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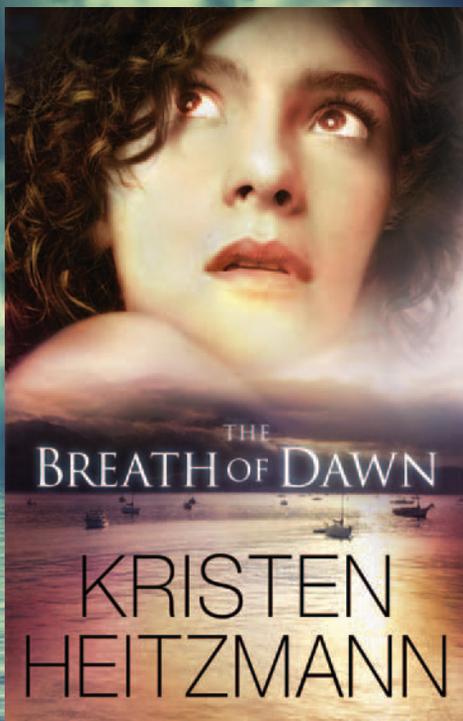
LYNETTE EASON
**HEART-STOPPING
ROMANTIC
SUSPENSE**

**THE FAITH BEHIND
THE HOBBIT**

ALSO:
Lis Wiehl
Brandilyn Collins
Steven James



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Lynette Eason on good, evil, and autopsies

“I want to see
the light.
I want to see the
good guys win.
I want to see
God glorified.”



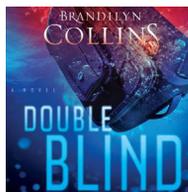
Christianity and
THE HOBBIT



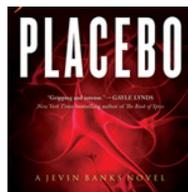
5 contemporary
YA authors



UNDAUNTED



Brandilyn Collins



Steven James

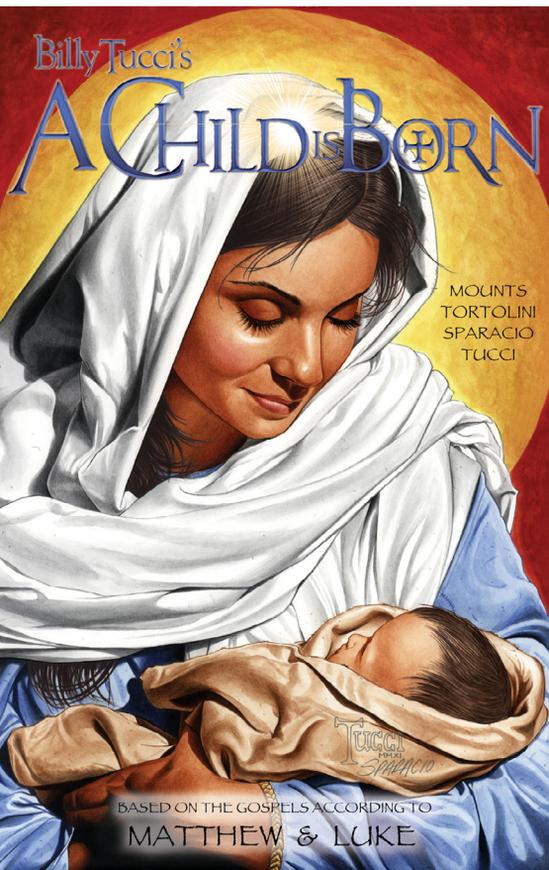
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EYES OF A KILLER

By C.J. Darlington

Brandilyn Collins has wanted to write about a brain chip for years. She's finally found the perfect story in her newest novel *Double Blind*, though the journey wasn't without a few false starts.

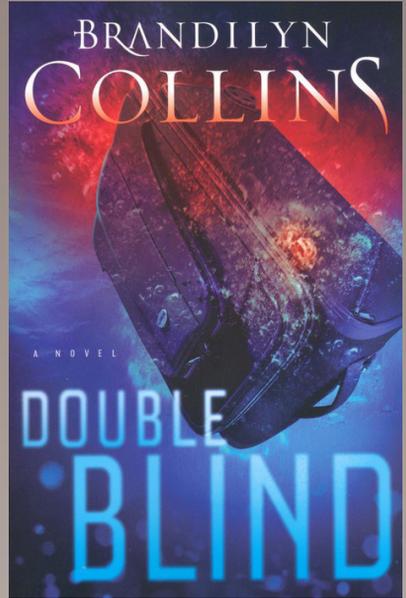
Out of the struggle came character Lisa Newberry, who is severely depressed. "In order to save her own life, she enters a medical trial for a brain chip that is supposed to cure depression," Brandilyn says. "She undergoes surgery, scared to death something will go wrong." Of course, *Double Blind* wouldn't be a Brandilyn Collins novel if something didn't. In her trademark Seatbelt Suspense style, *Double Blind* follows Lisa as she experiences vivid memories

of a brutal killing through the eyes of the murderer.

“Current medical technology does include experimenting with brain implants that send out electrical signals to cure depression,” Brandilyn explains, “but the tiny chip in my book, one that doesn’t have to be planted so deeply into the brain, is purely fictional at this point. We’re some years away from it, but something similar is in our future. The brain technology that’s coming is amazing.”

Brandilyn hopes readers take away from this novel not only the thrill ride, but the Christian message, which she believes never would have arisen if she hadn’t changed gears and written with the Lord’s subtle leading. “It’s pretty common for people who don’t *feel* God for

**“GOD, WHO CREATED
THE WORLD, LOVES US.
THIS TRUTH IS NOT
DEPENDENT ON HOW
WE FEEL AT ANY
GIVEN MOMENT.”**



whatever reason to say, ‘Well, *He* moved. *He’s* abandoned me.’ When you stand back from the emotionality of that statement and dissect it, you realize how illogical it is. God is always with us whether we feel Him or not. God, who created the world, *loves us*. This truth is not dependent on how we, or how my character Lisa feels, at any given moment. Imagine a God who changed at the whim of our ephemeral emotions. Wouldn’t be much of a God.” **FFE**

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STEVEN JAMES

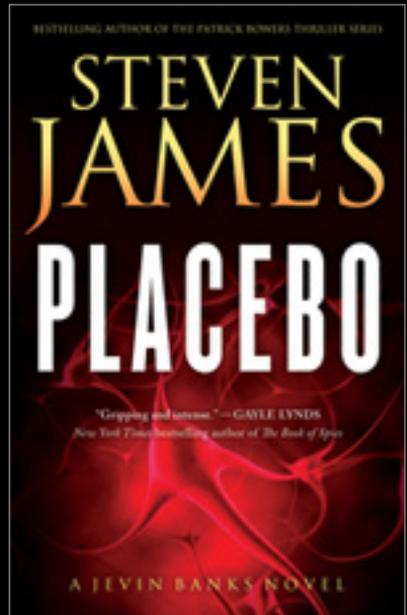
By C.J. Darlington

Thriller writer Steven James isn't your typical author.

