

## U.S. Review of Books Reviews

**Title:** Adrift

**Author:** V.P. Saxton

**Publisher:** Xlibris

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “Another family would invade their idyllic existence. People they knew nothing about would expect to become part of their lives.”

**Review Text:**

When Helena’s mother becomes ill and needs full time care, her and her family are faced with giving up their dream home on Capstan Court to help take care of her. The decision is not well received by their neighbors, who are devastated that their tight-knit community is being turned upside down. Helena and Greg, Lizzie and Mike, and Carla and Douglas as well as their families had been inseparable for years. But now has the time come for the Capstan Court residents to go their separate ways? The story follows each of these three families as they go about their lives all while processing the biggest change they’ve faced in all these years living next to one another.

Saxton’s novel presents itself as a simple yet relatable story about how close friends and neighbors can truly become over time. A feeling of ‘Desperate Housewives’ will cross the reader’s mind as they dive deeper into this story, but with less over-the-top drama. The crazy drama expected in such a narrative is replaced by normal, everyday household activities and exchanges more typical of modern families. It flows like that of what really happens with families and friends as opposed to the outlandish eccentrics in that of shows or movies. The fast-paced and quick-draw narrative changes can feel like that of a television series. Switching back and forth between each individual character and allowing each person to have their own voice. Each family gets their own development and story arc that ties together neatly at the end. Saxton has created a feel-good family novel that explores these friendships and relationships that will make the reader ask why they hadn’t heard of Capstone Court before.

**Title:** Children of the Fallen Empire

**Author:** Killian Tiwari

**Publisher:** iUniverse

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “At that point, he didn’t know that it was the symbol of the Tera-Ninja Dragon Clan. As a matter of fact, he didn’t know what a Tera-Ninja actually was, much less that he was one. Or at least half of one.”

**Review Text:** The Tera-Ninja’s are the most powerful warriors ever created. A race of superhumans genetically designed to be the most incredible weapons. With healing abilities twenty times more than that of a regular person, four times the strength, and the ability to manipulate energy particles around them, they were the ultimate weapons of war. Rejected by some nations and embraced by others, the Tera-Ninja’s flourished. But when the emperor is murdered, the empire they once thrived in collapses. It isn’t until many years later when five survivors Johnny, Sasha, Alex, Cirrus, and Sonia, come together as they try to prevent their world from falling into chaos.

“Children of the Fallen Empire” is an extremely captivating story that will keep the reader hooked until the very last page. A page turning adventure/sci-fi novel through and through. The histories and anthologies of the Tera-Ninja and the world they exist in are explained slowly during the course of the novel, easily letting the reader dip their toes into this world that Tiwari has created. All of the characters are unique enough to keep you invested in their own individual story arcs, watching how each tie in with one another as the story progresses. It’s light-hearted humor sewn throughout keeps you laughing as you interact with each character as they become integrated into the story. This appears to be the first book in a series, and if the rest are as well crafted as this one is, it will turn into one heck of a series!

**Title:** Hell in a Handbasket

**Author:** Timothy J. Amerine

**Publisher:** Xlibris

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “The rendezvous was far from over, but the trapper would soon be back to the mountains and the cold streams in hunt of the elusive flat tails that had brought them together.”

**Review Text:** What happens when you get a serious case of wanderlust? In the case of Billy White, you leave your life on the farm and head west. While his travels takes him through many places, and runs into many people of all walks of life, his lust for women is one thing that never wanes. Through the twists and turns, the marriages and lovers trysts, Billy finds himself on the journey of a lifetime. Will his passions lead him to where his heart leads him, or will he become tangled in his troublesome lust?

In a novel that will be sure to make the faint-hearted blush, this novel is unlike a lot of others of its kind. Not falling quite solidly into adventure or romance, it dances across the line and gives the readers two for one. Giving it a more complete story arc that isn't just about one element versus the other. While quite lengthy, it allows the reader see Billy grow from the young boy on the farm who knows nothing about the world, to the man he becomes towards the end. Seeing his trials and tribulations as he eventually learns to balance his lust for women in his marriages to Rebecca, White Moon, and Ann and how to put his “talents” to use in that department. This book can satisfy those who need a good story for the fellow wanderlust souls, as well as those who want something a little more steamy to keep them up at night.

**Title:** Root Cause

**Author:** Steven Laine

**Publisher:** Turner

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “A winding hill at the end of the road led them toward the university where Bryan hoped they would find the answers to who was responsible for Philomena.”

