 (available Winter/2003); \$12.95

www.paulinebjones.com

[EXCERPT]

Her hands, beneath the scratches, were well cared for. Her fingers were long and well shaped. The nails that weren't torn were neatly filed but unpolished. To her surprise, despite the signs she'd taken a very nasty tumble, she had this slight, very slight, feeling of relief. It was as if she'd laid down a burden. Beneath the uncertainty, she felt light and free.

If she had no past, that left only a future full of possibilities.

"What do you remember?" he asked.

A better question would be, what are you trying to forget, she thought.

"Let's start with something easy, like your name?"

Her name. Everyone had a name. For a moment, she had an impulse to make something up. Put something onto the blank canvas of her mind, but her mind refused to play. It didn't cough up a single consonant, let alone a whole name. She pushed at the gray mist and it pushed back. Opening just enough to let out a single emotion. Panic. It spilled through her like a tsunami, threatening to sweep her away.

Moon Night

by C.J. Winters

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-062-X; paperback: 0-7599-0115-5

www.cjwinters.com

Anything can happen on a blind date under a full moon in the Ozarks. Including murder.

While on a hayride, urban Keefe, 46, and Tara, 38, are transported back to the same rural setting in 1884, into the bodies and identities of a farm couple, ages 17 and 20. Shocked by their immediate problems—identity crises, a killer with a crossbow, life on a subsistence farm, and neighbors who have known them since childhood, Tara and Keefe struggle to survive.

Then things get complicated.

[EXCERPT]

As Tara was placing the lamp on the table, a scratchy, rustling sound came from behind the cabin. Her blood iced, freezing her grip on the lamp. Keefe? A bear? Or a killer with a crossbow? She started counting. Ten heart slamming seconds later she dashed to the side of the window in the rear of the cabin, lifted the curtain and peeked out--at the reflection of her own frightened face surrounded by black.

Flattened against the wall, she scanned the room for a weapon, and noticed the long gun above the fireplace. She made a grab for it, missed by a good two inches and tripped on her skirt. "What the devil!" She clutched at the mantle for balance. "I've shrunk!" She was still stuffing most of the blasted skirt into the hole at her waistline when Keefe called out to her to open the door. She'd never been so glad to see anyone in her life! As soon as Keefe had rebarred the door, she stepped up to him and touched his chest with the edge of her hand at eye level, comparing their heights.

"What's this?" he asked. "Karate practice?"

"Bears be damned," Tara muttered, glaring at his second shirt button. "Besides turning into a blonde, I've shrunk two inches. And so have you!" Confused, Keefe caught her by the elbows. "Bears? You saw a bear?"

"Well, I don't know it was a bear." She pointed at the back wall.

"But maybe it was." With a sob she tilted her forehead to his chest. "It isn't fair! I liked being taller!"

More mystified than ever, Keefe skipped the bear business and wrapped his arms around her. His cheek brushed the top of her head. Her hair, smooth at the crown, tumbled in unruly curls about her young face to a froth on her shoulders. It smelled fresh and outdoorsy, with a hint of wood smoke and hay. The sort of hair he'd loved burrowing in during high school and college days. Her sobbing shudders, a kind of friction dance against his body, stirred him even more. Holding her, savoring the sensations and his swift response, he waited to see what she'd do when she noticed.

And then the faint buzzing in his head came again, like a subtle alarm clock. Another warning?

No...this time it was more of an idea...or knowledge. Before he could arrange his thoughts, Tara moved out of his arms. He wished she'd stayed; it would be easier to tell her about this new suspicion.

"I'm all right," she said, drying her eyes on the torn waist of her skirt. "Except for looking like an After Clearance Sale."

Keefe grinned at her exposed lingerie. "And I had you pegged as red satin and lace under a gray pinstripe."

She sniffed. "Did Alan warn you I come apart at the seams over the slightest deviation from normal?"

Sobering, Keefe decided he might as well say it; they weren't getting any younger. "He also didn't tell me we might switch bodies with a couple of kids half our age."

Tara's eyes widened, making her look distressingly young considering the rate his hormones were pumping. "Of course I'm not sure," he admitted. "I suppose we could just have skipped back in time. Say to a previous life together."

"Just skipped back in time?" Her high-pitched laughter bordered on hysteria. "Of course, that's it. Why didn't I think of it. It's so logical."

Ignoring her sarcasm, Keefe plugged on with his theory. "But if we'd known each other back then, shouldn't we, uh, recognize ourselves? And I don't, Tara. All I know about you I've learned tonight."

Her eyes were hazier than when she'd greeted him at the door, and he paused, studying the tiny upward curve at the corners of her mouth. Sort of a Mona Lisa smile, except that she wasn't smiling. More like barely holding on. Then, stroking her soft cheek with one finger, he offered the most shocking part of his theory. "I have a hunch a psychic would say we were walk-ins."

Tara seemed to grow smaller, her saucy features distorting, the color draining away. Keefe didn't know which terrified her more—the idea that they'd swapped bodies with other persons, or him for suggesting it. She was as pale as moonlight, yet there was nothing ethereal about her. On the contrary, she seemed pulsating with life...and drew him like a magnet.

"I've heard the term," she whispered through bloodless lips. "You think we somehow traded bodies with people from another time?" Her voice rose. "That right now somebody is walking around in my body, living my life?"

Keefe shifted his feet and wished he'd kept his mouth shut. Not everyone was open to far-out theories. "Well, maybe. Unless we come up with something better."

Despite Tara's waxy color, she surprised him by leaning against him, as if she was too weary to stand. Her lashes fluttered, and he put his arms around her and flexed his knees, ready to catch her. Then he bent his head and covered her mouth with his. It had worked before, in the pasture. If he wasn't too late...

Nora's Turn

By Susan Yarina

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-3242-5; paperback: 0-7599-3244-1

Nora's Turn is a rag to riches short contemporary romance and the Muleshoe Cafe in Muleshoe Missouri is where the hero, Hayden Hunter and heroine, Nora Jones, meet.

Nora's Turn available in paperback April 2002, ISBN# 0-7599-3244-1 and Electronic format since March 2002, ISBN#0-7599-3242-5. What dark secret keeps Hayden Hunter and Nora Jones apart? What is the one thing that can bring them together?

[EXCERPT]

"My name is Hayden Hunter. I'm the vice president of Lessux Automobiles. Pleased to meet you Nora Jones."

Her fork, her jaw and her confidence dropped all at once. "Oh, my God, I-even-I know who you are! You just can't be son of "H-Hume Hunter?"

He nodded, watching her carefully.

"I can't eat with you." Her food careened wildly, nearly falling off her plate as she swooped it back up. He was one of those. "I bet you never missed a Sunday service in your life."

"What?" He did a double take. "You mean, church?"

"Yes, church. C-H-U-R-C-H as in hypocrite, church!" She sneered at him, not caring, in fact hoping that she did not look angelic. With a huff, she headed to the back room of the café. Back to safety. "Hey, you can't come back here. Listen mister, just because you're used to getting anything you want, you just can't..."

One moment, he was looming over her, the next he was kissing her, pushing, demanding. Fireworks started from where his mouth lit her fuse and fear flamed after, causing the deepest panic she had ever known. She bit him, hard and followed with the loudest scream she could muster.

A minute later Hayden Hunter found himself flat on his face, outside the café, for the second time that day.

"Princess ain't no lot lizard, you scumbag."

The trucker thought he was treating her like a whore? Never. More like an angel. Hayden looked up and licked the blood off his lower lip in time to see his little angel, smiling and dusting her hands off, as if it had been her, instead of the hulking trucker at her side, who had thrown him out.

In spite of her momentary lapse and fear, Nora Jones was comfortable with her world again.

Notorious Angel

By Jennifer Kokoski

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0326-3; paperback: 0-7599-0472-3

<http://www.notoriousangel.com>

In the days after the Napoleonic War old scores were being settled. Beware the Angel of Death warned England's War Department, for one insidious touch from the assassin left even the noblest and most reclusive man gasping his last breath.

Lady Sera Montgomerie knew she had to brave the dangers of a midnight ride to protect the secrets of her dearest friend. But in daring to leave the protection of her brothers, she chanced an unforgettable encounter with the notorious local blacksheep.

The Blackguard of Blackstone returned from a decade abroad seeking only one thing -revenge. Gabriel St. Clair knew from his dying father's missive that the Angel had come to call. His only clue to the notorious angel's identity is the supposedly innocent girl he meets on the road at midnight.

When these two meet, they are drawn into a whirlwind of conspiracy, seduction and deception. Can Sera and Gabriel's love and understanding see beyond the passion of hate and fear?

[EXCERPT]

The Daring Damsel...

"Stand and deliver!"

The thieves growled like hungry human wolves. Lady Seraphina Montgomerie hid beneath her brother's cloak in hopes the highwaymen didn't recognize their prey was a woman. Midnight shadows on a barren country road were the only protection Sera had.

In retrospect, setting off on her own that night proved foolhardy, but she had no choice. Her dearest friend was depending on her. Like her patriotic brothers, Sera simply could not betray a noble trust. Even if it meant facing bloodthirsty highwaymen at midnight.

She only wished she hadn't gone on this reckless mission alone.

The Unforgiving Hero...

They called him a notorious rogue.

It was a reputation he earned with distinction. And cunning. In Gabriel's work, the airs of a gentleman were clever disguises for those who wished to be suspected of patriotism and honor. A bastard rake, who had forsaken family, country and some said even God, was never accused of such noble aspirations.

Indeed, only a fool would trust such a person with his life, let alone his secrets. The Blackguard of Blackstone's crimes were almost as innumerable as they were atrocious. Even the criminal class, who'd just as soon kill their own mothers, feared him. It was humorous to see a bloodthirsty pirate cower in fear when the Blackguard appeared. Almost as entertaining as the flighty chits of the ton who swooned at the mention of his name.

