SEATBELT SUSPENSE from
BRANDILYN COLLINS

LYNETTE EASON
RANDY SINGER
ERIC WILSON

10 NEW VOICES in YA FICTION
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THE STAKES Couldn’t BE HIGHER

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CHRIS WELL (EDITOR)
Chris Well is the editor of FamilyFiction. Although maintaining a website, weekly newsletter and bimonthly magazine keeps him pretty busy, he still has hopes of getting back to that novel. (Don’t even ask how long his agent has been waiting.) http://www.StudioWell.com

REL MOLLET
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Rel Mollet resides in Melbourne, Australia, with her movie-loving husband and three book-loving daughters. http://relzreviewz.blogspot.com

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(SUSPENSE DEPT., MOVIES/DVDS DEPT.)
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(SPECULATIVE FICTION DEPT., YA/TEEN DEPT.)
Katie Hart spends her free time reading, connecting with authors, and dreaming up new stories. http://www.BladesofBetrayal.com

CHRISTA BANISTER
(CONTemporary/GENERAL FICTION DEPT.)
Christa is the author of Around the World in 80 Dates and Blessed Are the Meddlers. Based in Dallas, Texas, she weighs in on pop culture on her blog. http://www.ChristaBanister.typepad.com

BEN AVERY
(CHILDREN’S DEPT., COMICS/ANIMATION DEPT.)
Ben Avery writes comics, performs with puppets and plays Lego with his kids (and sometimes without them). He’s the creator of Time Flyz and ArmorQuest. http://www.BenAvery.com
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His latest legal thriller, *The Last Plea Bargain* (Tyndale House), is no exception. The novel is loosely based on the raw emotions Singer encountered during the infamous Summerville case where he represented three daughters who lost their father at the hands of their stepmother. Weaving an intricate plot around the quest for justice (and bringing back favorite character Jamie Brock from *False Witness*), Singer has crafted a page-turner which addresses plea bargaining, the death penalty and creating false memories in people.

“This book was my effort to peel back the onion on these issues and show that sometimes justice isn’t as black and white as we want to make it,” Singer says. “When I hit a big ethical topic on which Christians differ, I always try to give it a balanced approach. I want to give perspectives and facts readers might not normally consider. I tried to look at this realistically, not in a preachy way, from every side. From the victim and prosecutor’s perspective, the defendant’s and the defense lawyer’s. I think it’s uninteresting when you present a one-sided view of an issue on which people have passion and opinions. Then the book feels like it’s just a pulpit, a soapbox.”

Singer’s hope is that *The Last Plea Bargain* will spur readers to think about the intricacies of the criminal justice system. But more importantly, he wants people to ponder the greater dilemma of grace versus justice. “If we can’t let go of things, it destroys us as much as it does the person who caused the injustice in the first place,” Singer says. “I hope to shine a little ray of sunlight on these bigger themes.”

—C.J. Darlington

**MORE ABOUT RANDY SINGER ONLINE**

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/randysinger
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of *Two Seconds Late*, we see a woman like Esther, raised up “for such a time as this,” as she faces dangerous people in politics, business and the military.

**DO YOU PLAN FOR SUBSEQUENT TITLES IN THE SERIES TO ALSO FOLLOW THIS PATTERN?**

Yes, like all my books, there will be biblical themes threaded into the stories in some obvious and not-so-obvious ways.

**YOUR BOOKS RANGE FROM MYSTERIES TO SUPERNATURAL SUSPENSE TO NOVELIZATIONS OF FAMILY FILMS. DOES WORKING IN DIFFERENT GENRES PRESENT A CHALLENGE?**

For me, stories are all about personal struggle—whether that’s facing doubts, death, demonic entities or romance. The mood and settings of a story change, the plots fit different molds for their genre, but at the core I’m writing about people I relate to in some way.

**WHAT ARE YOU WRITING NOW?**

I’m now working on the film novelization of *October Baby*. The movie [is in theaters now], but the book will come out with the DVD release in the fall. I’m also starting work on *Three Fatal Blows*, featuring Aramis Black and Detective Meade. Should be fun!  