He doesn't outline his books, and he writes and edits standing up using a music stand. He admits his novels never end the way he expects. "Some authors write from the perspective that they're in control of their stories," James says, "but I write with one ear in the direction the story is leaning, and then I try to uncover it. I write what I'm curious about, not what I already know. One day on the radio I heard about mind-to-mind communication research, and it fascinated me. That became the impetus for my new novel *Placebo*."

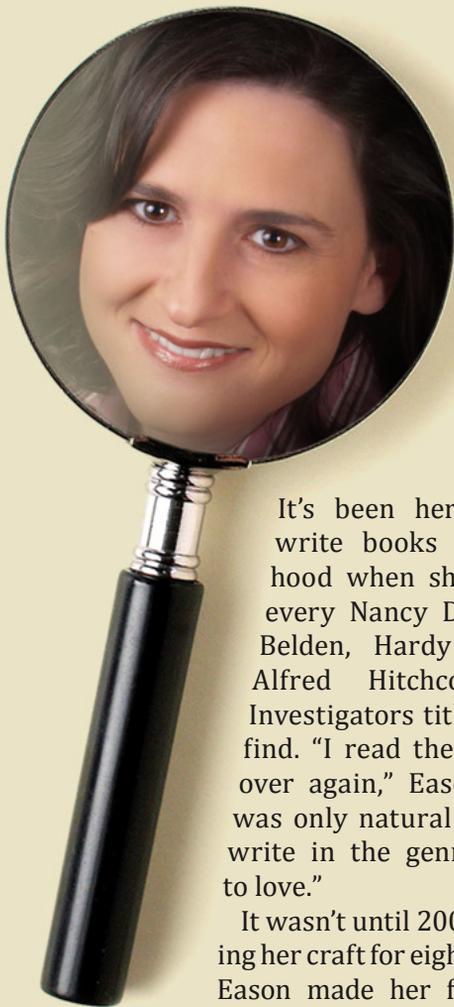
The first in his Jevin Banks Series, *Placebo* follows Banks, an expose filmmaker, as he investigates a controversial neurological research program. He's soon drawn into a far-reaching conspiracy involving one of the world's largest pharmaceutical firms. "Maybe the scariest thing about the cutting-edge concepts in the story isn't so much that they could be true," James says, "but that so much of the science fiction-esque discoveries in *Placebo* already are true. All of the scientific and medical research findings are real."

Never one to shy from depicting evil in his often chilling tales, James doesn't write with a particular message in mind. Instead, his stories come from a moral dilemma or a question he wants to explore. "I



"I write what I'm curious about, not what I already know."

don't ever divorce my beliefs from my writing; but in fiction, I seek to explore and expose more than to explain. I strive to write books that celebrate what God celebrates and abhor what He abhors, stories that tell the truth about human nature (including good and evil and redemption), and that are the most excellent works of art I can produce. I want readers to leave *Placebo* with a stronger belief in the power of—and importance of—faith." **FFE**



GOOD vs. EVIL

By C.J. Darlington

Lynette Eason never stops thinking about her characters and stories. Writing fiction is a 24/7 job for the award-winning suspense novelist, and she wouldn't have it any other way.

It's been her dream to write books since childhood when she devoured every Nancy Drew, Trixie Belden, Hardy Boys and Alfred Hitchcock Three Investigators title she could find. "I read them over and over again," Eason says. "It was only natural I'd want to write in the genre I'd come to love."

It wasn't until 2007, after honing her craft for eight years, that Eason made her first sale to Harlequin's Love Inspired suspense line. A year later, she began working with Revell Books, too. She's since published more than a dozen books, including her Women of Justice Series, which received high praise from the likes of Dee Henderson and Irene Hannon. Lynette's

latest offering is *When a Heart Stops*, book two in the Deadly Reunions Series, and features a medical examiner who finds herself in the crosshairs of a serial killer. "I had to do a lot of research," Eason says of creating her heroine. "I talked to one ME and sat in on a workshop where he went over every question I had in relation to the story. That was really cool."

"I like to see justice done. I like fairness," Eason says when asked why she likes to write suspense. "I like to see good win over evil because when evil is defeated, it gives hope. That's what I want my novels to do—give hope to people who may not see it in their current situation. If you want to see what light is, you have to know darkness. However, I

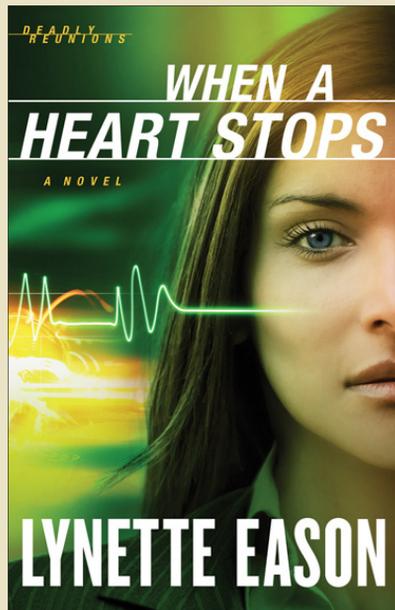
don't believe readers need the graphic details of darkness; I don't want to wallow in it. I know it's there, but as a reader I want to get to the good part. I want to see the light. I want to see the good guys win. I want to see God glorified."

Eason's goal is to write a rockin' good story that appeals to readers who don't want all the gore of most mainstream thrillers, though she has considered writing for the secular arena, as well. "I'm curious to see if I could do it," she says, "but if I did, the story would still have a faith element."

"I like to see good win over evil because when evil is defeated, it gives hope. That's what I want my novels to do."

Which isn't to say her books don't have a body count—*When the Heart Stops* is all about catching a killer; but the ultimate message Eason hopes readers catch is that love is what matters. "It's so important we give of ourselves in order to better someone else's life. I want the reader to walk away asking him or herself, 'What can I do to help someone else today? Who can I be Jesus to today?'"

With degrees in education and business, Eason is a born-and-bred Southerner who enjoys driving into the mountains and



finding a small town to explore. Sometimes she'll relax by taking her two kids to an amusement park, but mostly Eason just loves to write. Whether it's a shorter novella or a full-length novel, she often finds it hard to close the laptop for the day. "The work is never ending. I don't get to lock up my office, climb in my car and drive off at 5 p.m. An author is never truly done for the day, but I thank God for allowing me to do this. I have the best job ever and wouldn't trade it for anything. I just pray people see my books for what they are—a ministry." **FFE**

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THE CHRISTIAN FAITH



BEHIND
J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S
THE HOBBIT

Although they approached their fiction differently, J.R.R. Tolkien and his friend C.S. Lewis shared the belief that their fantastical storytelling was a way to smuggle Christian truth past the biases of secularized readers. We've rounded up several books and resources that help readers explore the Christian faith behind the classics *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*.