Brought Together in a Tempest of Passion and Betrayal

A cool night wind whipped a lock of hair across her face. Blackstone gently stroked the errant strands behind her ear. His hand lingered a moment against her cheek. Long, warm fingers caressed her. The feel of smooth dark leather brushing her bare skin enthralled Sera. Unexpected warmth sprang to life within her belly.

"It must have been difficult for you," she gasped struggling to keep her thoughts. In the back of her mind, she knew she was forgetting something important. It kept ringing through her mind at an even, musical pace. "Losing your father when you'd been away for so long. Many people lost the ones they loved in the War."

"Yes, they did," the earl agreed grimly. Cunning shadows flickered in his eyes. "And many people betrayed the ones that they loved. War brings out the worst in even an angel. But peace brings retribution."

Unconsciously, Sera bit her lower lip. With the skill of a manipulative seducer, Blackstone soothed the bruised flesh

with the soft tip of his thumb. The touch sent shivers of unaccustomed desire through Sera. She innocently gave herself to the caress uncaring of its unwarranted familiarity. The warmth inside her coiled hungrily.

"Gabriel?" Sera asked in a dreamy voice that forgot all sense of propriety and how one addresses a total stranger. At that moment, she was overwhelmed with the sensation that he was not an unknown person to her at all. Gabriel Blackstone was incredibly real and so intimately close to her he could no doubt see into her soul. She could feel his warm breath on her face, the soft touch of his fingers on her lips as she lifted her gaze and indulged in the beckoning shadows of his eyes. She had a sudden overwhelming desire. She wanted to drown in his misty green embrace. "Do you hear bells?"

Emerald shadows glittered in silent triumph. Enchantment enticed and beguiled Sera like a doe fascinated with her hunter. Dark motives swirled beneath the earl's mask of gentle desire. Something that could have been warning reflected within the shadows of his eyes. Cunningly, Blackstone pulled her closer.

His mouth hovered just a scant inch above hers when he finally answered. "Church bells, love," he rumbled as he lowered his mouth to hers. "I believe it is midnight."

On Wings of Love

By Kate Douglas

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-590-7; paperback: 0-7599-0124-4

Photographer Andy Petersen's dream assignment assisting noted ornithologist Nathan Murdock quickly turns into a nightmare. Professor Murdock is expecting the senior Mr. Petersoen at his remote mountain camp, not the absolutely gorgeous--and irritating--Ms. Petersen.

The question is, can a certified control freak find common ground with an avowed male chauvinist? Sparks--and feathers--fly in this tale of love and terror amid the beautiful peaks of California's Trinity Alps, as Nate and Andy are forced to deal with each other, a group of murderous smugglers and the preservation of an eyrie of magnificent, but threatened, peregrine falcons.

[EXCERPT]

Suddenly, without warning, the ledge crumbled. Andy dropped off the edge, her hands gripping the abrasive rope in a vain attempt to stop her descent. It happened so fast she didn't have time to scream. She fell a dozen feet before the rope caught her, long enough to wonder if Nate was strong enough, with all his injuries, to save her. But then the rope jerked hard under her ribs, tore the skin on her hands and stopped her fall.

She swung a moment against the face of the cliff, then, swaying gently back and forth like a huge pendulum, was lowered steadily to the ground. Nate halted her descent, holding her just inches above him. His muscles bulged with the strain of her weight, the cords in his neck stood out like bands of steel. She let go of the rope and grabbed his shoulders.

He grunted with the unexpected weight of her, but his arms snaked around her waist and held her against him. She wrapped her legs carefully across his back, avoiding his bruises as much as she could. Then she pulled his face against her breasts, laughing with the sheer joy of having made it safely to the ground.

He growled into her belly. "Don't you ever pull a stunt like that again, or I swear to all that's holy I will leave you where you fall!"

"But I made it!" She unwrapped her legs from his waist and slid to the ground, her arms still holding tightly to his shoulders. "I made it, and we've still got the rope!" She was invincible, untouchable. She had dared and won.

.....

"Dinnertime?" Nate lifted one eyebrow, a relieved grin splitting his face. He obviously welcomed the distraction.

"Don't I wish," she answered, moving away, effectively ending the moment. She grabbed her fanny pack off the floor. "I can offer you a choice from our wide selection of granola or energy bars," she said, pulling out a half dozen wrapped packages. Mimicking a waiter in an elegant restaurant, she pretended to read from a list.

"Your choices include apple-raisin, raisin-apple, or apple with raisins." She held out the selection of bars.

"I hate raisins," he deadpanned. He took one anyway and led Andy to a nearby rock where they could sit. "Make it last. We still don't have any idea how we're gonna get out of here."

"Yeah, but at least we've got the rope," she said.

"But we almost lost you," he responded softly. "No rope is worth that."

Proud Mari

by Kathryn North aka Kathy Awe

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-583-4; ISBN paperback: 0-7599-0122-8

[EXCERPT]

Prologue

WHAT WILL the kids and I do if I lose Fisherman's Paradise? Marigold Adams never cried, but now she felt tears stinging behind her eyelids.

"Eight thousand dollars, Liz," she said. "Eight thousand dollars, due in August. Only weeks away. How could Eddie

have done this to me? Where did he think we'd raise so much money?"

Liz MacDonald, a rake-thin dishwater blonde dressed in jeans and a windbreaker, waved off the approaching waitress before replying. "You know the answer to that."

"Oh, yeah. Remember what he always said? When God asked if I wanted brains, I thought he said rains, so I said, not as long as the fish are biting. He figured it was a big joke." Mari wrapped her hands around her coffee cup, trying to dispel the chill she'd felt ever since she talked to the loan officer. "Eddie wasn't a bad man, but he'd never face up to any unpleasantness, any consequences. Nothing was going to happen to him. He was going to live forever."

She tried to laugh. "I'm sorry. I sound like a witch, don't I? He was my husband. I loved him. I miss him. But I'm so scared...and even though I wish I wasn't, I'm angry."

Liz wordlessly reached across the gleaming wood-grained tabletop and touched Mari's hand.

"If just once he could have done the sensible thing," Mari continued.

"He had to go snowmobiling that night. He'd just bought a fast new machine. Of course he always took a bottle along, to keep out the cold. Oh, Liz, why didn't I stop him?"

Liz's unadorned lips thinned. "Because he was an adult?"

It was a good answer. It just didn't apply to Eddie. Mari knew he'd never been good at being an adult. She'd always been the strong one, the one who held it all together. It was what he and the kids expected from her. It was what she expected from herself.

Somehow, over the years it had become a matter of pride. She set the cup down on the booth's varnished tabletop. "Sorry, Liz. I didn't mean to cry on your shoulder."

"Don't worry about it. That's what friends are for."

Mari stood and hitched her purse strap over her shoulder. "I've gotta go. I still have to pick up groceries and then I'd better be getting back to Fisherman's. A new guest is coming in today."

"A guest? Just one person, vacationing alone?"

"Yeah. We get them at Fisherman's once in a while. A guy. He'll probably spend all day, every day, out on the lake fishing. You know the type. He'll arrive with a tackle box the size of a rowboat and only come in off the lake when it's pitch dark."

"Hey, don't knock it. They're my favorite kind of guest. They pay their rent. You never see them. Then they go home. No fuss. No muss. No bother. I bet you won't even know he's there."

Rawhide Surrender

By Elysa Hendricks

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-541-9; paperback: 0-7599-0108-2

<http://www.hardshell.com>

In a lawless west Texas border town, a woman has two choices: death or dishonor. Doctor's apprentice and former Comanche slave, KC O'Connor finds a third - she buries her femininity and longing for love beneath a boyish disguise. But the arrival of an injured green horn shatters the shell around her hidden heart.

[EXCERPT]

KC knelt next to the man and grasped his shoulders, rolling him onto his back. Only when he lay flat on the ground did she realize the scope of the loss his death was. Beautiful, she thought. Even in death his face held the power to move her. A lump formed in her throat. No matter how often she encountered it, the ending of a life affected her. Unbidden, tears stung the back of her eyes.

Savagely, she rubbed her knuckles into her eyes. She would not cry for some unknown man - no matter how

beautiful. She never cried. She hadn't cried for Mama, or for Papa. She didn't cry for her lost brother, Brendan. Crying didn't bring the dead back. Crying didn't ease the pain of grief. She swallowed the lump in her throat, pressed her lips into a tight line and reached for the pearl button of the man's shirt. His eyes blinked open. Shock held her rigid.

He reached out. His hand closed around her wrist, trapping her. His grip brought her nightmares to life.

A strangled shriek bubbled in her throat. Her heart pounded in fright. With a gasp, she yanked her hand free. Overbalanced she landed on her backside in the dust. She scooted away crab-like.

His hand fell limply to his side. "Please," he croaked. "Help me."

Right Man, Wrong Time

By C.J. Winters

www.cjwinters.com

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-3468-1; paperback: 0-7599-3469-X

[EXCERPT]

It was Fate. Bick knew in his head and felt in his sore gut that the arrangement boded trouble. Nevertheless, the woman had conveniently, if painfully, dropped into his lap. He needed her help, and she didn't have any choices worth thinking about.

"We'll look for your cave in the morning," he lied, "while I hunt for a farmer to help me. I warn you, though, we could pass right by the entrance and never see it."

"Oh, no, we'd see it. There's space to park."

Park? In the Ozarks? She must have said 'spark'. Though why lovebirds would choose a cave--

He shrugged and got to his feet. Some mighty strange ideas floated around these hills, and this was the sort of woman to invent a few. "I'll build up the fire, but it won't help much. We'll have to share my blanket."

There were more blankets in the supply wagon a couple of miles back. He'd planned to bring it up before nightfall.

"Oh, no!" She bit her lower lip. "I'll be all right. I can sleep in a tree."

He headed for the creek to clean their plates. "You don't have to worry about me, ma'am."

"Susa," she said firmly, "Bickford."

"As I was saying--Susa--you remind me of my sister." A sister who flattened him like an oak, claims to have crawled out of a cave, and says she'll sleep in a tree. Suddenly he recalled the firm, round bottom he'd shoved off him earlier. It was a long time since he'd enjoyed that sort of pleasure. Too long.