“*In Two Seconds Late*, we see a woman like Esther, raised up ‘for such a time as this,’ as she faces dangerous people in politics, business, and the military.”
After a brush with death due to equipment failure, smokejumper Alexia Allen is ordered to take time off while the incident is under investigation. She makes a last-minute decision to recuperate at her mother’s home and attend her high school reunion. Yet trouble seems to be following her, and within hours of arriving home she is confronted with murder, arson—and a handsome detective.

Chock-full of the suspense and romantic tension you’ve come to expect from Lynette Eason, When the Smoke Clears is the explosive first book in the Deadly Reunions series.

COMING FEBRUARY 2012

LYNETTE EASON is the author of several romantic suspense novels, including Too Close to Home, Don’t Look Back, and A Killer Among Us. She is a member of American Christian Fiction Writers and Romance Writers of America. A homeschooling mother of two, she has a master’s degree in education from Converse College. She lives in South Carolina.

Connect with Lynette at www.LynetteEason.com
WHY DO YOU THINK STORY IS SUCH A POWERFUL WAY TO COMMUNICATE TRUTH?
It’s the opportunity to impact others. When it comes to story, most people “get it” when it comes to World War II—who the bad guys were, what the stakes were, the sad, sad story of Jewish persecution and killings, and how the good guys eventually won. Since writers don’t have to explain all those things, we can construct thrilling plots that zero in on the action.

WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION DRIVING THE STORY IN CHASING MONA LISA?
Tricia and I began kicking around an idea: what would happen if the Nazis decided to steal the Mona Lisa during the chaotic times of August 1944, when Allied forces were advancing on Paris? That’s when the fun started.

OVER THE COURSE OF WRITING THE STORY, WHAT SURPRISED YOU MOST?
Many do not know that the famous Louvre Museum in Paris started packing up its treasures, including the Mona Lisa, Venus de Milo, and Winged Victory at Samothrace, a few days before the start of World War II when Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. The Louvre shipped most of its treasures to chateaux south of the city. The Mona Lisa, the most famous painting in the world, apparently moved six times during the war and was even hung up in a girl’s bedroom at a chateau in southern France.

WHAT PARTS OF CHASING MONA LISA WERE INSPIRED BY REAL LIFE?
When I was in Paris, I took a World War II walking tour that passed by the famous Prefecture de Police, where the Paris uprising started just before Liberation. Then the group walked to the Hotel Meurice, where the German High Command was headquartered. I peppered the tour guide with questions all afternoon, but I was able to “see” how many of those famous events really happened, which are part of the book.

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOUR READERS MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO LEARN ABOUT YOU?
My wife, Nicole, is Swiss, and we are fortunate to be able to go to Switzerland twice a year—once in winter for skiing and once in the summer for hiking in the Swiss Alps. Not only does Nicole get to be Swiss again and speak Swiss-German, French and Italian, but I get to tag along and soak up the beauty and the culture. I’m very blessed.

WHY DO YOU THINK STORY IS SUCH A POWERFUL WAY TO COMMUNICATE TRUTH?
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MORE ABOUT MIKE YORKEY ONLINE
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/tricia-goyer-and-mike-yorkey
Brandilyn Collins

FASTEN YOUR SEATBELT

By C.J. Darlington

THE BEST-SELLING AUTHOR EXPLAINS WHY THE PULSE-POUNDING THRILLER GONE TO GROUND IS HER MOST CHARACTER-DRIVEN NOVEL TO DATE—AND WHY HER JOB IS TO ENTERTAIN READERS.
Brandilyn Collins’ love affair with words began as a girl when, much to her family’s amusement, she proudly wrote a story about a stallion named Betsy. Her first job at 16 was as a typesetter at the private college she attended, so it was hardly surprising she would eventually try her hand at writing novels. It took 10 long years of learning the craft, but in 2001 her first novel, *Eyes of Elisha*, was published. She’s since produced 20 more, including her latest and perhaps most ambitious, *Gone to Ground* (B&H).