**Review Text:**

Corvina Guerra is a travelling winemaker hoping to settle down in her family’s Italian vineyard. After she pays a visit to a local winemaker’s winery, as a family favor, she finds her world turned upside down and thrown into quite the mystery. An outbreak of Phylloxera, a plant louse that devastated vineyards everywhere in Europe, over a century ago, has infested the vines of the winery and has the potential to spread to every winery in the country. Who could have done it, and why? Corvina, along with Bryan, make it their mission to get to the bottom of the mystery. If they don’t stop the spread of the outbreak, could it be the end of the wine industry all together?

“Root Cause” is a very compelling mystery through and through with a twist you’ll never see coming. The plot is one complex enough to keep you on your toes yet easy enough not to become oversaturated, creating an exciting and page-turning story. The main character’s given field is very different than that normally seen in this particular genre, making Corvina an intriguing character and one to captivate the reader. Laine’s own expertise in the field of winemaking is apparent as he carefully interlaces details within the story. He gives the readers a small glimpse into the world of wine, showing the complexity and intricacies that it takes in the field, but without over explaining so as to bore you. Everything is explained just right, and helps to wrap up the narrative neatly.

**Title:** Retribution

**Author:** Philip Barnard

**Publisher:** Xlibris

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “All you know is that the case remains unsolved. Your repression of the actual events has contributed to your reluctance to proceed with an investigation of your own.”

**Review Text:**

Dr. Jack Sanders is a well known and well respected clinical psychologist, going so far as to even occasionally helping the police with cases. Such is the case when Dr. Sanders discovers that one of his clients is murdered by another one of his clients. The case rattles him to his core and brings back the skeletons in his own closet. He finds his judgement clouded because of the the demons of his own repressed past, coming back to haunt him. In order to move on, he finds that he needs to bring an end to the unsolved murders of his own parents. In order to do that, he dives deep into his own family’s history and discovers dark secrets long buried that now finally are coming to light. Terrible family ties, long lost relatives, and unspeakable crimes bubble to the surface. Will Dr. Sanders finally be able to move on from his own trauma, or will he be buried by his family’s dangerous secrets?

Dr. Philip Barnard, a clinical psychologist like his protagonist Dr. Jack Sanders, builds a complex family history that will easily draw in any reader. A relatively short novelette, the focus is kept clear and crisp so as to not bog down the story. The pacing is effective in keeping you wondering what Dr. Sanders will find out next, but not so fast as to hurry you through to the end. It gives a perfect sense of impending dread as he uncovers his family’s secrets, building and building until you reach the climax. By the end you will feel yourself rooting for Dr. Sanders to find the closure he so desperately desires.

**Title:** Four Guardians

**Author:** Jessica & Jordan Fisher

**Publisher:** iUniverse

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “All you need to know is that you are the child I was sent to protect; and I am your follower.”

**Review Text:**

Many years ago, there was an ancient civilization known as the Children of Geia. These Children of Geia were very connected to the earth, able to use magic in the forms of the four elements. Wind, fire, earth, and wind. The humans of this civilization were terrified of these angel-like people, with their beautiful white wings. A war broke out amongst these Children of Geia, the humans seeking to destroy their entire race. Only a handful of survivors were left on both sides, spreading out across the world of Minemi. Years later, four followers seek out the remaining guardians. Natalie, the fire guardian, and her follower Sasha. Noah, the wind guardian, and his follower Isaac. Zoey, the water guardian, and her follower Eli. And Logan, the earth guardian, and his follower Leila. Together, the guardians and their followers must fight back the monsters of darkness coming to consume a town and find the cure. Can the guardian’s learn to master their elements? Can they push back the darkness and save the world?

“The Four Guardians” is an epic tale in a small package, with a little more than one hundred pages. It has a unique take on elementally related magical abilities, making it stand out in comparison to other stories of a similar theme. There is a heavy focus on the main characters throughout, the guardians and the followers. There is a playfulness amongst these characters, given their young ages, that make them stand out in such a story. Further depth into these main characters and their individual stories would give this story an advantage in this genre. However for what is given, it makes for a nice story overall. Though readers will only have a short amount of time with these characters, their interesting story lines and the way they are all tied together will leave readers wanting more.

**Title:** Tess

**Author:** Kay Sellers

**Publisher:** Xlibris

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "I believe that you are a unique and gifted individual who only wants to help."