River Of Dreams

by Sharon K. Garner

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<http://www.hardshell.com>

[EXCERPT]

"If that plane won't fly, amigo, you'd better be able to walk on water." Nic Hamilton leveled a rifle at her, clicking off the safety to punctuate his cold words.

At the first sound of his voice, Gabrielle O'Hara looked up from where she knelt on his splintered dock, examining her pontoon plane's damaged float. This was a fine start, she thought, Nic playing with guns and threatening her.

"Try amiga," she answered, laughter in her voice. She slowly tugged off her aviator sunglasses, revealing emerald-green eyes, peeled back the baseball cap that confined her coppery hair, and stood up. "Hello, Nic." Her voice surprised her when it caught on the edges of his name.

"Gabby." His face went slack with shock, erasing the anger. She watched his fighting stance relax and he lowered the rifle, clicking on the safety. His dark eyebrows, thin and sweeping, briefly lifted into his forehead before he squinted at her in the bright sunlight.

"I should have guessed it was you, Gabby. I've heard that you're a madwoman in a plane," he finally said.

Nic's shouted threats had stopped pouring from her radio before she landed. She'd been a captive audience, since her plane's radio wouldn't transmit, just receive.

She shrugged. "There's always method to my madness, Nic. I'm sorry I couldn't answer you on the radio. I wanted to surprise you anyway."

"You wanted to surprise me," he repeated tonelessly and, at last, smiled his crooked grin. "Even when I'm threatening to blow you out of the sky if you try to land? But then you never listened to me when we were kids, Copper Top. Why should it be any different now?"

She returned his grin with a shaky one of her own. "Come on, Nic. I kind of guessed you didn't really have an anti-aircraft gun trained on me. And you would have broken me like a twig if I hadn't listened to you when we were kids."

Second Chance Cowboy

By Melissa Ford

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0207-0 (\$5.00); paperback: 0-7599-0608-4 (\$12.95)

- A Romance Writers of America Golden Heart Finalist

Lori Langston cherished her life as the newlywed wife of sexy Wyoming rancher Travis Langston, but a secret from her past tore their lives apart. Now a twist of fate has given her a second chance to win the heart of the man she loves.

Torn between what she longs to do and what she believes is right, Lori struggles with the heavy burden of guilt. When she accepts that her only hope of happiness is with her beloved cowboy, Lori realizes that reclaiming her dream is worth the risk of a second heartbreak.

Sleighride

by C.J. Winters

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-613-X; paperback: 0-7599-0114-7

www.cjwinters.com

A sleigh glides into a surprise Vermont snowstorm and the wily horse delivers his 21st century passengers, attorneys Kama and Rey, to a country tavern in the year 1811.

Shaken and worried, yet fascinated, they set their logical minds in search of explanation. The attentions of a rowdy, charismatic young farmer and his shy betrothed, however, expand their confusion.

Snared in a skein of a time long past, Rey and Kama seem destined to bear the passion and pain of love that cannot be...and will not be denied.

[EXCERPT]

The candles flared as the front door burst open, admitting a sweep of frigid, snow-laden air and a young, square-cut man. As Kama stared, he closed the door with a powerful, straight arm thrust, stamped his feet once, knocking some of the snow from his boots, then crossed the room in rapid strides, yanking off his gloves on his way to the fireplace. Legs apart, he faced it and spread his broad hands, their blunt fingertips drained of color, to the blaze. Kama gauged that he was about twenty, her own height of five-seven, and strong enough to sling her over his shoulder with one arm. An ox of a man who wore his brute power like the cloak of a king, she couldn't take her eyes from him.

He spoke without turning his head. "Ah, the wind is bitter. Joshua is stabling my mare."

A mare? Surely such a man would want a stallion to master!

"We were beginning to worry about you, Lache." Peony Jarman dipped a mug into a pot of liquid on the hearth and handed it to him. "We expected you hours ago."

The man called Lache widened his stance before the fire. Thighs like tree trunks threatened the seams of his buckskin breeches.

"You knew I would come, Peony, love." Laughter rumbled in his barrel-like chest. "I would not let Ellie enjoy her last Christmas as a spinster without me!"

Then without warning he pivoted, and his dark eyes locked with Kama's.

In the whip crack of change, she gasped, the stranger seeming to snatch her breath. She felt as though she'd been melted and poured into a mold with no room for either oxygen or expansion. The tavern room paled about her and the background hum of conversation faded. Rey, Peony and the others drifted out of focus.

Only the popping, hissing fire and the sturdy young Lache remained sharp and clear in the dusky room. Poised between awareness and forgetfulness, Kama waited in the heart of the exclusive space bounded by Lache and the fire.

Grateful she was still seated because she doubted her legs would support her, she groped for Rey's hand. It was

warm and comforting, while Lache's gaze was hot and demanding.

Sound The Ram's Horn

By S. Joan Popek

Available soon at Hard Shell Word Factory

Author's home page: www.sjoanpopek.com

[EXCERPT]

"We named him Joshua." Sam handed the tiny bundle to the proud grandfather. Tears of joy swam in the old man's eyes as he gently unwrapped the baby.

His startled gasp when he saw the child inside the blanket stung Sam's heart.

"Yeah, Dad. It's a pigmentation phenomenon. The doctor thinks it's a DNA anomaly. Mama would say the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, but he's ours, Dad, mine and Laura's, and we love him. No matter what. He can be yours too, if you let him."

The new grandfather stood immobile and stared at the baby in his arms for a long time. Touching him gently with a thick, work hardened finger, he traced around the tiny face, across the child's broad, yellow-gold forehead to the prominent little nose, then across the exquisitely shaped neck and right shoulder. When he reached the baby's shoulder, his hand hesitated for an instant, then gently circled the dime-sized, ebony, star shape on the child's skin. Slowly his fingers traveled down the length of the baby's arm, across the tiny stomach, and down his chubby, right leg until his huge hand folded gently over the perfectly shaped foot.

"His eyes are gold," he whispered, then bent his head to gently kiss his grandson's forehead with all the love of any

grandfather.

Six months later, Sam sat down beside his father on the sofa. Joshua was perched on his grandfather's lap. The baby looked up at his grandfather, grinned and gurgled. Grandpa made cooing sounds and tickled the soft, glowing skin of Joshua's plump tummy. Over the months, Joshua's skin tone had turned from a soft yellow to an almost luminescent, golden hue.

Sam watched the two silently for a while, then asked, "Dad, why do you sneak over here all the time? Why don't you just tell Mama you're coming? Maybe she would give in and come see him herself."

The old man smoothed Joshua's silky hair back off the boy's forehead and sighed. "No Son. It ain't gonna happen. She won't even use his name. If she speaks of him at all, he's Sam's son, not Joshua. Hell, I call him that myself half the time. Kinda' fits though, you know?"

Sam's son--Samson. Lord knows he needs all the strength he can muster to get through this life."

"Why do you say that, Dad? He's not retarded, or deformed, or crippled. It's just his coloring, that's all. In fact, he's just the opposite. Dr. Rainey says he's months ahead of other babies his age. He wants to have his IQ tested as soon as he's two years old. Doc says we may have a child genius here. What's wrong with that?"

Spirit Lake

By Christine DeSmet

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-544-3; paperback 0-7599-0391-3

Hard Shell Word Factory

[EXCERPT]

"Boarding a train was going to be difficult for Cole Wescott. Especially since he didn't have a ticket. Then there were the guys shooting at him. ...

"...Laurel Hastings gloried in the peacefulness of her surroundings. She'd lived all her life in the woodland of northern Wisconsin and it never ceased to please her sensibilities.

"She stood in the screened breezeway behind her cabin proper, drawing in a lungful of crisp night air, and listening, holding tight to a wiggling bundle in her arms. ...A breeze off Spirit Lake caught tendrils of her waist-length hair, tickling her sweater sleeves and fluttering about the little one she cradled, reminding her that June was hurrying on and wild animals needed time to run, time to mate and time to raise a family before autumn's howl set it in."

Star-Crossed

Marilynn Byerly <http://marilynnbyerly.com>

As Ebook: ISBN: 1-58200-567-2 <http://www.hardshell.com/Star-Cro.asp>

As Trade Paperback: ISBN: 0-7599-0100-7 <http://www.hardshell.com/starcro2.asp>

Trapped on Arden, Earthman Tristan Mallory discovers that men are sex slaves forced into harems. He has no intention of belonging to anyone, not even beautiful fellow scientist Mara d'Jorel.

Mara despises the harem system and has refused to participate, but her heart won't allow anyone else to own Tristan, and owning him will turn his growing love into hate. To give Tristan the freedom her world denies, she must risk everything--her reputation, her home, and even her freedom and life. But her greatest risk is losing Tristan's love to another woman.

Tristan's friend Kellen Votrain is acquired as a bed slave by vicious Cadaran d'Hasta, head of Arden's Internal Security, who has used the lives and deaths of thousands of men to gain her power. Intelligent and amoral, she'll do anything to destroy him and Tristan and any woman weak enough to love them. With the help of a local intelligent alien who resembles an Earth cat and Dorian Dalia--Tristan's longtime romantic interest, Tristan, Mara, and Kellen escape the planet. Through the vast emptiness of space and the most primitive of human colonies, they seek freedom, but Cadaran is always one step behind them.

National Readers' Choice Award First Place Winner
A Sapphire winner for best SF Romance of 2000
Write Touch Award Winner
An Affaire de Coeur Winner

Tainted Tea For Two

By Susanne Marie Knight
<http://www.susanneknight.com>
ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0148-1
ISBN paperback: Deadly Duos #3 (0-7599-0802-8)

Someone wants Lord Embrey dead. Will the method of execution be by poison, or injection, or... potato??

When personal fitness trainer Ms. Marty Jackson accepts an assignment in England, romance is the furthest thing on her mind. Fate has other ideas in the form of a handsome British barrister. But when a body is found in the library, can

Marty convince her new-found love of her innocence when all evidence points in her direction?