“The initial idea was triggered from seeing a TV true crime show about a string of unsolved homicides committed in a small Southern town,” Brandilyn explains. “The show focused more on the investigation or lack thereof, but I began to think of the people involved. How would such a horrible thing affect a small town?

“Then I got the idea for the premise: What if three women independently realized they’d discovered the killer—someone dear to them—and had to make the choice to bring the man down—except each suspects a different man? Now that had my attention because it was so rife with possibility for tension and high stakes in all three women’s lives, not to mention the town as a whole.”

But having a unique plot is only part of what creates a thrilling story. Brandilyn will be the first to tell you characters make or break a good suspense novel. “It doesn’t matter how ingenious the plot. If readers don’t empathize with the characters, if they don’t care what happens to them within the plot, they’ll stop reading. The very hard thing I continually deal with is how to write my trademarked Seatbelt Suspense—which promises a fast pace, yet still makes the story character-driven.”

Brandilyn considers *Gone to Ground* her most character-driven novel to date. Told in first person, the story unfolds through...
I don’t sit down to write a ‘Christian’ novel. I sit down to write the best rollicking suspense I can. That’s my job—to entertain, not to preach. That’s my job—to entertain, not to preach. If I don’t entertain, the reader won’t finish my book. The faith element must rise naturally from the protagonist(s), as well as the challenges and danger in the story. As I write, this element becomes clear. If I tried to force it, it would sound didactive. I want it to be so natural to the story that nonbelievers can read my suspense and not be put off by the faith element. They can simply see it as part of a character’s growth.”

In her quest for authenticity, she even traveled from her home in Idaho all the way to Mississippi to interview the locals. “I made careful notes of how they spoke certain words. I knew I would be writing in dialect, and I had to get it right.”

She also immersed herself in the setting by spending a day driving around taking photos of where she planned to set her fictional town of Amaryllis. “I wanted people in that area to be able to picture it,” she says. When asked why she loves writing about small towns, Brandilyn is quick to point out it’s all about the intrigue. “Everyone knows everyone—or so they think.”

Overall, Brandilyn desires that people of all walks can enjoy her stories. “I don’t sit down to write a ‘Christian’ novel,” she says. “I sit down to write the best rollicking suspense I can. That’s my job—to entertain, not to preach. If I don’t entertain, the reader won’t finish my book. The faith element must rise naturally from the protagonist(s), as well as the challenges and danger in the story. As I write, this element becomes clear. If I tried to force it, it would sound didactive. I want it to be so natural to the story that nonbelievers can read my suspense and not be put off by the faith element. They can simply see it as part of a character’s growth.”

More about Brandilyn Collins online
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/brandilyn-collins
If you like BRANDILYN COLLINS...

After you’ve devoured *Gone to Ground*, you may be asking, “What do I read now?”

Here’s a list of 10 suggested authors.

**TERRI BLACKSTOCK**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/terri-blackstock
With more than six million books sold, Terri Blackstock is the award-winning author of such series as Cape Refuge and Newpointe 911. Her latest novel is *Downfall* (Zondervan).

**IRENE HANNON**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/irene-hannon
The author of nearly 40 novels, Irene Hannon has won multiple honors for her fiction. This summer, she wraps up her Guardians of Justice series with *Lethal Legacy* (Revell Books).

**KRISTEN HEITZMANN**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/kristen-heitzmann
An artist and music minister, Kristen Heitzmann is the best-selling author of *The Edge of Recall* and the Christy Award winner *Secrets*. Her most recent is *Indelible* (WaterBrook Press).

**AMY WALLACE**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/amy-wallace
Amy Wallace is a home-school mom, speaker and a graduate of the Gwinnett County Citizens Police Academy. Her latest suspense title is *Hiding in Plain Sight* (Harvest House).

**KATHY HERMAN**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/kathy-herman
Having worked for years in Christian retail, Kathy Herman has since retired and become a best-selling suspense novelist. Her most recent is *Dangerous Mercy* (David C. Cook).

**STEVEN JAMES**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/steven-james
Author Steven James has written a series of psychological thrillers starring FBI Agent Patrick Bowers. The latest is 2011’s *The Queen* (Revell Books).