A Hobbit Devotional: Bilbo Baggins and the Bible

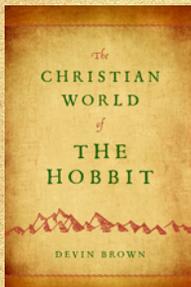
Ed Strauss

(Barbour Books)

If you enjoy J. R. R. Tolkien—even if you're new to his classic stories—you'll love

A Hobbit Devotional, featuring 60 humorous, challenging, and encouraging devotionals. *The Hobbit* has fascinated readers for more than 70 years. Now, this tale of humble folk who overcome

fear, discouragement, and despair through steadfastness, courage, and hope forms the basis of a brand-new devotional book. Each reading sketches a scene from *The Hobbit*, relates it to a contemporary life situation you might experience yourself, and brings in the teaching of a relevant Bible story or verse.



The Christian World of The Hobbit

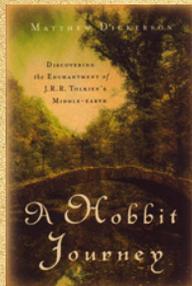
Devin Brown

(Abingdon Press)

In his beloved story, *The Hobbit*, J.R.R. Tolkien takes readers into a world unlike any other, yet so much seems famil-

iar. As Bilbo journeys there and back again, glimpses of the spiritual are seen. Previous guides to Tolkien's fiction have often made one of two wrong turnings: either they have entirely overlooked the Christian elements or they have claimed to find "Christian" elements everywhere,

going far beyond the fundamental aspects that have been absorbed into the story. *The Christian World of The Hobbit* does what no book has done: it brings Tolkien fans new delight by introducing a side of Tolkien that is rarely explored but vitally important to his writings—especially to *The Hobbit*. Written by internationally regarded Tolkien scholar, Devin Brown, this approachable, witty, and highly entertaining book offers up fresh perspectives to fans of *The Hobbit*, both the book and the film adaptation.



A Hobbit Journey: Discovering the Enchantment of J. R. R. Tolkien's Middle-earth

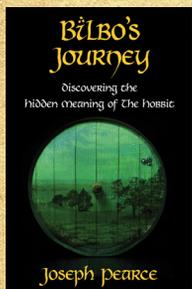
Matthew Dickerson

(Brazos Press)

The Lord of the Rings trilogy has delighted millions of fans worldwide in book and movie form. With the

theatrical release of the two-part film *The Hobbit* slated for 2012 and 2013, attention will once again turn to J. R. R. Tolkien's classic works. In a culture where truth is relative and morality is viewed as old-fashioned, we welcome the chance to view the world through hobbit eyes: we have free will, our

choices matter, and living a morally heroic life is possible. In this engaging and thought-provoking book, Tolkien expert Matthew Dickerson shows how a Christian worldview and Christian themes undergird Tolkien's Middle-earth writings and how they are fundamentally important to understanding his vision. This revised and expanded edition of *Following Gandalf* includes new material on torture, social justice, and the importance of the body.



Bilbo's Journey:

Discovering the Hidden Meaning in The Hobbit

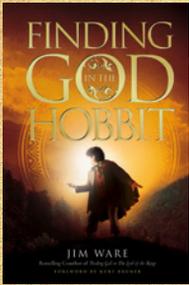
Joseph Pearce

(Saint Benedict Press)

Discover the Christian meaning in *The Hobbit*. In *Bilbo's Journey* go beyond the dragons, dwarves, and elves,

and discover the surprisingly deep meaning of J.R.R. Tolkien's classic novel *The Hobbit*. Bilbo's quest to find and slay the dragon Smaug is a riveting tale of daring and heroism, but as renowned Tolkien scholar Joseph Pearce shows,

it is not simply Bilbo's journey, it is our journey too. It is the Christian journey of self-sacrifice out of love for others, and abandonment to providence and grace. In *Bilbo's Journey: Discovering the Hidden Meaning of The Hobbit* you will relive the excitement of Tolkien's classic tale, while discovering the profound Christian meaning that makes *The Hobbit* a truly timeless adventure.



Finding God in The Hobbit

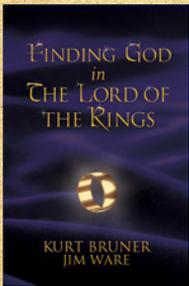
Jim Ware

(Tyndale House)

Thousands have been captivated by the spiritual themes that underlie Tolkien's imaginative fiction. In *Finding God in The Hobbit*, Jim

Ware, co-author of the popular "Finding God" series, indulges readers with an

exploration of the spiritual significance of J. R. R. Tolkien's famous children's classic. As they are acquainted with Tolkien's message of transcendent truth, readers will see how God is mysteriously at work even in everyday moments. A reflection summarizes each chapter's main insight. Bibliography included.



Finding God in The Lord of the Rings

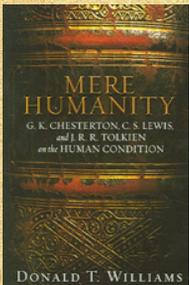
Kurt Bruner and Jim Ware

(Tyndale House)

Considered the most popular books of the 20th century, *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy is more than a great story. It's a much-needed

reminder that Christians are all on an epic quest. In examining the Christian themes in the trilogy, authors Kurt

Bruner and Jim Ware find that truth and fiction are not as far apart as they seem. When read in the light of Scripture, Tolkien's trilogy reveals a rich tapestry of redemption, values, and faith against all odds. Insightful reflection notes end each chapter. A great book for personal study, devotional time, or group discussion!



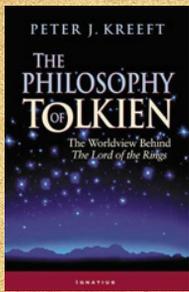
Mere Humanity: G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, and J. R. R. Tolkien on the Human Condition

Donald T. Williams

(B&H Books)

Philosophers list "What is man?" and "What is the purpose of life on this earth?" as two of the most important

questions that must be asked by everyone in the quest to become a complete human being. *Mere Humanity* digs into the treasured writings of Chesterton, Lewis, and Tolkien for the answers.

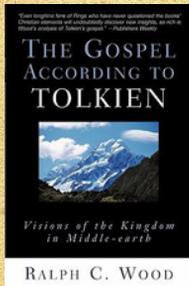


The Philosophy of Tolkien: The Worldview Behind The Lord of the Rings

Peter Kreeft
(Ignatius Press)

While nothing can equal or replace the adventure in reading Tolkien's masterwork, *The Lord of the Rings*, Peter Kreeft says that the journey into its underlying philosophy can be another exhilarating adventure. Thus, Kreeft takes the reader on a voyage of discovery into the philosophical bones of Middle earth. He organizes

the philosophical themes in *The Lord of the Rings* into 50 categories, accompanied by over 1,000 references to the text of *Lord*. Since many of the great questions of philosophy are included in the 50-theme outline, this book can also be read as an engaging introduction to philosophy. For each of the philosophical topics in *LOTR*, Kreeft presents tools by which they can be understood. Illustrated.