[EXCERPT]

Belatedly making sure her short, cotton robe covered what it was supposed to, Marty took a step back from Gresham. No good, though. His masculine after-shave drifted toward her and teased her tired senses. "What do you mean by coming into my room like this? I could've been... sleeping."

Fortunately she changed her word choice from "naked" to "sleeping." Dangerous suggestion around someone who looked as devastating as he did.

Gresham's smile conveyed his disbelief. "At eight o'clock? I hardly think so." He clasped his hands behind his back and took a cramped stroll around the room. "I'm here to bring you downstairs."

Although she should have thrown him out, she stood rooted to the floor. She didn't even flinch when he picked up her special paperweight, but she would've been lying if she didn't admit her fingers itched to grab it out of his hands.

Then, for some reason, the four poster bed seemed to attract him. He walked over to it and began pawing through her pile of recently discarded clothing. "I was under the impression that Americans understood English, Ms. Jackson. Dinner, I remember saying, is at eight. You are keeping everyone from their food."

Only when he uncovered her bra did her motionless state vanish. "Do you mind?" She quickly tugged on his arm, and pulled him away from the bed... and the intimate articles.

He smiled again, revealing perfect white teeth. This time her heart fluttered in such a peculiar way. "I, ah, told Lottie I wouldn't be joining you."

"You have no choice. Come. It is late."

Annoyance crept into her tone. She planted her hands on her hips. "Listen, I appreciate the offer but I'm tired and I don't feel like eating."

The top of her robe gaped open a little. Naturally his gaze took in the sight. Just collarbones, but his smile deepened.

She grabbed at the material. The beast!

Then he did the unexpected. He bent down to stare directly into her eyes. Waves of his masculine, musky after-shave shook Marty to her very core. His sparkling grey eyes mesmerized her, and once again, she couldn't have moved if her life depended on it. She gulped down hard. Embarrassingly enough, her nipples hardened. Good grief, this power he had over her was unfair but there was no way she could protest.

"Ms. Jackson," Gresham murmured, "you will accompany me to dinner, undressed as you are, or otherwise." He slowly, torturously, skimmed the side of her cheek with two of his fingers.

When she shivered, he broke contact and shrugged.

"Make no mistake about it. Lord Embrey wishes to meet you tonight, and I'll not have him disappointed."

She was left breathless. Never in all her born days had anyone affected her to this degree. She didn't even know the man, didn't even like him, but one touch from him and she was like Jell-O. Marty, you're losing this battle. Better retreat and build up your defenses.

"Ah, okay." She massaged the bridge of her nose. Was this day ever going to end? "Give me a minute and I'll get dressed."

"Agreed."

She waited but he didn't leave the room. Starting to lift her hands to her hips again, she then remembered about the robe gaping open. "Obviously I can't change with you here." Her voice practically dripped with sarcasm.

"No?" Gresham raised a dark eyebrow. "A pity." He purposefully walked to the door, then turned around. "You said a minute, so that's when I'll expect you to be done. And, by the way, there's no sense locking the door." He patted the pocket on the left side of his breast. "I have the key."

The Blue Flame

By Barbara Hodges

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-604-0; paperback: 0-7599-0147-3

<http://barbarahodges.gobot.com>

Kelsey Cafferty has been dead for seven years, or so her sister Regan believes. That is until a stranger, with a birthmark of a blue flame, shows up on her doorstep and informs Regan that he is a mage, and that she must come with him to save his world, Daradawn and her sister, Kelsey.

Regan, along with her friend Ben, and his basset hound Maggie, enter a rift, and find themselves in a world where magic rules, both good and evil.

In Daradawn Regan faces the Power within her, a power that she must master, before it destroys her.

The Blue Flame is available at Hard Shell Word Factory in electronic and print format, and many other online sites. It is also available at Waldenbooks, and other brick and mortar stores by special order.

[EXCERPT]

Regan is spending her first night in Daradawn. The night presents a danger and Peter requests her help in setting up a ward of protection.

Peter smiled. "You, my friend, are of the ground, they of the air. You will never agree. It is enough that we all continue to fight Dirkk together." He yawned. "Come, it is late, everyone to sleep, for tomorrow we have a hard ride."

Regan watched Peter pull a blanket from Angus' backpack and cross to the far side of the fire pit. He kneeled, scooped a pile of dried leaves into a long narrow mound, and then laid the blanket over them.

"Here, this is for you."

"Where will you sleep?"

"There are blankets for three, enough for all, since I will take the first watch."

Regan frowned. "Watch? I thought this was a safe glade?"

"It always has been, but things change."

Angus circled the fire to where Peter stood and stared up into his face. "You are not setting wards?"

Peter said nothing.

The dwarf frowned. "Then you are still weak. I will take the first watch."

"I'll take the second," Ben said.

"And after Ben, me," Regan said. "I'm too excited to sleep anyway."

"Enough, none of us will sleep," Peter said. He met each of their unwavering gazes. "I can set wards, but I will need Regan's help."

Regan thought of the field where she had looked out through Peter's eyes and half of her ached for the feeling of closeness, the other feared the helplessness.

Peter saw her hesitation. "It will not be like the field, but like the approach to the rift."

She swallowed, then nodded. It was quicker this time. She had only time to think once of Kelsey, then warmth filled her stomach and spread upwards. Heat coursed down her arm to where her hand gripped Peter's. Her eyes drifted shut and Peter's grip tightened.

"Keep them open, you must see the Power."

The tree trunks that surrounded the glade began to glow like the phosphorescent walls she had seen in a New Mexico cave. The warmth spread and she gasped as every nerve in her body tingled with pleasure.

"Regan," Peter's voice held an undercurrent of fear. "Stop the flow. I can not control it."

He tried to pull his hand from hers, but Regan laced her fingers through his and held on. The pleasure rippling through her body intensified and the tree trunks glowed brighter.

"Just a little more."

With a jerk, Peter yanked his hand free.

The moss around the bottom of the trees began to steam. "Look, I'm doing it without you."

"Yes, you are," Peter said. "Now draw it back before you incinerate the trees, and us along with them."

Regan turned to stare at him. "Draw it back? I don't know how."

"Reverse the flow, draw it back into you."

"It will burn me up."

"Control the Power, Regan, or it will consume you," Peter said.

The tree trunks began to smoke. "How? Tell me how."

"Close your eyes. Look inward and you will see it. Then picture little streams of Power trickling from your stomach to your legs, arms and neck."

Regan closed her eyes.

The Power was a brilliant, pulsing mass of light stretching from the top of her thighs to her shoulders, and growing brighter with each second.

She took a deep breath, then reached into the glowing mass with her mind and separated it into, glowing strands. She sent five strands down her arm and into each hand, then another five down her legs. The last of the mass she formed into a shining halo and sent it upward toward her head and hair. She felt her body vibrate and sway as she absorbed the power. She waited until the glow was nothing but an ember, then opened her eyes.

The trees surrounding them had black streaked trunks. The once vibrant green, water-soaked-moss looked pale and dry, as if a good breeze would crumble it into powder and send it sailing. "Did I do that?"

Peter wiped his forehead with a shirt sleeve. "Yes. You are strong even without your words of power."

Regan looked across the campfire to Ben and Angus' pale, strained faces.

"You'd best train her and soon," Angus said and stomped off to the farthest edge of the glade. He scooped leaves into a pile, then threw a blanket over them.

"I'm sorry," she whispered in Angus' direction.

Peter touched her arm. "It was my fault. You have grown stronger in the power since you entered Daradawn. I could not control the Power in you as before. I will not try again until you have had training. Now go to bed. The wards are set."

Regan walked to her blanket and stretched out on it. She turned on her back and waited for the earlier weakness to come, it didn't.

Her gaze went upward to stars that peeked through the oaks' leaves. She sought a familiar constellation, but there was no North Star, no Big Dipper. Was this even Earth? My God, what had she got herself into? A wet nose thrust under her hand and Regan smiled in the dark as she stroked Maggie's head. She looked for, and found, Ben's solid figure in the fire's light. At least she wasn't alone. She turned on her side and hugged Maggie close.

The Bride-Seeker

by Jackie Kramer (aka Jackie Bielowicz)

Millennium Magic, edited by Christine Gee

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-564-8

<http://www.hardshell.com>

Sydney Parker feels she is circling the cul-de-sac of existence, and hopes the new Millennium will bring exciting changes

to her life. But she doesn't expect a handsome cop from the end of the 21st century to kidnap her to the future. And when Sgt. Drake Fremont wants to Claim her, that's more than a self-respecting woman can take.

Raised in a world where men outnumber women 100 to one, Drake doesn't know much about love. But he does know that this gorgeous woman from the past is meant for him. But can he convince her to stay with him before the Bride-Seeker, the time gateway between the centuries, separates them forever?

2000 Sapphire Award Finalist

[EXCERPT]

Caught by the intensity of his sapphire gaze, Sydney found herself wanting to trust him. She swallowed the hard lump in her throat.

"Sgt. Fremont---"

She realized he was staring at her mouth, and she felt her lips tingling with anticipation.

"I can't help it," he whispered. *I have to have one taste."

He sealed his mouth to hers, and Sydney's entire universe centered on the fervor, the fiery passion that exploded between them.

He cradled her head between his hands. She clung to his wrists, feeling as if her legs would no longer support her. His tongue teased for access, and she opened her lips for his entrance...no, for his invasion, powerful, overwhelming...yet tender. Her heart pounding in her ears, she could only tumble along with the flood of emotion that swept over her. His mouth drifted down her throat, nipping, caressing. She moaned, her hands clenched in his soft, thick hair.

The Crystal Key

by Jacquelyn Hallquist

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-570-2

books@hardshell.com

If you can't get enough of "Romancing the Stone," you won't want to miss (this) story of a semi-adventurous ornithologist who sets out to learn what really happened to her twin bother and ends up being mistaken for a witch. (Loosely based on that enigmatic artefact, The Crystal Skull, this) book overflows with colorful characters and the exotic locales of Belize. -- Elizabeth Burton, Blue Iris Journal

[EXCERPT]

Jessica's breath caught in her throat as the slab of stone slid aside revealing a vault built into the temple wall. A strange scent disguised in honeysuckle, yet punget and bitter, wafted through the room. She gagged, tried to turn away, to flee, but Alfredo, usually so gentle so kind, dragged her forward.