**Review Text:**

The first book in a series, "Tess" is the culmination of several genres all thrown into one; part coming of age story, part police investigations, and part traveling. While the title "Tess" may initially fool readers into believing that Tess is the main character, it is actually Jannet Russman who is the focus. Jannet is an extraordinary woman, with empathic hypersensitivity and synesthesia, giving her greatly heightened psychic abilities. While in traveling in Spain, she finds herself involved with the Madrid Police Department and the cold cases they are trying to solve. Can Tess help the police to solve these cases in time? Who exactly is Tess and what does she want with Jannet? All questions will be wrapped in a thrilling conclusion that will leave readers wanting more.

"Tess" is an interesting read that can make the reader feel almost as if they're listening to their own friend's diary entries. The way that the story is broken up into segments is a unique way of conveying such a story to an audience. It allows readers to be a part of what is going on in Jannet's life and all the things she's going through in her trials and tribulations. The concept of the story itself is not unheard of, with a main character helping with a police investigation while traveling somewhere, however Seller's unique take on her main character makes it stand out. While some of the wording can be mechanical, the story itself is rich with mystery. All in all, this is a novel that creates a unique atmosphere that will keep the pages turning.

**Title:** A Deadly Homecoming

**Author:** Jane Bennett Munro

**Publisher:** iUniverse

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “‘I’ll be ready,’ I said, ‘Death mask and all.’”

**Review Text:**

Pathologist Toni Day is back at it again with another mystery to solve! Toni and her husband Hal find themselves back in Toni’s hometown of Long Beach, California to help her mother’s best friend Doris find her husband Dick. But when Doris suddenly falls ill and ends up in a coma, Toni and Hal begin to unravel some of the mysteries hidden deep within the historic house that Doris and Dick share. A house that Doris herself believed to be haunted. Secrets become unearthed as Toni explores the house to find the answers, as well as a body and a new murder mystery to solve. Decades upon decades of schemes and serial murders are hidden within the walls of the haunted house. Can Toni solve everything before she becomes a victim?

Jane Bennett Munro has done it again with another exciting and well hatched mystery. It is a fun and entertaining story with an extremely enjoyable cast of characters. Sassy Toni Days leads the charge as a fun yet relatable character with a knack for solving mysteries. The tone and pacing match perfectly with the story, leaving you incapable of putting the book down in fear of missing out. All of the twists and turns that Munro weaves beautifully throughout will leave mystery lovers craving more. An exciting and intense story with the unknown paranormal element thrown into the mix for an extra element of fun. This is a mystery that will not only satisfy mystery lovers, but will draw in newcomers to the genre with its energetic and enjoyable characters. Readers will eagerly await the next mystery for Toni Days to solve!

**Title:** Endless Days

**Author:** Jayne McGregor

**Publisher:** Xlibris

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "When you are totally in love, your brain just seems to go into a state where you lose your common sense."

**Review Text:**

Arianna Spinelli is a single mother when she falls head over heels for Dr. Nick Caravelli, the handsome surgeon. What starts out as a not-so-serious relationship between the two, blossoms into a whole world of trouble. Soon after the two become engaged, Arianna starts to learn the truth about some of the not-so-handsome parts of Nick's life. Wherever Nick goes, problems seem to follow behind him like something from a soap opera. Whether it's his ex-wife and her attorney, or the corrupt doctors he works with, Nick somehow manages to get himself tangled in the mess. Arianna soon discovers, she's tangling herself in the web as well. Only this web isn't made of silk, but of jail cell bars. What happens when blind love leads you down the wrong path?

In a novel that is sure to keep readers eyes glued to the pages, Jayne McGregor tells the fictionalized tale of Arianna Spinelli. Based on a true story, but with names and places altered as to protect those involved, this is a story that will grip reader's and tug at their heart strings. Arianna is a sympathetic character who is completely relatable, though some of her decisions are questionable. She is a character who the reader will genuinely feel sorry for, as she's caught in someone else's trap. The pacing of the story is told almost as if it were a memoir, recounting through Arianna's point of view from the time she meets Nick to the very end. It's a story that will keep you turning pages to find out what happens to Arianna and her family.

**Title:** The Spirit of Cassious House: To Find Truth, Valour, and Honour, One Must Find the Courage to Search Among the Lies

**Author:** Linda Key

**Publisher:** Book-Art Press Solutions

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "His spirit haunts and roams Cassious House looking for his one true love; it's been like this for over three hundred years..."