**LYNETTE EASON**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/lynette-eason
The author of several romantic suspense novels, Lynette Eason has launched her Deadly Reunions series with *When the Smoke Clears* (Revell Books).

**RONIE KENDIG**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/ronie-kendig
Ronie Kendig grew up an Army brat—and is now married to a veteran. Her unique brand of military suspense includes *Firethorn* (Barbour Books).

**DIANN MILLS**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/diann-mills
Award-winner DiAnn Mills combines an adventuresome spirit with unforgettable characters to create action-packed, suspense-filled novels. Her latest is *The Chase* (Zondervan).

**ROBERT WHITLOW**
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/robert-whitlow
A practicing attorney, Robert Whitlow is the best-selling author of legal novels set in the South. His next novel, *The Choice* (Thomas Nelson), hits shelves late this summer.
For Christian readers who love science fiction, there are those titles that have achieved a kind of legendary status—both for breaking new ground in Christian fiction, but also for being so hard to find. But now Marcher Lord Press, a small publishing company that focuses exclusively on Christian speculative fiction—which includes science fiction, fantasy and supernatural fiction—is on a mission to make those titles available again. And—more importantly—in new editions with bonus material that make the books better than ever.

So far, MLP’s special editions include The Annotated Firebird trilogy by Kathy Tyers; Oxygen—Writer’s Journey Edition by John B. Olson and Randy Ingermanson; and The Restorer—Expanded Edition by Sharon Hinck.

“I want as many roads as possible leading to MLP,” says MLP founder and editor Jeff Gerke. “My true goal was that whenever anyone thought of the ultimate source of any Christian fantasy or science fiction, they would think of MLP. That meant that the classics in our little subgenre should be MLP books too.”

Simply republishing the out-of-print novels didn’t make financial sense. “We needed to turn them into special editions because people can buy the original versions for 38 cents off eBay,” Jeff explains. “In that case, why would someone pay $15.99 for our version? Only if it included new bonus content and was in some way deluxe.”
The authors approached adding bonus content to their novels in different ways. Randy Ingermanson, who built a following by teaching the craft of novel writing, says, “We created it with fiction writers in mind. I publish a free monthly electronic magazine with about 30,000 subscribers, and I knew they’d be interested in learning more about how to get a novel published.”

Sharon Hinck shares, “I dug into the books and thought about characters that I wanted to know more about...or how another character in the scene may have viewed the same occurrence differently.” She also added a devotional guide to the editions, drawing from the many emails she’s received about her novels’ themes.

For years, Kathy Tyers had kept a notebook filled with anecdotal information about her Firebird series, and MLP’s edition includes “maps, the author’s reminiscences and further insights into the plot and world-building and cast of characters,” she says. Publishing her trilogy as a 3-in-1 special edition also gave her the opportunity to bring books four (Wind and Shadow) and five (Daystar) to life.

While the main text of most of the MLP editions remains unchanged aside from small tweaks and corrections, Randy Ingermanson took things a step further. “John and I had 10 more years of experience as novelists when we revised Oxygen, so we took the opportunity to rewrite a number of scenes. Those scenes weren’t horrible—the first edition of the book won some nice awards—but we’re perfectionists and we saw plenty of things to improve.”

As for readers who already own the original editions, Sharon Hinck says they should consider buying the new editions, too. “If they liked the original story, this is an opportunity to experience it with more depth and fullness. I’m the type who loves the extras on a movie DVD, so my hope is that the new editions of The Sword of Lyric books will provide that same sort of great experience.”

Kathy Tyers notes that speculative fiction readers might be more willing to purchase a special edition. “If a reader’s preferred genre is historical fiction, she can find information in many other places—online, in libraries, etc. But it can be harder to find sources for this information on speculative fiction.”

Are there more special editions in Marcher Lord Press’s future? Jeff Gerke foresees a few. “Beyond the series we’re already releasing, there are a few others I’d love to republish. But it’s not a long list. We don’t have a lot of classics yet in our niche, after all. MLP will always be known primarily as a publisher of original Christian speculative fiction. But I love that new groups of people—each of these republished books’ micro-audiences—have come to learn about MLP through these re-issues.”