Everyone was silent, now, and in the stillness she could hear the blood singing in her ears, far-off voices keening, When something in the vault began to glow, she tried again to turn away, but the soft glimmer of light was irresistible, inexorably it drew her gaze and, in the end, she could only stand, transfixed, staring, aware of nothing except that shimmering thing resting there where it had remained for centuries, in the dark, alone, waiting.

The Right Mr. Wrong

by Karen Sandler

ISBN e-book 0-7599-0383-2; paperback: 0-7599-0386-7

Private investigator Jeff Haley doesn't believe in love, especially when it involves a wacky blonde blackjack dealer named Casey Madison. But when scandalous photos from Jeff's latest case fall into -- then out of -- Casey's hands, Jeff and Casey embark on a tri-state chase for the photos... and love.

[EXCERPT]

"Do you have them somewhere safe?" Jeff asked Casey.

She nodded absently, driving in silence. Suddenly, she shot him a glance. "What did you say?"

"The negatives. Are they safe?"

"Sure," she answered, although she sounded anything but. She took the Keystone exit, then rolled up to the stop. She kept her eyes on the road as she waited for an opening in the traffic.

"Where are they?" he persisted as she turned right onto Keystone.

"At my house." She slanted him another quick look. "Except..."

"Except?"

Her fingers on the steering wheel raced through a rapid tattoo. "Shouldn't be a problem though."

He gripped her shoulder and shook it. "What shouldn't be a problem?"

"The mail," she informed him. "It never comes before noon."

In spite of himself, he glanced at his watch. Elevenfifteen. "What," he managed, "does the mail have to do with anything?"

She flicked a glance at him. "The negatives," she stated the obvious, "shouldn't have gone out in the mail yet."

He couldn't have heard her right. "The negatives are in the mail?"

"In my mailbox actually. I left them out for the mailman."

Jeff struggled to understand. "You gave my negatives to the mailman?"

"Well, he wouldn't have them yet since the mail never comes until after twelve."

Jeff took a breath, wondering if next she'd be telling him Who was on first. "Let's start over... you left the negatives out for the mailman."

"And the reunion pictures. I packaged them all up to send to my sister Deb." She faced him. "I'm sure I told you that."

Jeff's jaw began to ache from gritting his teeth so tightly. "No, you did not."

She shrugged. "Whatever. I wouldn't worry about it. I'm sure they're still there."

Casey maintained a leisurely pace down Keystone. Jeff, eyes riveted on his Timex, watched the minutes pass.

"Can't this damn car go any faster?"

Unperturbed, Casey eased into the left lane. "I'm going the speed limit."

His right foot tensed as if it were pressed to the accelerator, trying to urge more speed from the reluctant car. She flashed him a smile, its provocative message adding arousal to the stew of emotions surging through him.

"Mellow out, Jeff. It's only twenty-five after. The mail never comes before noon."

She turned away too quickly to catch his glare. Figuring he'd better follow her advice before he put his fist through the windshield, he leaned back in the seat and closed his eyes. But with his eyes shut, he dragged in her cinnamon scent with each breath, until he ached to trace down its source with his tongue.

Through Iowa Glass

By Christine W. Murphy

ISBN e-book: 0-58200-063-8

Twenty-five years ago, Doctor Alex Casale made a mistake that almost cost him his life. He was twelve-years-old then. His only option -- run. Now, with the memory of that fateful night permanently erased from his mind, he returns home determined to prove he was right. Making the same mistake twice could prove fatal.

Common sense says Skye should move on when Iowa Glass starts to lay off workers, but childhood fears trap her in a town that's apparently dying. When she goes to work for the new owner of Iowa Glass, Skye must choose between the only place where she feels safe and the very dangerous man she is growing to love.

Now, with Skye's help, Alex must rediscover what he learned when he was twelve. If he can't stop blaming his stepfather for his mother's death and find the real killer, a madman will kill and get away with murder again.

Time After Time

Marilynn Byerly <http://marilynnbyerly.com>

As e-book: ISBN: 1-58200-044-1 <http://www.hardshell.com/TimeAft.asp>

As Trade Paperback: ISBN: 0-7599-0101-5 <http://www.hardshell.com/timeaft2.asp>

ALEXA WEST thinks she's found a man who loves her, but another man, JUSTIN LORD, woos her with an outlandish tale-- they have loved and married for their last twelve reincarnations, and he will allow no other man to marry her in their thirteenth. Is Justin's story lunacy, a line, or a love that spans the ages?

Determined to win her by making her remember, dynamic Justin romances Alexa by restaging and retelling their past lives and their loves. But he doesn't tell her she has rivals for his love, and she is all twelve.

One of the Best Time Travel Novels of 1998 - - A ffaire de Coeur Readers Poll
One of the Best Time Travel Novels of 1998 -- Affaire de Coeur Critics Choice

Timerider

By Susan Yarina

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-563-X; paperback: 0-7599-0057-4

Black Hawk, a fierce Apache warrior of 1882 Arizona, knows a woman's place is firmly two paces behind him. Caytlyn James RN, hurtled back in time, will walk behind no man. Cultures clash, passion ignites. Available in disk or download ISBN#1-58200 or in print ISBN#0-7599-0057-4 @ www.hardshell.com or www.barnesandnoble.com or www.powells.com or visit Susan at <http://www.geocities.com/Paris/Maison/3676/> .

[EXCERPT]

Black Legion Camp
Spring 1882

"Where are we?" Caytlyn smiled when Grey Wolf started buzzing like a bee.

"Do I have to call you little bee instead of little cat?" His bronze, lined face wrinkled in amusement.

"Wait, I know where I am." She looked around at the familiar landscape. Something in her started shrinking away from the next question, even as she realized that things were slightly different, younger, somehow. But it was undeniable. She was in the Superstitions. She could see parts of the valley below. The lay of the land was completely familiar, but there wasn't a city.

Where is Apache Junction? And Mesa? She saw only an isolated home or two. She became very alert as though she were in danger. Hair stood up on her arms, then the back of her neck. She asked very quietly, "What year is this?"

Grey Wolf reached out to hold her arm as if he knew what her reaction would be. "Your people call this the year of 1882."

Gasping as if he had slapped her, Caytlyn twisted out of his light hold and turned to run. She ran smack into Black Hawk whose grasp was not so easy to break. Wildly, she struggled as she repeated over and over, "It can't be, it can't be." She suddenly dropped her head to Black Hawk's chest, feeling extremely light headed. She garnered strength from his warm presence. Pulling her closer into his embrace, he crooned soothing words. The effect was calming for Caytlyn and slowly her head stopped spinning.

Grey Wolf came up behind her and patted her on the back as one might soothe a small child. "Don't worry. You are safe. We would never harm you."

Even as he spoke, the implications of what he had said made her reassess her situation. "God," she moaned, "I am with wild Apaches!" She paled as she remembered the history she had learned in high school. "What are you going to do with me?" Caytlyn struggled again, getting wilder and louder with each passing second. "Let me go."

Black Hawk suddenly lifted her into the air and shook her hard, just once. It stopped her cold. She realized with remarkable clarity that she was completely at his mercy. Slowly he set her down. She started, as if to run. The intensity of the look he gave her, stopped her. As cornered prey, she could do no more than look into his eyes mesmerized. She sensed his spirit profoundly. Yes, she might be his captive, but not in the usual sense of the word. Her heart leapt within her. She consciously tried to evict him from her heart and mind. It didn't work. The seconds stretched on as the three presented a curious tableau. She made an odd sound from deep in her throat and he reached out to soothe her by

laying his hand alongside her face. Little by little, her body relaxed as she came to know, that for her, there was no danger.

Century met century. Wild met civilized. Soul met soul.

Time Out Of Mind

By Barbara Raffin

ISBN e-book: 0-7599-0346-8; paperback: 0-7599-0349-2

www.hardshell.com

(EXCERPT for TIME OUT OF MIND by Barbara Raffin)

He leaned forward and brushed his lips across hers.

Samantha's breath caught in her throat. Suddenly Archer wasn't at all beyond her reach. He wasn't the safe object of her daydreams.

But, if she found the idea of becoming some pretty boy's conquest objectionable, why did craving carve deep into her core like an abscessed sweet tooth? Why did she sit unmoving as his lips assaulted hers?

Because she wanted what no practical woman should wish upon herself. She wanted Michael Archer to want her. Pastless, transient Michael Archer.

"How about it, Angel?" his lips whispered against hers. "Wasn't there ever a boy, a man for you?"

If she wanted a balm for her bleeding heart, if she wanted her ego salved, she'd get neither from a man who asked pointed questions. She was certain of that. Just as certain as she was that she must defend herself against the all too physical Michael Archer.

"Ed," she croaked around the bubble of air swelling in her throat. "I have Ed."

He covered her lying mouth with his, firmer this time, insistent. More than she wanted to protect herself, she wanted to believe the hunger she tasted on the probe of Archer's tongue. She wanted to believe he desired her. She wanted to lose herself in the moment and she did.

And she wanted the moment to last forever. But it didn't.

Archer withdrew his mouth from hers, not sudden but no less jolting to her. "Does your Ed make your toes tingle, Angel?"

Whisper Upon The Water

By Connie Vines

ISBN: e-book: 0-7599-0181-3; paperback: 0-75990-184-8

Dream Realm Award Winner

Apacheria, 1880

Tanayia is alone in the world. Her village destroyed and her people murdered by a group of revolutionaries who now hold her hostage. A darting escaped on the edge of Chochise's stronghold saves Tanayia's life, but she discovers her ordeal is only now beginning.

[EXCERPT]

I glanced at my captors. Their concentration was set on the uneven pathway that lead to the bouldery ridgebone of the mountains, not me.