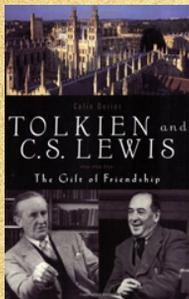


The Gospel According to Tolkien: Visions of the Kingdom in Middle-earth

Ralph C. Wood
(Westminster John Knox Press)

In this accessible and engaging book, Ralph Wood shows us that J.R.R. Tolkien's masterpiece is a deeply Christian work because it does not blink back the horrors of our terrible times but confronts them with startling honesty. Readers keep turning to this work because here they are immersed

in significance and meaning—perceiving the Hope than can be found amidst despair; the Charity that overcomes vengeance; and the Faith that springs from the strange power of weakness. *The Gospel According to Tolkien* will be loved by both longtime Tolkien fans and those recently drawn to his books through the popular feature films.



Tolkien and C.S. Lewis: The Gift of Friendship

Colin Duriez
(Hiddenspring)

Both Tolkien and C.S. Lewis are literary superstars, known around the world as the creators of

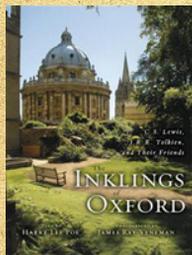
Middle-earth and Narnia. But few of their readers and fans know about the important and complex friendship between Tolkien and his fellow Oxford academic C.S. Lewis. Without the persistent

encouragement of his friend, Tolkien would never have completed *The Lord of the Rings*. This great tale, along with the connected matter of *The Silmarillion*, would have remained merely a private hobby. Likewise, all of Lewis' fiction, after the two met at Oxford University in 1926, bears the mark of Tolkien's influence, whether in names he used or in the creation of convincing fantasy worlds.

They quickly discovered their affinity—a love of language and the imagination, a wide reading in northern myth and fairy tale, a desire to write stories themselves in both poetry and prose. The quality of their literary friendship invites comparisons with those

of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Cowper and John Newton, and G.K. Chesterton and Hillaire Belloc. Both Tolkien and Lewis were central figures in the informal Oxford literary circle, the Inklings.

This book explores their lives, unfolding the extraordinary story of their complex friendship that lasted, with its ups and downs, until Lewis' death in 1963. Despite their differences—differences of temperament, spiritual emphasis, and view of their storytelling art—what united them was much stronger, a shared vision that continues to inspire their millions of readers throughout the world.



**The Inklings of Oxford:
C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Their Friends**
Harry Lee Poe (Author), James Ray Veneman (Photographer)
(Zondervan)

Oxford's fabled streets echo with the names of such key figures in English history as

Edmund Halley, John Wycliffe, and John and Charles Wesley. Of more recent times are those of C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and the other members of the renowned literary circle to which they belonged, the Inklings. What would it be like to walk this medieval city's narrow lanes in the company of such giants of Christian literature, to visit Magdalen College, where Lewis and Tolkien read aloud their works-in-progress to their friends, or the Eagle and Child pub, the

Inklings' favorite gathering place? The lavish photography of this book will introduce you to the fascinating world of the Inklings, matching their words to the places where these friends discussed—and argued over—theology, philosophy, ancient Norse myth, and Old Icelandic, while writing stories that were to become classics of the faith. The Inklings of Oxford will deepen your knowledge of and appreciation for this unique set of personalities. The book also features a helpful map section for taking walking tours of Oxford University and its environs. **FFE**

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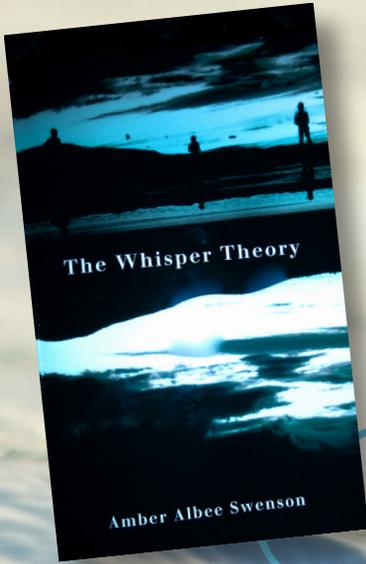


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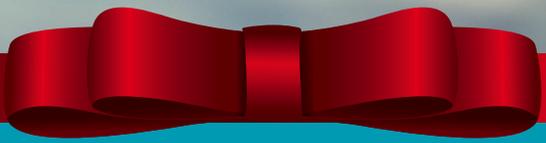
girl?
because of what you
believe, or because
you haven't had the
opportunity to be bad ■

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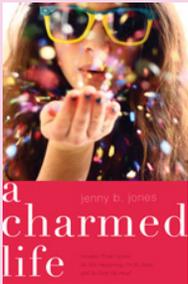
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YA 5

5 CONTEMPORARY YA AUTHORS

Rel Mollet

Recent years have seen significant growth in teens reading fiction, spurred on by epic stories such as *The Hunger Games* and *Twilight*, tackling all manner of young adult issues from love triangles to survival of the fittest. These five contemporary writers infuse hope and faith into their young adult novels.



Jenny B. Jones

Jenny B. Jones' trilogy about teenage Manhattan socialite Bella Kirkwood who gets transplanted to rural Oklahoma, is now available in a 3-in-1 volume—*A Charmed Life* (Thomas Nelson)—to read or use for

bicep curls, says Jenny!

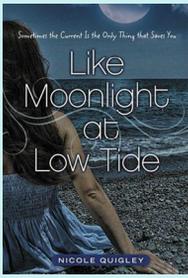
Teen readers connect with Bella because of her normality—"Bella's just a Christian girl living her life," Jenny explains. "She's not super holy; she's not someone who always learns her lesson; she's not perfect. She's sarcastic and flawed and struggles with things other girls wrestle with: boys,

parents, rejection, fear, decisions, mistakes, peer pressure, approval and so on."

While teens see more of the world and its ugly side due to constant access to the Internet and living in a world where everything is caught on video, Jenny believes their fears are essentially the same as previous generations: "Death, violence, peer acceptance, the planet, the meaning of life, who they'll sit with at lunch. Those worries are timeless."

In light of these burdens, Jenny's priority is to write books that are fun to read and inspire happiness yet hopes readers connect with the spiritual thread, as well. "I love and adore the emails I get from readers who are blessed by the spiritual message. That means the world to me."

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/jenny-b-jones/>



Nicole Quigley

A visit to her childhood home inspired debut novelist Nicole Quigley to write a story about a girl torn between what she always wanted to be and who she was born to be.

Like Moonlight at Low

Tide (Zondervan) is a darkly

poignant novel about high school junior Melissa Keiser, who returns to her hometown with one goal: Hide from the bullies who convinced her she was the ugliest girl in school. "I can relate because I was bullied in middle school," shares Nicole, "I imagined what it would be like for a girl growing up in my childhood neighborhood. What would happen if her family was falling apart and she was the outcast

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/nicole-quigley/>

at school, and then she suddenly blossomed? What happens when she meets the boy next door?" However, there was one question Nicole couldn't shake: What happens if you get everything you ever wanted and it still isn't enough?

Despite their many struggles, Nicole loves the openness of today's teens. "Teenagers today don't hide things. They tell their stories, and they expect the same of others. In that way, they're pretty pragmatic. It's as if they say, 'You're a screw-up today. Fine. Now, what's next?' I like that."