**Review Text:**

Three hundred years ago, Prince Timothy Andrew was wrongfully cursed for a murder that he did not commit. A curse was put upon the house in which he lived, the Cassious House in Kelton Heights, trapping all of the good spirits inside. Now the town, and its twin Welleston Village thirty miles away, are brought into the modern times. Set approximately six weeks following the conclusion of Key's previous novel, Alyssia Franklin-Jenkins begins to investigate the house when she encounters the prince's spirit and falls in love. A conspiracy is brewing at the nearby University regarding the new Natural Disasters Research Facility. Secret meetings, conspiracies, and mystery surround the Cassious house. Can Alyssia get to the bottom of everything in time? Is she the key to finally breaking the curse?

Key has created quite the story with a little bit of romance, mystery, and adventure all thrown into one cohesive whole. This is the second book in the series, and it is seamless in continuing on the adventure from the previous novel without leaving new readers out of the loop. There is just enough suspense and thrills to excite readers but it's never over-the-top and keeps the plot rolling along. While there were some fairly obvious points in the mystery, the rest keeps you on your toes and allows more for a fun adventure than anything else. The air of mystery and adventure will hook new readers in, and those familiar with the previous novel will get a continuation of the story they already love.

**Title:** Tales of the Whispering Pines

**Author:** J.T. Carruthers

**Publisher:** Xlibris

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "I need to tell you something, Destiny. You make me feel like I'm on top of the world."

**Review Text:**

Tree farmer and volunteer firefighter Chris has been living with his daughter Sapphire deep within the whispering pines of Alaska. The years have been tough for the small family. Chris lost the love of his life, as well as Sapphire's mother, Samantha to cancer and things just hadn't been the same. Chris continued on for Sapphire's sake, knowing his beloved wife would want him to give their daughter every bit of joy as possible in her childhood. During one dispatch call, however, Chris's life gets turned upside down. Destiny, and her daughter Holly, had a terrible fire at their home and need a place to stay. Chris decides to offer a place at his parent's bed and breakfast in the meantime. The bond that the two form is not like that of anything Chris had felt in a long time, or even knew was possible. What will happen with Chris and Destiny? Will they run away? Or will they reflect Destiny's name and find their own destinies together?

Romance comes knocking with this sweet novel. It gives readers just the right amount of cheesiness that romance lovers will want, without sacrificing plot. The relationships all of the characters develop throughout the course of the story will be sure to tug on heartstrings. There are certainly elements that are a little rosier than what would typically happen in real life, but such is the course for a cute romance such as that between Chris and Destiny. Not only that, but the relationships the two have with their children, Holly and Sapphire, only makes for a stronger development. The novel may not be groundbreaking in the romance genre, but it definitely makes for a fun read that will be sure to please romance lovers.

**Title:** Portal 106

**Author:** Georgina Fatseas

**Publisher:** Royale House Publishing

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "Something you taught me. If you can't beat them, confuse them."

**Review Text:**

Prince Alycn has found himself as the only person to turn to in a time of crisis. The civilizations of Oberon and Amada are faced with the threat of the aggressive Lacertians. They threaten to destroy their worlds, and they are now looking to Prince Alycn for answers. The prince hasn't exactly been too keen on the political game, much more interested in developing a traveling technology called the neutrino, than to lead his people. By pure accident, the device accidentally sucks up Jed, a human from Australia. Can the horse stud owner from Earth help save these galaxies, as well as the Earth he calls home? Can he and Alcyn work together in order to fight the Lacertians?

Fatseas has created quite a space adventure that could rival that of some of the major sci-fi series to date. It's the kind of space adventure that will give the biggest sci-fi buffs enough to keep them satisfied, but doesn't go overboard so as to allow those new to the sci-fi world. There are certainly elements that a little more on the dry side, causing readers to crave a little less explanation and a little more action. Seeing as this book is the first in a series though, the explanation is necessary in order for the reader to gather the rich world that Fatseas has built. Perhaps the most enjoyable element, however, is the developments between the characters. The way that they play off one another and interact is what drives that plot along. Readers feel attached to these characters and want to see them in their adventures in space, and they want to see them succeed against the Lacertians.

**Title:** Rattlesnake & Son: Attorneys at Law

**Author:** Jonathan Miller

**Publisher:** Artemesia

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "And then above me, as if directly overhead, I heard the explosion."