MORE SPECulative FICTION ONLINE
http://www.familyfiction.com/genres/speculative/books
MELANIE DICKERSON
Melanie Dickerson delights in taking a traditional fairy tale and making it real with genuine characters responding to circumstances in realistic ways. Look for The Merchant’s Daughter and The Healer’s Apprentice (Zondervan).
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/melanie-dickerson

ANDREW KLAVAN
Multi award-winning author Andrew Klavan has given his writing a YA focus since 2009 and the release of his Homelanders series (Thomas Nelson), which have been optioned for movies. His latest, Crazy Dangerous, is another high-octane thriller.
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/andrew-klavan

KARYN HENLEY
Best known for writing The Beginner’s Bible, Karyn Henley has turned her hand to YA fiction with the release of her lyrical fantasy novels, Breath of Angel and Eye of the Sword, part of her Angelaeon Circle (Waterbrook Press).
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/karyn-henley

10 NEW VOICES IN YA FICTION
By Rel Mollet

ONCE SEEN AS THE DOMAIN OF MELODY CARLSON WITH HER EXCELLENT TEEN-FOCUSED BOOKS, THE YOUNG ADULT MARKET HAS EXPLODED WITH WONDERFUL WRITERS LIKE JENNY B. JONES, LISA T. BERGREN AND BRYAN DAVIS. LOOK FOR THE FOLLOWING NEW TALENT WHO WRITE SPECULATIVE, FANTASY, CONTEMPORARY AND EVEN HISTORICAL FICTION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.
HEATHER BURCH
Marrying into a family of novelists, Heather Burch soon followed in their footsteps. Her debut novel, Halflings (Zondervan), features an intriguing heroine and three half-angel boys determined to protect her from evil forces.
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/heather-burch

SHANON DITTEMORE
Shannon Dittemore’s debut novel, Angel Eyes (Thomas Nelson), is a story of beauty, betrayal and faith and the first in a supernatural, romantic trilogy from this former actress turned youth minister and author.
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/shannon-dittemore

NICOLE O’DELL
Youth culture expert and “Teen Talk” radio host, Nicole O’Dell has added fiction to her impressive resume in recent years. Look for her Diamond Estates series, including The Wishing Pearl and The Embittered Ruby (Barbour).
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/nicole-o-dell

KRISTA MC GEE
With her passion for youth ministry, it was natural that Krista McGee would write for teens. Keen to have them look more closely at the Bible, Krista writes contemporary novels based on biblical characters. Look for First Date (Esther) and Starring Me (Isaac & Rebekah) from Thomas Nelson.
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/krista-mcgee

D. BARKLY BRIGGS
Inspired to help his four young sons cope with the loss of their mother to cancer, Dean Barkly Briggs began creating a story which turned into The Legends of Karac Tor series. Look for the latest installment, The Song of Unmaking (AMG Publishers).
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/d-barkley-briggs

L.K. MALONE
When not writing, L.K. Malone reads a book a day and was inspired to write a Judeo-Christian teen fantasy novel after reading the Hunger Games and Harry Potter series. The Mirror of N’de (Kregel) is available now.
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/l-k-malone

ROGER BRUNER & KRISTI RAE BRUNER
The Altered Hearts series, written by father and daughter team Roger and Kristie Rae Bruner, tells the story about a young woman who experiences a life changing mission trip to Mexico. Found in Translation and Lost in Dreams (Barbour) are available now.
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/roger-bruner

MORE YA AUTHORS ONLINE
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/genres/young-adult/
COZYING UP...

WITH AN eBook?

Traditional mysteries, long a staple in the mainstream, have faced challenges finding a place in Christian publishing circles. Now, the eBook format has started bridging the gap between authors and readers.

By C.J. Darlington
By definition, traditional mysteries are devoid of explicit violence, sex and profanity—one would think they’d be an ideal fit for the Christian fiction market. Surprisingly, they haven’t found nearly the same popularity they do in the general market, where the category has been a staple going all the way back to Agatha Christie.