Nicole's hope for her story is that teens will realize God can redeem any situation, and He can breathe hope into our lives no matter how dark our corner the world seems to be right now.



Krista McGee

When Krista McGee decided to indulge her literary passions, the young adult genre was an easy choice. She explains, "I love this age group—their enthusiasm, their honesty, their potential. I want to encourage them in

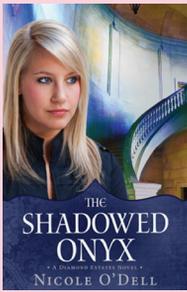
every way I can to find God's purpose for their lives and to pursue it with their whole hearts."

Working in youth ministry for more than a decade, Krista is well aware of the challenges faced by her readers. "Young people today deal with loss constantly—parents divorce, friends move, they move. Life can be incredibly difficult for teens. They need the reminder that God is faithful, that He will protect us and provide for us, and that He will bring good out of our difficulties."

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/krista-mcgee/>

Krista's *Right Where I Belong* (Thomas Nelson) is inspired by the biblical story of Ruth. Ruth's sacrificial love drew in Krista; "She left everything and everyone she knew to move with a bitter widow to a country filled with people who hated her homeland." In her story, Natalia Lopez moves halfway across the world to help her step-mother adjust to single life. Her new life in Tampa is very different from her life in Spain, but one thing is exactly the same: her commitment to stay as far away from boys as possible. Then she meets Brian and that commitment is challenged!

For Brian, Krista found her inspiration closer to home. "I based his personality on that of my 9-year-old son Thomas. Brian is who I hope Thomas will be in another nine years—funny, kind, with a tender heart for God and others, and not too messed up from having two older sisters!"



Nicole O'Dell

Youth culture expert Nicole O'Dell delved into her past for her Diamond Estates Trilogy. Diamond Estates is a fictional residential home for troubled girls nestled in the Colorado Rockies and is based on Nicole's own experiences in

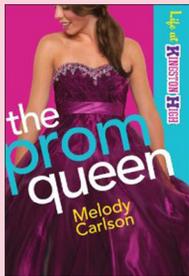
a residential Teen Challenge program. *The Wishing Pearl*, *The Embittered Ruby* and *The Shadowed Onyx* (Barbour) feature a teen girl wrestling with life-changing issues, including abuse, family breakdown and suicide.

Nicole believes choice and tolerance are the most challenging issues for teens. "Teenagers exist in a generational crisis of faith that's entrenched in

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/nicole-o-dell/>

those two words. Their friends believe in everything and nothing equally. Black and white truths are scoffed at as being hateful. Christ followers are considered simple-minded and not fully evolved. More than ever before, our teenagers need tools—movies, books, teachers, music, etc.—rooted in Scripture with a focus on preparation to guide them through today's issues.

In *The Shadowed Onyx*, Joy desperately wants to make sense of life and death after her best friend's suicide and becomes vulnerable to friends who encourage her to pursue witchcraft. "Good and evil are equally real," shares Nicole. "Both want your allegiance. One wants life for you; the other, death." Nicole hopes her stories encourage teens to be aware of the enemy's lure and, thus, be prepared.



Melody Carlson

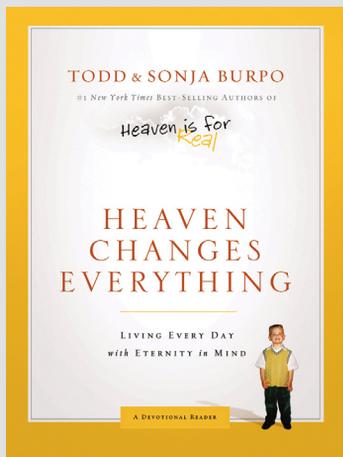
Prolific YA author Melody Carlson is driven by the empathy she feels for young people for whom life can be tough—possibly now more than ever before. "I think almost all adolescents struggle with identity issues

and fitting in. So many elements in their world are in flux—their mind, body, friends, values—that it can leave a teen feeling lost and unstable," she said. Her latest novel, *The Prom Queen* (Revell), features Megan Bernard who decides God must want her to pursue the title of prom queen after watching a name-it-and-claim-it TV evangelist. While an entertaining, light-hearted novel, Melody includes

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/melody-carlson/>

important life lessons, including holding true to yourself, your friends and your faith. "When teens believe God created them for a specific purpose in life—and when they value and nurture a few close friends—their overall identity will be strengthened. As a teen's identity grows more solid, the need for approval and acceptance from the popular crowd is diminished." Melody includes real-life teen and cancer survivor Bethany Bridgewater in her novel. "Bethany used her Make-a-Wish to come visit me in my home. I was finishing writing *Prom Queen* when she shared a piece she'd written about attending her own prom, and it seemed perfect to include in this book. Bethany is just one teen who, despite her tough challenges, has remained faithful to God. I love that!" **FFE**

HEAVEN CHANGES EVERYTHING (THOMAS NELSON)



In the passenger seat, Sonja turned so that she could see our son, whose car seat was parked behind mine. I pictured his blond crew cut and his sky-blue eyes shining in the dark. "Do you remember the hospital, Colton?" Sonja said.

"Yes, Mommy, I remember," he said. "That's where the angels sang to me."

—*Heaven Is for Real*, xvii

Have you ever been watching a television show or listening to the radio and suddenly a voice says something like, "We interrupt this program for an important message from XYZ News"? If you're familiar with that kind of interruption, you understand how the story we shared in *Heaven Is for Real* unfolded for us. Again and again, our young son interrupted our lives with little strings of words that stopped us in our tracks:

"That's where the angels sang to me."

Or . . .

"I was sitting on Jesus' lap."

Or . . .

"You had a baby die in your tummy, didn't you?"

Hearing these statements, we wondered, *How did you know that?*

In casual, little-boy language, Colton would mention something that had happened to him in heaven or something he had learned there. These little interruptions became lifechangers for us as we realized his story was true and that it held huge implications for our lives—and for others'. We began to let God teach us through our son.

In addition to writing Colton's story in *Heaven Is for Real*, we began sharing our experience with audiences around the country. Along the way, we encountered more "interruptions" of memorable moments and life lessons as people shared their own stories or responded with new insights that reinforced what God was teaching us about heaven.

We've written *Heaven Changes Everything* to share those new "interruptions" and insights that came to us either through an idea God sparked in our hearts or through people who shared their own story in response to ours. Each one is drawn from one of Colton's "interruptions" or from some other part of his astounding story shared in *Heaven Is for Real*. Some chapters will be short, others longer; like most interruptions, their length and impact are unpredictable. Put together, they reveal how our experience continues to show how heaven changes everything about our life here on earth.