**Review Text:**

Dan Shepard, known as the Rattlesnake Lawyer, is a New Mexico lawyer with a law practice all his own. He gets the shock of his life when his son Marley, who has hasn't seen in years, shows up in his courtroom. Upon rekindling his relationship with his son, Dan finds out that a lot has changed with his son, including the fact that the fourteen-year-old boy may possess psychic abilities. The lawyer in him sees stars in eyes for what these kinds of abilities could mean for his practice. But life shatters this dream to pieces when things go awry for Marley at school. After a magic trick gone wrong, he finds himself in some serious legal trouble. Worse yet, prosecution wants to try him as an adult. Dan rushes in to represent his son in a case unlike any other he's ever had to deal with in his career. Was his son set up? Can the Rattlesnake lawyer get his son out of trouble? Or will they have to face some of the dangerous consequences of trying to prove his innocence?

Miller creates a perplexing story that is sure to ensnare readers in what is the truth, and what isn't. There are elements of the fantastical interwoven with the more grounded court proceedings, making for a unique story unlike any in its genre. There are so many twists and turns that it will cause readers to hold onto their seats for dear life, in fear of getting thrown off this roller coaster of a story.

**Title:** Two Roses

**Author:** Mazen Kharboutli

**Publisher:** AuthorHouse

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "I will never return to New York as long as I live, Daniel told himself, little knowing what life had in store."

**Review Text:**

Daniel Bouchard has been alone most of his life. The ones he loved most in the world were taken away from him at an early age, forcing him to bury his emotions deep to keep his broken heart hidden from the world. Fast forward in his life, Daniel has been accepted to a prestigious university in exciting New York. He decides to leave the little family he has left in Paris to start a new chapter in his life. He begins to struggle with questions about love and sorrow until he meets a young woman named Greta, who changes his life forever. For a brief period of time, Daniel is able to find the happiness he'd always yearned for. But when Greta suddenly leaves him without a word, Daniel is completely dumbfounded. He searches for over two decades to find the answer to what happened, unable to find what happened to his lost love. He tries to move on with his life, moving onto new relationships, even getting married and having children of his own. Through a series of incredible circumstance, will Daniel get the answers he's been searching so long for?

In a book full of drama, love, and life, Kharboutli paints a picture a lot of readers can relate to. This emotionally charged novel doesn't shy away from the stages of love and loss. A story about the sting of a broken heart and the pain of moving on without closure. It's one that will leave readers yearning for that happy ending for Daniel, and holding onto their seats in anticipation for how things turn out for him and his family.

**Title:** The Light From The Dark Side of the Moon

**Author:** Norman G. Gauntreau

**Publisher:** Blank Slate Press

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** “She then cradles the violin in her lap and nods to me, and together we sing the first line as she waves the bow to the beat: *We’ll meet again...*”

**Review Text:**

It’s time for celebration of the 70th observance of D-Day, and Henry Budge is eager to go. The 92 year old World War II veteran, leaves his rehab hospital to make his way to France, despite what his family has to say about it. He hopes to be able to confront the demons of his past before he passes away, and relish in the memories of his long lost love Elodie. Unable to forget the one true love of his life. During his time in France he reminisces on what his life was like in 1944; from landing in Normandy, to helping rescue a group of children, to falling in love with Elodie. What will happen to Henry when he comes to discover the truth about what actually happened during his time? Will this taint his memories forever? Or will this new knowledge bring him the closure he’s yearned so many years for?

In this beautifully told story of war, heart ache, and love, this tale of Henry Budge shines. Gauntreau stands out in his ability to make the reader feel as if they knew Henry up close and personally, as well as feeling like they are there in the war alongside him. The narrative switches effortlessly between present day and Henry’s memories of his time during the war. It gives readers an equal amounts of light, with Henry fondly remembering the quieter moments with Elodie. As well as an equal amount of darkness, as he relives some of the horrors he endured. It will bring both tears and laughter, and will have readers hoping Henry is able to find what he is looking for.

**Title:** No Salvation

**Author:** Jeffrey Hess

**Publisher:** Down & Out Books

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "Porter had only one chance to win them over."

**Review Text:**

In 1972, the Vietnam War was full steam ahead. It was a time when war was not only running rapid, but prejudice, inequality, and racial tension were at an all-time high. Based on the true story of the USS Salvation as it sailed through the South China Seas, Commander Robert Porter is at the helm trying to navigate his crew to safety. Morale is at an all-time low, and Porter has been brought in by the Captain in an attempt to tidy up the ship's crew, much to the crew's chagrin. Porter must try to bring order as the war outside rages on, bringing a series of violent plane attacks from above, and unrest in the cabins below. All while he tries to figure out whether he received his position due to his own qualifications, or if it was because of the color of his skin. Can Porter bring peace amongst his crew, or will the war outside bring this ship down?