I pulled my wrists and felt the leather give. My heart pounded hard in my chest and I felt light headed. Quickly, I slid the leather over the saddlehorn and freed my hands.

As we reached the point where the trail crests the light was fading and the harsh winds howled in the distance, I knew I must make my move.

Soundlessly, I slid from my horse. The animal broke stride for only the length of a crow's cry.

The wind whipped against the brush and grainy pellets of hair began to pepper the ground. I heard the startled cry of several horses and the sound of my captors.

This time if I was found, El Capita'n would kill me!

Womb For Rent

by Amanda Brian (aka Patti Shenberger)

ISBN e-book: 1-58200-078-6; paperback: 0-7599-0603-3

Available at www.hardshell.com

[EXCERPT]

"Mr... I mean Derek, have you given any thought to when you would like to try to... I mean for us to... oh heck, when do you want to start working on having a baby?" Talli stammered, her words sounding more confused by the minute.

Derek watched her fingers as she nervously twisted them together. He leaned across the seat to take her hand in his. "How about tonight?"

Talli gulped. "Tonight?"

"Tonight," he affirmed, surprising even himself with his answer.

Talli watched Derek settle back in the plush seat and lift the phone to call up front to Joseph.

Minutes later, Talli's eyes widened as the realization dawned on her. "Tonight,?" she whispered to herself, her eyes on Derek as he spoke softly into the receiver.

Glossary II: About the Authors

Sabrah Agee

Kathy Awe

Soon to be released from HSWF: a short story collection written as Kathryn Awe

Available now: PROUD MARI from HSWF, electronic and trade paperback, written as Kathryn North.

Kathryn Awe writes from the home she shares with her husband, on the Minnesota/Ontario border lakes. At various times in her adult life, she's worn many hats: non-traditional college student, maid, waitress, office manager for a marine dealership, church secretary, Christmas wreath maker, stock broker, editor, wife, mother, and grandmother. Writer. Kathryn's goal as a writer is to write stories about people we all recognize: the people we work with, our neighbors, our lovers, our friends. Her fiction carries the piney tang of her Minnesota home.

Michele R. Bardsley

Bestselling author and HSWF Senior Editor Michele R. Bardsley spends her days asking her son not to throw toys into the potty, venturing into her preteen daughter's room to ask the clothes on the floor to please walk to the appropriate laundry pile, and answering her husband's silly questions such as, "Honey, why is my sock glued to the floor?"

Named Queen of Housework Procrastination, Michele enjoys eating large quantities of chocolate and drawing smiley faces in the dust on her furniture. Her other hobbies include Plant Homicide (whaddaya mean you gotta water those green thingies?) and picking up dog poop when she takes her sweet little mutt Pumba for walks. (She didn't say she had great hobbies.)

In-between the duties of her fantastically interesting life (yawn), Michele edits books for Hard Shell Word Factory and writes novels and short stories and grand excuses about how her husband's socks get stuck to the carpet.

Jackie Bielowicz

All her life, Jackie Kramer wanted to be a mother, writer, and the first stripper in space. Not necessarily in that order, but a girl's gotta have some dreams, doesn't she? Motherhood came first. Raising two rambunctious boys gave her the insanity...er, motivation to write. She wrote over 25 Star Trek short stories. But since ST fan fiction doesn't pay well (only a free copy of the issue your story appears in), she turned to her second love, romance.

Her first book, *BABY BONUS (OOP)*, was a Silhouette Desire, and hit the USA Today Bestseller list for May, 1996. Her second, *BROKEN PLEDGE (ISBN #1-58200-109-X)*, from Hard Shell Word Factory was a finalist in the 1999 Booksellers' Best Award Contest. Combining her two loves, she wrote a time-travel novella, *THE BRIDE-SEEKER*, for HSWF's romance anthology, *Millennium Magic (ISBN #1-58200-564-8)* which was chosen a Sapphire Award

finalist for best SF novella in 2000. Her third romance novel, *COMING TO TERMS* (ISBN #1-58200-611-3), debuted the same year. Her two HSWF novels are also became available in tradeback from HSWF in May, 2001 (ISBN #0-7599-0602-5)

While her writing isn't yet paying mega-bucks, her 20+ year career as a pediatric nurse allows her to earn her living working with the greatest creatures on Earth, children. They give her tons of resource material which is why you often find them in her books. Meanwhile, Jackie will keep writing, hoping that Legolas will take her away from all this while she trains to Strip In Space!

All rebuttals (or offers of employment) can be directed to www.jackiekramer.com

Jane Bierce

Jane Bierce has been writing romances for over 20 years. First published by harlequin American Romances, she has also been published by Silhouette and Zebra. In 1992, she lost her sight and it was restored by surgery. While recovering, Jane wrote *ONCE AGAIN A PRINCESS*, knowing that it probably wouldn't ever be published as it broke too many rules. Mary Z. Wolf took a chance on the book shortly after taking over Hard Shell Word Factory.

Barbara Donlon Bradley

Barbara Donlon Bradley has always had a vivid imagination. At the tender age of 11, she started creating characters based off of popular television shows she watched.

In 1993 writing took on a whole new meaning for Barbara when her mother-in-law moved back to Virginia. Her mother-in-law belonged to Romance Writers of America, and was itching to join a local chapter in Virginia. A new group had just developed in the Tidewater Area. Unknown to Barbara, her mother-in-law paid for her first year in RWA and the new group Chesapeake Romance Writers.

This gentle push was followed by another one. The chapter decided to have members send in 5 pages to be critiqued. Barbara, knowing she'd be out of town for the next meeting, sent in her five pages, figuring if no one liked it, she could slink away, never to be seen again. To her surprise they loved it, so she started to work diligently at learning the craft of writing.

In March of 1996 she was voted in as president of the Chesapeake Romance Writers, holding that position for three years. Now she is newsletter editor for CRW. She is also a chaplink advisor for RWA's Chapter President's link, is a member of the Futuristic, Fantasy, & Paranormal chapter of RWA, and managing editor for World Romance Writers Spin Journal, another national organization for romance writers.

Her first release, "A Portrait in Time" is a finalist in the World Romance Writers Crystal Globe Awards. Her second release, an essay titled, "What Goes Around, Comes Around" can be found in "Crumbs in the Keyboard: Stories from Courageous Women Who Juggle Life and Writing", which will be released in June 2002. All proceeds will benefit the Center for Women and Families.

Writing is a passion for Barbara. She has completed four manuscripts so far, including a sequel to "A Portrait in Time".

You can visit Barbara's web page at <http://www.geocities.com/barbbradley/>

Marilynn Byerly

Best-selling author Marilynn Byerly's writing passion is adventure stories--past, present, and future. In her creations of swashbucklers, true love, and villains to vanquish, she also likes to add a dash of magic.

"Romantic Times" has called her an author to watch. "Affaire de Coeur" named her one of the five up and-coming authors of 1998 and an Outstanding Achiever in 2001. Her novel STAR-CROSSED, has received a Sapphire Award, the National Reader's Choice Award, and a Write Touch Award, and the "Affaire de Coeur" Best Futuristic Award. Her sf adventure novel, THE ONCE AND FUTURE QUEEN, was an EPIE and PEARL finalist. Her website is <http://marilynnbyerly.com>.

Margaret L. Carter

Marked for life by reading DRACULA at the age of twelve, Margaret L. Carter has specialized, as both fan and writer, in the literature of the supernatural. Her first two books, CURSE OF THE UNDEAD and DEMON LOVERS AND STRANGE SEDUCTIONS, were anthologies of horror stories. A graduate of the College of William and Mary, she holds a Ph.D. in English from the University of California, Irvine. Her works on vampire fiction include THE VAMPIRE IN LITERATURE: A CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY and DIFFERENT BLOOD: THE VAMPIRE AS ALIEN. She also edited an anthology of scholarship on DRACULA, entitled DRACULA: THE VAMPIRE AND THE CRITICS.

Her articles and short stories have appeared in a variety of publications, including several of Marion Zimmer Bradley's Darkover anthologies. Her novels include a werewolf tale, SHADOW OF THE BEAST, and two vampire novels,

DARK CHANGELING (winner of an Eppie 2000 award for horror) and SEALED IN BLOOD.

She and her husband, a retired Navy Captain, live in Annapolis, Maryland, and have four sons, several grandchildren, and an assortment of cats. <http://members.aol.com/MLCVamp/vampcrpt.htm> .

Christine DeSmet

Christine DeSmet's romantic suspense Spirit Lake was a finalist and winner in two national contests of Romance Writers of America before being published by Hard Shell Word Factory. Her agent is marketing two new romantic suspense novels, Nesting Instincts-also set in Wisconsin, and Treasure at Jump Creek, set in Wyoming but with a continuing character from Nesting Instincts. Christine is also an award-winning screenwriter with a project at New Line Cinema. She teaches screenwriting and fiction throughout the year at University of Wisconsin-Madison. A fellowship graduate of the Warner Bros. TV Sitcom Workshop, she's a member of Writers Guild of America, East; Wisconsin Screenwriters Forum; Romance Writers of America; Electronically Published Internet Connection; and Electronically Published Professionals.

Kate Douglas

Kate Douglas is multi-published in contemporary romance, romantic suspense and erotic futuristics. She has three HSWF titles: HONEYSUCKLE ROSE, winner of the 2001 Eppie for Best Romantic Suspense, ON WINGS OF LOVE, winner of the 2001 Eppie for Best Contemporary Romance, and COWBOY IN MY POCKET, winner of both the 2002 Eppie for Best Contemporary Romance and the Quasar for Best Cover Art. With a motion picture deal in the works, Kate is currently working on the screenplay for Cowboy in My Pocket. Her erotic futuristic series, StarQuest,

available through Ellora's Cave, gains in popularity with each new release. When she's not in front of the computer, Kate's usually cooking something up in the kitchen, much to the delight of her husband, children and grandson.