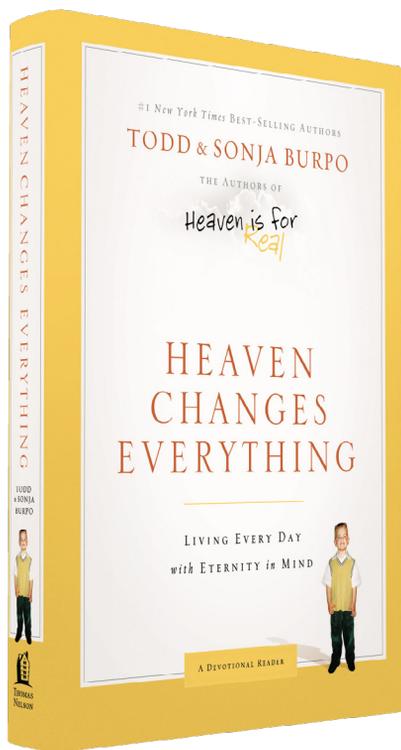
We understand now that Colton's little-boy descriptions of heaven that interrupted our days were actually God's interruptions of our lives. He nudged us unexpectedly with moments that made us gasp—and then grasp the truth, again, that heaven is for real. We pray that the thoughts and lessons we share here will interrupt your life with heavenly perspective the way they interrupted ours, and that living every day with eternity in mind will change everything for you, too.



New from the authors of *New York Times* bestseller *Heaven Is for Real*

HEAVEN CHANGES EVERYTHING

LIVING EVERY DAY *with* ETERNITY *in* MIND



What began as one family's worst nightmare is now the story that has touched millions worldwide. In this new inspirational reader, Todd and Sonja Burpo share their family's responses to the *Heaven Is for Real* experience. They answer questions about what it's like to struggle with God, to doubt, and what He might doing with those interruptions in our lives. Includes insights gained from readers whose own stories have reinforced the importance of living every day with the hope of heaven. *Heaven Changes Everything* encourages readers to keep thoughts of eternity in mind in the midst of their busy, stressed out lives.

Because heaven truly is for real...
and it changes everything!

Available now wherever books are sold

For more information please visit us at



HeavenIsForReal.net
and
Facebook.com/HeavenIsForReal

survivor

Renowned apologist and speaker Josh McDowell determined early in life that his past would not define his future.





"I'm a walking example that God can use anyone, and I'm so grateful for it."

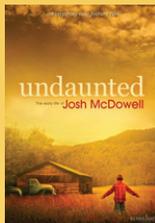
The author of bestselling books such as *More than a Carpenter* and *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell has given more than 24,000 talks and impacted millions for Christ. For years, people have wanted to make a movie about of his early life. McDowell always resisted, worried the sensitive subject matter of his troubled childhood wouldn't be handled correctly. After finally connecting with award-winning filmmaker Cristobal Krusen of Messenger Films, the result is the moving docu-drama, *Undaunted*.

McDowell couldn't be more pleased with the finished product. "I don't know how it could be done better," he said. Shot in Traverse City, Mich., *Undaunted* follows a young McDowell as he faces life with an alcoholic father, sexual abuse at the hands of a farm hand, and extreme doubts about a God who lets it happen. The film also shows how he researched the claims of Christianity and eventually realized God fiercely loved him despite his past.

"After I became a Christian," McDowell says, "I concluded there was nothing too great in my life for God's power to deal with [and nothing] too small or insignificant for His love to be concerned about. That set me free to be all that God created me to be.

"Every day, I experience negative things from being abused and having an alcoholic father; but I've seen [through] the years they actually make me a better person. I'm more sensitive to forgiveness. Every time I face some of this, I'm able to say, 'Thank You, Lord! You dealt with that in my life. If I can trust You for this, I can trust for other things.' I'm a walking example that God can use anyone, and I'm so grateful for it." **FFE**

UNDAUNTED
directed by
Cristobal Krusen



MORE ONLINE: <http://www.familyfiction.com/movies/undaunted-the-early-life-of-josh-mcdowell>



IRENE HANNON

C.J. Darlington

Irene Hannon's faith colors everything she writes. Whether it's her latest suspense tale or her Love Inspired romances, Hannon's stories always stem from her Christian worldview. "Someone once asked me how I add faith to my fiction," she says. "I have to admit the question flummoxed me. I don't 'add' faith. It's just...there. How could it not be? I look at everything through the lens of faith. It's who I am."

Although Hannon was a huge reader as a child, and at the age of 10 won recognition for a story in the classic children's magazine *Jack & Jill*, she found herself climbing the corporate ladder in a Fortune 500 company as an adult, while still trying to juggle her writing. The decision to quit her job and write full time was the hardest of her life. "I had a fabulous career," she says, "but once I reached the executive ranks I had little

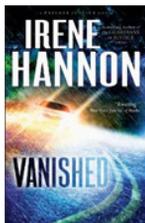
time or energy for fiction writing. That's when I realized I'd reached a crossroads. I spent a lot of months praying for direction. I'm happy to say I've never looked back and have no regrets."

Hannon's new Private Justice Series debuts with *Vanished*, a tale inspired by a late-night encounter with a bicyclist

Hannon almost hit with her car. "I swerved to avoid him, and then started what-iffing," she says. "The incident lasted mere seconds, but it grew into not only *Vanished*, but the whole series. *Vanished* is a story of vanishing people, a tenacious reporter, a skeptical PI and a secret that will shatter lives. My previous series have focused on law enforcement. This one features three ex-law-enforcement operatives (a police detective, an undercover ATF agent and a Secret Service agent) who join forces to form a private investigation firm. They were also college roommates, which adds some fun backstory." **FFE**



"I look at everything through the lens of my faith."



VANISHED
Bethany House

MORE ONLINE: <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/irene-hannon>

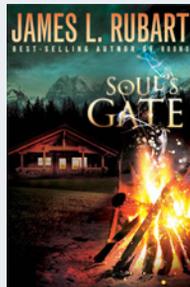
NEWS & NOTES



OPEN GATE

The idea for James Rubart's third supernatural suspense novel *Soul's Gate* (Thomas Nelson) came to him while he was working on his debut book, *Rooms*. "I kept asking myself how I could take the concept of someone going into the rooms of their soul to the next level," Rubart says. "The idea popped into my head to have people somehow journeying into other people's souls." Rubart is currently working on the thrilling sequel to *Soul's Gate*, which should release next July.

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/james-l-rubart>



STAGE TWO

Tessa Lancaster, the kick-butt heroine of Camy Tang's *Protection for Hire* (Zondervan) returns for another exciting round in *A Dangerous Stage*. A former enforcer for the Japanese mafia who found God in prison, Tessa's hired to protect a contestant (and his thirteen-year-old daughter) in a rigged singing competition. "I really enjoyed writing about Tessa and Charles again," Tang says. "Tessa's struggles parallel some of my own, forgiving people who have hurt me. I hope readers can relate and also find hope that the wounds can be healed with God's help. In this novel I also knew I needed to reveal more about Charles' heart and his spiritual walk. My prayer is that his questions will help people make their own decisions to follow Christ with intensity and passion."

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/camy-tang>

DRAGON FIRE

In Don Brown's new military thriller *Fire of the Raging Dragon* (Zondervan), a naval war breaks out between China and Taiwan, and the U.S. President is forced to make hard personal and moral choices since his daughter, a recent Naval Academy graduate, is stationed on one of the first responding submarines. "This novel deals with ethical and moral issues occurring within China right now" Brown says. "I was compelled to explore them in this story." Be looking for a third novel in the Pacific Rim series soon.