This has long puzzled novelists and industry professionals alike, including author Debbie Viguie. “I think in many ways it’s because mysteries aren’t a genre you normally associate with Christian fiction,” she says. “I think they are underrepresented and therefore underappreciated.”

That’s all changing with the blooming eBook market. Traditional mystery authors now have the chance to share their stories in a much bigger way, and many have embraced the technology—rereleasing out-of-print novels in eBook form, and even publishing new novels as eBook exclusives.

Take Lorena McCourtney, for example: Her Andi McConnell series, about a spunky 60-year-old who inherits a limousine, was cancelled by the publisher after the release of book one, Your Chariot Awaits. Normally, this would have been devastating news. However, McCourtney saw the promise of releasing book two, Here Comes the Ride, as an eBook. She has since published several of her backlist titles in the form as well. “Here
are books that I thought were long dead,” she says. “And now readers are enjoying them again!”

Debbie Viguie’s next Psalm 23 Mystery, Beside Still Waters, will be an eBook exclusive too. “My mysteries are doing very well as eBooks,” Debbie says. “I believe one of the key reasons is that people who are predisposed to enjoy mysteries are finally able to find books because they show up as ‘mysteries’ and not just as ‘religious fiction.’ The books seem to be selling far better in electronic form than in print.”

Industry veterans Ron & Janet Benrey birthed Greenbrier Book Company to give quality out-of-print books a new life and a chance to find a larger audience. “We studied the changing paradigm in book publishing,” Ron says. “We were confident in the unstoppable transition to eBook and POD publishing.”

He says their best-selling eBooks are cozy mysteries: the Lord Danvers Mysteries by Donna Fletcher Crow; the Ivy Towers Mysteries by Nancy Mehl; the Healing Touch medical mystery series by Hanna Alexander; and the two cozy mystery series written by Janet and Ron—the Royal Tunbridge Wells Mysteries and The Pippa Hunnechurch Mysteries. Greenbrier currently publishes more than 50 eBook titles, about a quarter of which are also published in paper versions.

Meanwhile, MacGregor Literary Agency has partnered with several authors to launch
A mystery is afoot at 221 Baker Street, but will Griffin Sharpe be able to figure out the clues before the future catches up with the past?

When Sherlock Holmes moves out of Baker Street, a new tenant moves in – a mysterious woman named Elizabeth who has long been a fan of Holmes. So when Elizabeth goes missing along with a special time travel invention, Griffin sets out to rescue her. But finding Elizabeth will take them on a race against the clock that bends time itself?

Keep up with the latest in the adventure at www.noplacelikeholmes.blogspot.com
I’ve actually bought more books now that I have my Kindle than I did before.

—Christy Barritt

Spyglass Lane Mysteries. The imprint is breathing new life into cozy mysteries from the likes of Susan Sleeman, Anita Higman, Cynthia Hickey and even FamilyFiction’s editor, Chris Well.

“A bunch of our authors found themselves with the rights to some cozy mysteries they had written for a publisher a while back,” agent Amanda Luedeke explains. “Instead of letting them sit and collect dust, they wanted to do something with them. As their agents, we decided the best route would be to publish the books online as a collection. We’ve helped them through the entire process.”

Asked “Why eBooks?” Amanda quickly answers, “Why not eBooks? It’s the fastest growing publishing division, and it works really well for the category genres. People love whodunits.”

Still not sure you want to take the plunge and buy an e-reader? Author Christy Barritt, who self-published her third Squeaky Clean Mystery, Organized Grime, in electronic and print form, was on the fence herself at first. “Then my husband surprised me with a Kindle two Christmases ago,” she says. “I pretended to be happy about it. Just so he wouldn’t feel bad, I began playing around on it. And you know what? I discovered I loved it! I’ve actually bought more books now that I have my Kindle than I did before.”

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Robert Liparulo has made a name for himself among thriller fans with *Comes a Horseman* and *Germ* and the like. But lately, Robert has felt God leading him in a different direction.