Jennifer Dunne

Jennifer Dunne wrote her first "book" at the age of four, telling the story of a lost little girl and the helpful elephant who leads her home. She was all set for a career in the literary arts, to begin in that far off misty future after kindergarten -- then she discovered a book about "the new math" on the coffee table, and fell in love with numbers instead. After getting a degree in math followed by a masters degree in artificial intelligence, she joined IBM and devoted herself to doing neat things with computers, all the time continuing to write romance stories as a way of balancing so much logical brain activity. She quickly discovered that, despite her mother's warnings, not only did people want to read her "weird" stories, they were willing to pay her to do so.

Combining her love of science with her love of romance, Jennifer became the driving force behind the Science Fiction Romance newsletter, and the two-term president of Romance Writers of America's Fantasy, Futuristic and Paranormal chapter. Her first book, the science fiction romance RAVEN'S HEART, won the EPPIE Award for the best science fiction original ebook. She followed this up with DARK SALVATION, a twist on vampirism inspired by genetic engineering, and SHADOW PRINCE, which won the Reviewers Internation Organization's Dorothy Parker Award (honorable mention) for best futuristic. Her June 2002 release, SEX MAGIC, is an erotic romance that explores the science of magic. Her shorter fiction includes stories of do-gooding demons (HEAVEN AND HELL) and magical animal rights activists (SHIFTERS), but always with a touch of romance.

Take a tour of the worlds of Jennifer's imagination at her website, <http://www.jenniferdunne.com> .

Allene Frances

Allene Frances lives in Santa Rosa, CA. and McAllen, Texas. From a Cherokee and Irish background rich in storytelling tradition. She has worked with the hearing impaired, been a CEO, a District Manager of Sales for a cosmetics company, and an Avon lady. Her work has appeared in magazines, news-papers and other publications. Her many loves are animals, writing, Middle Eastern & Country Western dance, reading, golf, walking, crafts, and real life romance. An avid reader since childhood, words seemed to take on a life of their own, shouting out messages from ketchup bottles, boxes of cereal, the carton of milk on the table. It was when they formed themselves into stories that she was at last saved from the confusion and the jumbled unlinked images. Stories! Of course--the very reason for learning in the first place. She loves to read about courage and honor. If you add some action or suspense it's even better. A great treasure hunt will keep her up all night. And naturally, a stirring love story is always a winner.

Melissa Ford

Melissa Ford makes her home in rural Michigan with her husband, sons Walt and Collin, SugarPie the goat and a flock of chickens. After working as a special education teacher, she turned to a career in writing--an even more unpredictable world than education.

She currently has two books with Hard Shell Word Factory. HIS FRIDAY GIRLS, a young adult romance about a girl who comes to terms with the craziness of the teen years and SECOND CHANCE COWBOY, an adult romance about a woman who gets a second chance to win the heart of the man she loves.

Melissa loves to read from readers. Contact her at MFordL1@aol.com or the old fashioned way at P.O. Box 144 Dansville, MI 48819.

Sharon K. Garner

Sharon K. Garner is a former library cataloguer and a former proofreader. She lives in south-central PA, near a manmade lake, with her EMT/welder husband and college-student son, both of whom have learned not to twitch when asked such questions as, How do you disable a piece of big equipment? and How do you say (usually something embarrassing) in Spanish? Two cats, one who leads her life like a Friskies commercial, the other like life is going to sneak up and bite her, complete the household. In her spare time the author works seasonally and part-time at a gift shop to support her writing habit, does walk aerobics and occasional Tae-Bo, and reads English mysteries. <http://www.sharonkgarner.com>

Anita Gunnufson

Writing as Anita Lynn, she wears several hats in life. She's been married to her hero, Craig, for over 20 years, and has two sons and two grandchildren. She has been a Woman's Health Care Nurse Practitioner since 1978 and loves being a positive advocate for women. She has two homes, one in Flagstaff, AZ and another in the Los Angeles Area. She and her husband are currently residing with two middle- aged dogs and an elderly cat.

She has sold three books, one of which was published by Hard Shell Word Factory
Blood Fever ISBN: 1-58200-093-X
Blood Fever won 3rd place in the SARA Rising Star Awards

F. Jacquelyn Hallquist

F. Jacquelyn Hallquist has been writing stories since she was in the third grade. A retired school teacher, she has traveled widely and, over the years, engaged in many occupations including amateur archaeologist and delivery person for a Fuller Brush man. Currently, she resides in the Great Pacific Northwest where she shares her home and hearth with seven lovely, lazy cats. Brunch with friends has replaced travel as her favorite form of recreation.

Betty Craker Henderson

A former children's librarian and assistant editor at a local newspaper, Betty Craker Henderson plays upright bass and sings in a country band. She serves on the board of the Missouri Folklore Society and, with her husband Ben, has hosted a weekly musical program, the McDowell Gold Jubilee, for the past twenty-four years. In addition, she does public performances on the musical heritage of the Ozarks through her character, Granny Dingle, is available for children's programs, and is involved with Elderhostels in the Ozarks area. She is passionate about the Ozarks and her heritage and enjoys writing about the history of the area, both for adults and children. She's published poetry, magazine articles, newspaper columns, written short stories, a novel, Child Support (published both in an electronic version and in print), and is presently marketing a children's picture book and working on both a period novel and a juvenile book set smack in the middle of her husband's salvage yard.

She is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, Western Writers of America, the Missouri Writers' Guild, (serving as vice-president and co-ordinator of the annual conference for the year 2000), the Springfield Writers' Guild, EPIC (the Electronically Published Internet Connection), EPPRO (Electronically Published Professionals) , is a director on the board of Ozarks Writers, Inc.(a non-profit organization devoted to encouraging,

promoting and exposing the reading public to Ozarks writers), and is a charter member and past president of the Ozark Writers League.

Henderson is encouraged by her husband Ben, three kids, two sons-in-law, and five grandchildren, countless supportive friends, and is surrounded by forty acres of junk cars and a cat who believes he is God.

Her web site address is: <http://www.geocities.com/bettyhenderson>

Elysa Hendricks

After trying her hand at a variety of careers: retail sales, insurance underwriter, video store owner, home day care provider, and motherhood, in 1990, Elysa Hendricks, a longtime reader of romance, sat down to write a short contemporary romance. When her heroine turned out to be a winged, telepathic alien, Elysa decided she enjoyed writing stories set in different places and times.

After she finished her as yet unpublished romantic sci/fi/fantasy novel, she turned her talents to writing about the Old West. RAWHIDE SURRENDER is available from Hard Shell Word Factory. <http://www.hardshell.com> .

She then decided to return to her first love, fantasy romance. GEMINI MOON and CRYSTAL MOON are available from ImaJinn Books. Her short fantasy romance, THE CHRISTMAS VILLAGE is part of Novel Books, Inc's THE PLEASURES OF THE HEART anthology.

A founding member of the Windy City Chapter and the FF&P Chapter of RWA, Elysa is active in both groups. Long

time residents of Illinois, Elysa and her husband have been happily married for thirty years and have two sons. Someday she dreams of writing on a laptop while sitting on a tropical beach. For the time being she keeps warm by writing hot sensual love scenes. You can contact her through her web site: <http://www.geminimoon.org>

Barbara M. Hodges

Barbara Hodges lives on the central coast of California with her husband Jeff, two basset hounds, Winston and Sydney, and a sassy yellow tabby, Wallace.

The Blue Flame, the first novel in the Daradawn Trilogy, is her first published novel, and she has just completed her second, The Emerald Dagger, book two of the trilogy.

The Blue Flame is available through Hard Shell Word Factory, and many other internet sites in e-book and trade paperback print. The trade paperback is also available at Waldenbooks and other brick and mortar stores by special order.

Web Site: <http://barbarahodges.gobot.com>

Liz Hunter

Liz Hunter hails from Madison, WI, where she lives with her husband and daughter. Her first published novel, Beyond the Shadow, was a Golden Heart finalist in 1994, and a Golden Network Contest finalist in 1999. The later garnered her a publishing contract from HSWF, and the romantic suspense was released in May 2000. The author is currently

TGN's Golden Pen Contest Coordinator and editor of EPIC's newsletter, EPIC Journey. Readers can contact her at lizhunter42000@aol.com or check out her website at <http://www.lizhunter.com> .

Pauline B. Jones

Pauline Baird Jones is the award-winning, best-selling author of five novels of romantic suspense with a comedic twist. THE LAST ENEMY, the first book in her LONESOME LAWMEN series, was the first ebook to win a ROMANTIC TIMES Reviewer's Choice Award. BYTE ME, the second book in the series, was also nominated for the same award and was an EPIE finalist in 2000. Pauline loves living in New Orleans where the living is easy and the food to die for. For information about her other books, contests and free stuff, visit Pauline's website at: www.paulinebjones.com or write her at: pauline@paulinebjones.com Snail Mail: PO Box 740302 New Orleans LA 70114.

Susanne Marie Knight

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Susanne Marie Knight works as a writer for a fitness program shown on public television. Multi-published with books, short stories, and articles, Susanne's list of published books include Tainted Tea For Two, a romantic murder mystery, Hard Shell Word Factory; Janus Is A Two-Headed God, a science fiction romance, Awe-Struck Ebooks; Lord Darver's Match and The Magic Token, Regencies, LionHearted Publishing; Love At The Top, a contemporary romance, NovelBooks Inc.; and Grave Future, a paranormal romantic suspense novel, LTDBooks. Upcoming titles include The Reluctant Landlord, a Regency romance; and Timeless Deception, a time-travel Regency. Sign up for her newsletter,

Knight Dreams, at newsletter@susanneknight.com .

Jennifer Kokoski

Jennifer Kokoski was born and raised in the suburbs of Baltimore, Maryland some thirty years ago the youngest of a happy, boisterous brood. After battling arthritis in childhood and perhaps because of it she learned the magic that can only be found in a good book. As an adult she pursued a degree in psychology in hopes of understanding people but found her true vocation lay in writing good stories of her own. Whether for publications or as a web designer, she uses her artistic skills to teach, inform and entertain. She continues to make her home in Maryland amidst her ever-growing family including three nieces, 4 nephews and two godsons - the next generation of Kokoskis.