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/don-brown>



LIS WIEHL

Katie Hart

UNSEEN WARFARE

Best-selling author Lis Wiehl turns a simple murder mystery on its head by pulling back the curtain on the very real world of angels and demons.

"I read every book in my grade school's library in Yakima, Washington," Lis shares. "Really—every last one!" She acknowledges that early love of reading as the impetus toward her becoming an author. "My motto: if you read, you can write."

Lis credits her parents as influences for her writing, but her utmost inspiration comes from her kids. "They tease me: Mom, are you writing a story again? But I think and hope that they are proud."

Darkness Rising, the second book in the East Salem Trilogy, returns readers to the mysterious small town where very little is as it seems. Forensic psychologist Dani Harris teams up once again

with NFL-star-turned-private-detective Tommy Gunderson as they discover that Julie Leonard's murder was only one step in an all-out war against humanity.

This broadening the scope by including centuries-old conspiracy and more visible spiritual warfare tests the characters in new ways. "The biggest test is good versus evil—angel versus demons—but both sides are easily masked," Lis says. "How Dani and Tommy figure who or what is on either side tests them to the absolute highest degree."

Lis thinks our culture's interest in angels and demons stems from the fact that "it's the ultimate battle going on around us every day." She adds, "It's the very real unseen."

A former federal prosecutor and Harvard Law graduate, Lis is a popular legal analyst and commentator on Fox News, but she finds pleasure in simple things. "I love garage sales on a Saturday. You never know what treasures you will find."

Lis measures each day by what she calls a "pillow test": "When you finally settle in at night, have you done everything you can today, helped a neighbor, and expected nothing in return?" **FFE**



"The biggest test is good versus evil—angel versus demons—but both sides are easily masked."



DARKNESS RISING (THE EAST SALEM TRILOGY #2)

Thomas Nelson

MORE ONLINE: <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/lis-wiehl>

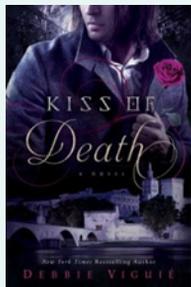
NEWS & NOTES



DEATH KISS

Debbie Viguié's *Kiss of Death* (FaithWords) is the second book in her vampire Kiss trilogy. Debbie shares, "Susan and friends continue to help the vampire Raphael try to find salvation and destroy the other vampires threatening the world, she is caught up in the realization that the key to the future lies in unlocking her family's mysterious past." RT Book Reviews gave the novel 4 ½ stars, saying, "The action is fast, furious and violent, interspersed with fascinating diary entries that are slowly revealed as the cousins translate pages, creating a rising excitement that doesn't stop when the book ends."

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/debbie-viguie>



UNDEAD VS. ETERNAL

The Twelfth Demon: Mark of the Wolf Dragon (Realms) is the second book in Bruce Hennigan's series *The Chronicles of Jonathan Steel*. Says Bruce, "I use the context of our fascination with vampires, werewolves, and the undead to reconnect you with the truth that we have eternal souls and we long to connect to our Creator." He also uses his medical degree to add realism to a villain who has genetically altered his blood to carry "vampire magick" and create an army of vampires and werewolves.

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/bruce-hennigan>

HALFLINGS TWO

Guardian (Zondervan) is book two in Heather Burch's Halflings series. Nikki Youngblood is growing to accept her role as a Seer and the part she can play as spiritual battles ensue, but she's torn between the two guardian Halflings she can never have. Two short stories set in the same world, *11:15: The Making of a Halfling* and *A Halflings Rescue*, are available to download free.

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/heather-burch>

R.J. LARSON

REIMAGINED STORIES

R.J. Larson weaves Old Testament stories into fantasy with ease, giving readers a new perspective on Biblical prophets.

"I've been obsessed with the written word from my earliest years and I'd even scribbled a few short stories for fun," R.J. says, "but becoming a 'real' writer never occurred to me until my husband and his sister both became editors." Articles and devotionals led to contacts within the writing industry, and eventually, an agent.

Prophet (Bethany House), the initial novel in her Books of the Infinite series, is R.J.'s fantasy debut. Seventeen-year-old Ela of Parne is called to be the Infinite's first female prophet, giving up dreams of marriage and a long life for harrowing journeys, imprisonment, and breathtaking one-on-one conversations with her Creator. In book two, *Judge*, new believer Kien Lantec is

called to deliver a message of the Infinite's judgment to far-off ToronSea, while the woman he loves, Ela, is sent home to Parne to warn the faithless of an upcoming invasion.

Many events in the books mirror those of Biblical prophets like Samuel, Jonah, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah. R.J. says, "Sometimes, shifting a plot from its usual setting allows us to view the thoughts behind the verses through new eyes, so to speak. In the Old Testament, this sort of plotline/setting shift is used to inform listeners, and compelled them to think of their own situations from different angles."

Despite their serious nature, the novels are filled with moments of humor, chiefly brought about by a fearsome warhorse who becomes loyal to Ela, and begrudgingly, Kien. "Pet was supposed to be a one-scene menace," R.J. shares. "His author-designated task was to charge into the scene, threaten Ela, and be conquered. However, in true destroyer style, he ignored my directive and did as he pleased."

R.J. cites Psalm 63:1, her favorite verse, as the driving force behind Ela's character. "My books reflect my heart's longing for the Lord, and His for us. Even now, decades later, this verse brings tears to my eyes." **FFE**



"In the Old Testament, this sort of plotline/setting shift is used to inform listeners, and compelled them to think of their own situations from different angles."



PROPHET
(BOOKS OF THE INFINITE #1)
Bethany House

MORE ONLINE: <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/r-j-larson>

NEWS & NOTES



GOLDSTONE INSPIRED

The latest book in Anne Elisabeth Stengl's Tales of Goldstone Wood is *Starflower* (Bethany House). Immortal Eanrin already is on a quest to rescue and win the favor of a lady, but when he comes across a human caught in a sleeping enchantment, he feels honor-bound to help and awakens her with a kiss. Anne recently announced the winners of her fan fiction contest on her blog, and has been posting all entries (which include stories, poetry, and art) in twice weekly installments for readers to enjoy.

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/anne-elisabeth-stengl>



MISSION TRIP DANGER

Andrew Klavan's latest book for young adults, *If We Survive* (Thomas Nelson) follows four American teens on a mission trip to Central America to help rebuild a school in a remote village. But when a Communist revolution sweeps the country, all Americans are targeted to die, and the teens must face streets full of killers, patrolled hills, and a dangerous jungle to reach the border alive.

► <http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/andrew-klavan>

SUPERHUMAN TEENS

Four authors team up to write about four teens in a project for Kindle Serials. Melody Carlson says, "The idea for 'The Naturals' was originally conceived by Aaron Patterson. He invited three other writers—Robin Parrish, K.C. Neal, and myself—to join him in creating four compelling teen characters who live in Silverwood, a small northwest town, where a lot of weird and unexplainable stuff is happening. Each of our characters—two guys and two girls—have some unique supernatural powers that they are trying to figure out. And something evil is brewing in a new industry that recently located in Silverwood." *The Naturals: Awakenings* (StoneHouse Ink), which comprises the first arc, includes eight episodes.