This historically-based tale gives you just the right amount of fiction you need to keep your focus while giving you the historical details you're yearning for. It really throws you onto the USS Salvation with the rest of the crew, feeling the tension alongside the rest of them. It allows for a closer look of what it was like living during this time period from the perspective of those not just on the battlefield, but on ships such as this lying in wait. Readers will find themselves rooting for Commander Robert Porter as he tries to balance the political unrest in his ship as well as the encroaching war outside.

**Title:** What's Stopping You Today? 6 Keys to Everyday Success

**Author:** Cynthia Howard

**Publisher:** WorkSmart

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "Change your reaction to stress and you will change your entire life."

**Review Text:**

Are you feeling a little stressed and worn down? Or like you're somehow keeping yourself back and causing yourself from becoming an unstoppable force? If you are, Dr. Cynthia Howard is here to help. The executive coach has worked with thousands of professionals to help change people's lives for the better by recognizing chronic stress factors and changing it. She has broken it down into six key points on how to bring about positive change in your life. She breaks down everything from how to channel your capacity, to steps to take when life becomes hard and more.

This easy-to-follow self-help guide is exactly what most professionals are looking for. It cuts straight to the point and doesn't try to baby readers into thinking everything will be fixed in their lives overnight. Howard talks to you as if you were sitting right in front of her asking for advice, making the reading sections extremely palatable for such a topic. This comfortable environment also makes readers feel as if they were simply talking to a friend about their issues, which helps ease readers minds on what can be such a sensitive topic. The guide gives off the hard-hitting self-help instructions that you need to kick you into gear, but without sounding condescending and critical.

There are many sections in the guide that allow readers to fill out for themselves. Questions, charts, and diagrams that help to aid visually to the guide, as well as engaging the audience. It allows for a break in reading so as to avoid too much wordage, so you can have a chance to think about what the previous section had talked about and how to apply it to your own life. They are interactive enough to keep you focused on the topic, but not so stiff as to seem formulaic. The directions are simple and concise, preventing readers from becoming confused as to what to do for each section. These charts, diagrams, and questions are all designed to make you take a hard look in the mirror, and have done so in such a clever and reassuring way.

Real-life examples were also added into the guide to help readers better apply the steps and advice that Howard offers. These examples only further aid the points that she makes, demonstrating in a real-world scenario how different situations can affect you. They don't over-exaggerate like some examples in self-help books can, but give readers just the right amount of

realism to show how practical her steps can be.

Real-world science and psychology were woven into the fabric of this guide, as one would expect and hope from a book of this type. It gives readers the reassurance that they are dealing with legitimate and sound advice. Presented in a simple fashion, terms and practices that are often complicated to explain have been broken down in an easy to understand way for every reader. They are also not over-used as can be tempting for this type of book. Instead of shoving all these ideas and terms into a reader's head like a strict school teacher, Howard gives just the right dose to give you an idea of what she is referring to and why she is utilizing it.

**Title:** The Sixth of September

**Author:** Callista Bowright

**Publisher:** AuthorHouse

**Reviewer:** Elizabeth Creel

**Recommended:** 

**Book Quote:** "This was the evening of September 6. And the blackness that had chased Sophie for the last five long years filled up her soul and almost drowned her."

**Review Text:**

Sophie and Olivia were strangers, having led very different lives. Sophie grew up in the lap of luxury. Winding her way through life from her time in Catholic school, to her disastrous marriages, her love affair with a younger man, and eventually into the arms of the suave Ty. Olivia, on the other hand, came from nothing. Growing up in an abusive household, Olivia has her fair share of disastrous marriages, eventually finding herself also in the arms of the Jamaican known as Ty. Bad childhoods and abusive men were the only things these women had in common, until the sixth of September, when their worlds collide. When the two of them find out that they're both in a relationship with the same man, instead of turning against one another, they work together to make things right. Will these two fiercely strong women be able to bring a con man to justice? Or will they let the traumas of their past get in the way?

The strongest, and most developed, aspect of this book are the characters, Sophie and Olivia. Readers are given a very in-depth look into the lives of each character, from the start of their lives all the way until their meeting one another. Each section of the book is dedicated to a particular time period in each woman's life, allowing readers to really get to know these two women in spectacular detail. This book is a foreboding 904 pages long, which may scare some readers away. This can also lead to some confusion as to the overall plot of the novel, as it isn't until page 269 that the connection between these two women is made. To this, however, the women's lives are interesting enough that readers will feel as if they know these characters personally, and will root for them when life gets them down. It's a brilliant character study for each of these characters, and could've made for excellent individual novels in and of themselves.