Writing time travel science fiction for fun, she has author over a dozen internet novels. Her first full length commercial Regency romance novel NOTORIOUS ANGEL makes its debut the summer of 2002 with Hard Shell Word Factory. More information available at <http://www.notoriousangel.com> .

Judith Lynn

Judith Lynn lives outside Oslo, Norway, with her husband and three children, two cats and a dog. Raised ranching in Western South Dakota, Judith loves the outdoors. She enjoys architecture, roaming through ruins, history, reading and gardening. She hopes her stories introduce readers to the richness of Norwegian history beyond the Viking Age. Love Thy Enemy is Judith's first novel. To find out more about the turbulent marriage of Tora and magnus, visit her website at: www.judithlynn.com .

Ginny McBlain

Ginny McBlain is a pioneer in the field of electronic publishing. HEART BROKEN, HEART WHOLE was published by Renlow Publishing in 1996. BEAR HUGS is her fourth e-book.

A Virginian transplanted to Nebraska by way of Texas, Ginny believes in the "bloom where you're planted theory." A keen observer of people, places and things, she honed her skill in airports around the nation during her days as an airline stewardess. Married over thirty years to a former passenger, Ginny has a married son and is an "other mother" to many of his friends.

She has served on many organization's board of directors, including two terms as President with the Romance Authors of the Heartland and as the first President of EPIC, the Electronically Published Internet Connection.

Christine W. Murphy

As a little girl, Christine Murphy came to the conclusion she'd been left by aliens to grow up in a small town in Minnesota. When would they notice she was missing and come back for her, she wanted to know. After graduating from college only 20 miles away, she decided drastic action was called for and she joined the Navy to look for them. The Navy, in their infinite wisdom, sent her to Iceland, one of the few places on Earth with more Lutherans per square foot than Minnesota. Eventually, she realized no one was coming for her and she decided to settle for domestic bliss. Christine lives in New England with three exceptional children and one crazy, red Abyssinian cat.

Christine has four books currently available at Hard Shell Word Factory. At Your Command, her paranormal romantic

comedy, is available in paperback (ISBN: 0-7599-0423-5) and e-formats. Available in e-formats and coming soon in paperback are: Highlord of Darkness (SF), For the Emperor (SF romance), and Through Iowa Glass (romantic suspense). Soon to be released in paperback and e-formats: Cast in Steel, Carved in Stone, a prequel to For the Emperor. You can contact Christine at LSComp@aol.com or visit her web site at <http://members.aol.com/lscomp> .

Shirley Parenteau

Shirley Parenteau moved from writing travel articles to an award-winning newspaper humor column, then to children's books and full-length women's fiction. Her eight published children's books include a Children's Choice winning picture book, a Weekly Reader Book Club selection, and a YA science-fiction novel republished in Germany. After two novels with Ballantine Books and three Harlequin Historicals, Shirley discovered e-publishing. She was delighted when Hard Shell Word Factory published *Blue Hands, Blue Cloth* with vibrant illustrations by Susan Walker and thrilled almost speechless to win an Eppie for Best Children's Book. She loves exploring cookbooks almost as much as writing--two of her children's books are cookbooks--and happily shares favorite recipes here. A native Oregonian, Shirley now lives on 3 acres south of Sacramento California with her husband and more stray cats than she expected.

Barbara Phinney

After retiring from the military, Barbara Phinney tackled something she knew nothing about, romance writing. And so her second career was born. Writing romance has helped her to see the world differently. Everyone has goals and motives. Understanding them helps me deal with those around me. When not writing, she volunteers at her children's schools, teaching creative fiction to very busy pre-teens.

Barbara's romantic comedy, *All For A Good Cause* is available at Hard Shell Word Factory's website, www.hardshell.com . Barbara lives with her husband, two children and an ancient cat. You can contact her about her novel at barbarap@nbnet.nb.ca .

S. Joan Popek

S. Joan Popek is an age-challenged grandmother tiptoeing through the Twilight Zone while she gazes longingly at Ganymede. She is also an award winning author, and her works include *SOUND THE RAM'S HORN*, A Frankfurt Award Nominee, soon to be released from Hard Shell Word Factory, an EPPIE 2000 award winning collection of short stories, *THE ADMINISTRATOR* from The Fiction Works and *JUMP START YOUR WRITING CAREER WITH ELECTRONIC PUBLISHERS*, an EPPIE 2002 Finalist from Atlantic Bridge Publishing. Her home page is www.sjoanpopek.com .

Barbara Raffin

I'm one of those obsessive writers who'd rather write than breathe. I wrote my first novel at age twelve in retaliation to the lack of female leads in the adventure stories I loved reading. I sailed through high school writing assignments...something I took for granted. I even aced my first college paper in spite of it lacking a thesis sentence. Guess I didn't always know what I was doing. But I loved playing with words, exploring the human psyche, and telling stories.

TIME OUT OF MIND was one of those rare books that comes through an author instead of from her. It finaled in almost every competition into which it was entered, winning West Houston's Emily, River City Romance Writer's Duel

on the Delta, and East Texas RWA's Southern Heat. Of TIME "Romantic Times" writes, "A fabulous job of keeping the suspense going...until the very last page" and "The Word on Romance" calls TIME "brilliant." I'm proud this haunting story is finally being published by Hard Shell Word Factory.
www.hardhsell.com

To learn more about TIME OUT OF MIND and my first book, WOLFSONG, visit my web-site:
www.authorraffin.homestead.com

Karen Sandler

Karen Sandler recently sold her ninth novel. Also a screenwriter and filmmaker, she's currently in production on her second short film. Married for more than 20 years, Karen is a staunch believer in love, romance and chocolate.

Patti Shenberger

Patti Shenberger has loved writing since she held a pen and could form a coherent sentence. Throughout her teens she penned many an intergalactic adventure with the crew of the Starship Enterprise, wrote herself into riding shotgun with Starsky and Hutch, and even crafted a calamity or two with the Dukes of Hazard boys!

Now all grown up with two teenagers of her own, Patti enjoys writing for all genres. She has also published her first novel, WOMB FOR RENT, under the pseudonym of Amanda Brian (the name of her two kids) and saw its release in May of 1999 from Hard Shell Word Factory. She is also multi-published in fiction and nonfiction magazine length articles. Presently, Patti has four manuscripts at four separate publishing houses and is awaiting a decision on a three

book deal she wrote with her writing partner.

Currently, Patti is finishing her second term as President of the Greater Detroit Romance Writers of America Chapter, and has held numerous positions in the past within her local chapter. She will also be running for RWA Region 2 Representative this fall. Please feel free to contact her at pattishen@msn.com or pattishenberger@msn.com.

Betty Jo Schuler

Schuler has two books published by Hard Shell Word Factory: *Camp Cheer*, a YA pick-a-path mystery, and *Male Wanted*, a romantic comedy. Visit her website at <http://home.webworks2000.net/bschuler/bettyjo.html>

Louise Titchener

Louise Titchener lives in Baltimore with her philosophy professor husband and is the author of more than forty published novels. These include romance, science-fiction fantasy and mystery. Her latest novel, *BURIED IN BALTIMORE*, is a mystery featuring her dyslexic heroine, Toni Credella. *BURIED IN BALTIMORE* won an Eppie for Best Mystery of 2002. Check out Louise's website at <http://www.mysteriousbaltimore.com>.

Connie Vines

A reviewer described Connie's writing as pure magic, saying her style of storytelling encircled you like wisps of tribal ghosts and held you captive until you finished the last page.

Connie has served on the board of Outreach International Chapter of Romance Writers, and the YA/MG Network for Writers where she was editor of "After the Prom." Currently, she writes a monthly column title "News on the Net" for the Orange County Chapter of Romance Writers. She also judges the RITA, Orange Rose, EPIES, and Award of Excellence.

Active in Native American education and literacy programs, Connie can be found working with young adults or relaxing at southern California pow wows in the company of her husband and sons.

Her first novel, *Rachel and the Texan*, a Zebra release, won the Award of Excellence from the International Chapter of Romance Writers. *Whisper upon the Water*, ISBN# 0-75990-184-8, published by Hard Shell won the Dream Realm Award, and was nominated for the National Book Award.

Visit her website at: www.hometown.aol.com/connievines/index.html

C.J. Winters

Always more interested in Tomorrow than Yesterday, C.J. was pleased to discover the American past offers a wealth of backgrounds for some of her offbeat stories. Combined with her fascination for the extra-normal, the discovery led to her time-travel romances, *Moon Night*, *Sleighride*, and *Right Man, Wrong Time*.

Intrigued by the unknown since her teens, C.J. is always questioning: What if? Could it be? Why not? And if so...? *Sleighride* resulted from such questioning. C.J. explains, "Following surgery, I returned home on Christmas Day. I'd had plenty of sleep in the hospital, and as I lay awake that night, the story of *Sleighride* drifted like snowflakes into my

mind. I edit obsessively, but the story has never changed. Of the many Christmas gifts I've received, Sleighride is my favorite of all time."

Although she lives in the Kansas City, Missouri area, C.J. prefers rustic settings for her stories. Creating intense relationships and helping them unfold through intriguing, subtle or whimsical interplay is her idea of fun. She says, "Story plotting is like weight-lifting for the brain. You collect puzzle pieces and then find places to fit them."

Visit C.J.'s web page: www.cjwinters.com

Susan Yarina

Susan Yarina told stories the whole time she got married, became a wife, mother and registered nurse, horse rider and trainer, trail rider, rancher, artist, seamstress, business woman and finally writer.

When she was a nurse she worked to make people feel better, and now writes for the same reason. Her first published novel is Timerider (April 2000) , a time-travel romance set in Arizona in 1882. It garnered rave five and four star reviews "in the tradition of Romancing the Stone". Her second novel is Nora's Turn (April 2002), a short contemporary romance about the power of love over terror and abuse. Both books are available in paperback and ebook and are on the paperback bestseller list at Hard Shell Word Factory for the first quarter of 2002.