JAMES CHANKIN

The Mark

James Chankin considers making faith-based films his mission field. After producing movies such as *Jerusalem Countdown*, *Christmas with a Capital C* and *Escape*, he's just released *The Mark*, the first in a trilogy of end-times thrillers. "The whole goal of the movie, which was filmed in Thailand, is to introduce the rapture and show what it's about in an action thriller that shows real life," Chankin says. "Chad, the main character, is injected with a chip, which you soon find out is the mark of the beast; but he didn't have a choice. What would it be like if that happened?"

Since college when Chankin switched from a pre-med degree to fine arts, he's wanted to be involved in film. He pursued acting and did some commercials, but it wasn't long before he realized what he truly loved was producing and directing. After 15 years in Hollywood, he wasn't fulfilled.

"I asked God, 'What am I supposed to be doing? Why am I here?'" I realized that if I'd spent 15-plus years in an industry, He was building something for me. I can take that experience and knowledge and give it to Him and allow Him to be glorified."

Chankin is now determined to create quality movies that are challenging to viewers without being preachy. "With a movie, you don't have to stand up and preach," he says. "You're entertaining, and viewers aren't feeling threatened by watching a movie. *The Mark* trilogy has been my passion for the last couple of years. I hope those who watch it see that and understand it comes from the heart. That's truly, truly what I hope. It's not just about making a film and making money. It's about sharing what I love—and that's God's Word—and the value of what I believe God is to me in my life." **FFE**



"With a movie, you don't have to stand up and preach."

NEWS & NOTES



Testing, Testing-1, 2, 3...

Just in time for the holidays, actor/director Corbin Bernsen (*Rust, 25 Hill*) returns with a new faith-based movie called *3-Day Test*. The film follows a family whose father (George Newbern) unplugs them from the world for three days in an attempt to reconnect. Think *Home Alone* meets *Survivor*. "The film features talented comedic actors in a zany plot," Bernsen says. "It has a strong message about family and faith, which are important pillars to strengthen our community."

► www.familyfiction.com/movies/3-day-test



Happy Birthday, *Love Comes Softly*

The beloved movie series based on Janette Oke's classic books is celebrating the 10th anniversary of the first movie *Love Comes Softly* with a 10-DVD boxed set. That's more than 18 hours on the Western prairie. Coincidentally, it took Michael Landon Jr. 10 years to gather enough interest in the first installment to bring it to the silver screen. "Everybody thought it was too soft, too this, too that," Landon said. "They said no one would watch, no one would tune in; but then when it aired it became the highest rated movie in the history of the Hallmark Channel." This set includes all the films except the holiday special *Love's Christmas Journey*.

► www.familyfiction.com/movies/love-comes-softly-10th-anniversary-collection

Nic Cage Is In!

It's been verified by Producer Paul Lalonde (Cloud Ten Pictures) that Nicolas Cage is confirmed to play the part of Rayford Steele in the upcoming *Left Behind* movie remake. With a budget approaching \$15 million, filming should begin in Louisiana in the coming months. At press time, Vic Armstrong (who was a stunt man for Harrison Ford, Pierce Brosnan and Christopher Reeve) was in talks to direct, and the filmmakers were in LA hoping soon to cast Buck Williams and Chloe Steele. If all goes well, we could see a 2014 release.



BILLY TUCCI

A Comic Is Born

For more than a decade, Billy Tucci dreamed of telling the Nativity story as a comic book.

“As a Christian,” Tucci said, “I felt this type of book needed to be produced.” However, known for his gritty action comics, it was a risk for Tucci to write and draw a short Christian-themed comic book. “I was incredibly anxious about how the mainstream comic audience would react,” Tucci said.

He received courage and inspiration to go ahead and do it from his wife. “It was watching my wife’s winning battle against breast cancer that made me realize what’s really important in life,” he recounted. “It was her victory that made me realize no work was more worthwhile to my family than illustrating this story of Mary and Joseph.”

His dream became the book *A Child Is Born*, which is being re-released in a hardcover edition in time for the holidays and is

a project unlike anything he has worked on before.

The reaction that he was worried about from his fans to *A Child Is Born* has been mostly positive. “It’s a very secular readership, and I did receive some hate for it initially,” Tucci said, “but the vast majority of readers really have

embraced the book. They see all the hard work we all put into it and that it’s a quality product.”

More important to Tucci, though, was his family’s reaction. While his wife supported him “100 percent,” his sons, as his fans, wondered why. “My elder son asked why I was doing a comic book about Jesus rather than a superhero,” Tucci said, “but after I finished it, both my boys wanted me to draw an illustration of them with Jesus!”

Billy says that it was an incredible personal journey of faith for him. “It was the most joyful work experience of my career, and I want to continue to do more.”

He already has plans for a follow up about the Beatitudes. **FFE**



“It was the most joyful work experience of my career, and I want to continue to do more.”

NEWS & NOTES



A Veggie Christmas Extravaganza!

Big Idea is releasing a special Christmas box set for the holiday season—*VeggieTales: the Ultimate Christmas Collection*.

The set collects all of the previous Christmas themed releases, from the first—*The Toy that Saved Christmas*—to the last, *The Little Drummer Boy*, and the four in between, plus a CD with 25 Christmas songs.

Mike Nawrocki, co-creator of VeggieTales, executive vice president of Big Idea and voice of Larry the Cucumber, said, “It’s important for families to spend time together remembering the true meaning of Christmas, especially amid all of the hustle and bustle the holiday season can bring. We hope kids and families alike will have fun watching all of our Christmas stories in *The Ultimate Christmas Collection* and that it will help them to grow in their faith this year.”

A Gospel Story that Packs a Punch

The life of Christ has been told in many different ways, but probably never as it is in *Lions.12*.

Written by Demetrius Veasy, *Lions.12* retells the gospel story with a blend of hip-hop pacing, a graffiti- and anime-inspired art style, martial arts action and Narnia-like allegory.

“Since I saw my first anime, *Astro Boy*, I fell in love with the Japanese style of animation and comic illustration,” Veasy said. He got the idea to create *Lions.12* when he was flipping channels and noticed all the cartoons with adult content that are watched by children. “I believe God gave me this story to counteract the negative thing kids see on TV.”

The Sheep and His Flock

Every Monday, a cute sheep wearing a clergy shirt leads his flock and follows his Shepherd in Susan Mattison’s webcomic, *Pastor Shep*.

“His character exists in that awkward middle area between being a leader and being just another Christian trying to make sense of life and live it for God,” Mattison, the creator, writer and artist of the comic said.

She hopes readers enjoy the warm, optimistic humor, but also, “I hope people find the deeper layers—about what it means to be part of a varied faith community, to be a servant leader and to have the bright-eyed faith of a child.”

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