His previous adult thrillers were heavy on action, adventure, and the fight between good and evil—but, as the author freely admits, somewhat light when it came to acknowledging God’s influence in the world and in the lives of his characters.

“As I prayed,” Robert shares, “I sensed God telling me it was time to go another direction, to take a new, bold stance in proclaiming His sovereignty in everything that happens, to rip down the veil and show His inextricable presence in all we experience—unreservedly and unapologetically.”

The result is my new book, *The 13th Tribe* (Thomas Nelson). “My goal was to make a story that felt so real that the supernatural and faith elements were simply a part of the ride.”

And a ride it is. *The 13th Tribe* is an exciting, suspenseful tale wrought with complexities about faith, God, love and justice. What if during the time of the Israeli exodus a group of people sinned so greatly that God condemned them to immortality? Dubbing themselves the 13th Tribe, they become vigilantes determined to win God’s favor by killing sinners. “Originally I had a central theme in mind—you can’t earn heaven,” Robert says. “God’s grace is given to us, and all we have to do is accept it. Then other themes presented themselves—primarily our struggle to grasp God’s holiness and how even our good intentions can be twisted when we insist on abiding by our own limited logic instead of God’s righteous wisdom.”

My goal was to make a story that felt so real that the supernatural and faith elements were simply a part of the ride.

MORE ABOUT ROBERT LIPARULO ONLINE
http://www.FamilyFiction.com/authors/robert-liparulo
CHASING THE CASE
DiAnn Mills’ novel *The Chase* (Zondervan) is based on a real-life cold case straight from Houston’s FBI office. “It’s the first book in the Crime Scene: Houston series,” DiAnn says. “All the plots are based on solved cold cases. When I began my research for *The Chase*, it created a passion inside me. The story had to be written.” To assure authenticity, DiAnn spoke with those who’d worked the case and even verified her villain’s scenes with someone who’d been a part of a cartel.

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/diann-mills

DIVING IN

The idea for Dani Pettrey’s debut novel *Submerged* (Bethany House) came while she was watching a movie about cave divers. “I asked myself, what type of person would willingly undertake such a dangerous endeavor?” Dani explains. “How could that person use their love and hunger for adventure to help others? That’s when my character Cole McKenna was born. I’ve had a blast getting a glimpse into the lives of the fascinating men and women who explore the places most of us will never see.” According to author Dee Henderson, “*Submerged* is romantic suspense that will keep you up at night!”

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/dani-pettrey

MOVE OVER, PLUM

“Sloane Templeton is meant to be a G-rated version of Stephanie Plum,” Bonnie Calhoun says of her leading sleuth in *Cooking the Books* (Abingdon), “only with more excitement and humor!” When Sloane starts to receive cyber threats, she dusts off her computer forensic skills, shocked to discover someone wants her dead. “She doesn’t like guns,” Bonnie adds, “but she’s got attitude to beat the band—and the bad guys. Oh, and she has an aunt Verline, who fancies herself the Iron Chef, when in reality you need a cast-iron stomach to partake of her culinary disasters.”

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/bonnie-s-calhoun
As a second-generation author, Anne Elisabeth Stengl grew up with a deep interest in writing, and began developing ideas for Tales of Goldstone Wood at age 14. Seven years later, she wrote the first draft of Heartless.

“I have always loved fairy tales,” Anne shares. “When I started writing the Goldstone Wood stories, I wanted the characters and situations to be highly relatable even in their fantastic context. Thus Heartless begins with a teenage girl obsessed with finding the man of her dreams. ‘Veiled Rose’ deals with a young man struggling so hard to find or reinvent his identity that he loses himself completely, and with a girl so determined to do the right thing in her own strength that she comes very near to destroying herself.”

Book three, Moonblood (Bethany House), continues the story of Prince Lionheart and Rose Red, but the series is far from over. Anne is currently working on books five and six.

“The ultimate theme of all my fairy tales is undeserved grace,” Anne says. “Though I write stories of classic princes and princesses, heroes and foes, my characters are all very human and very flawed. Though they face monsters of many kinds, the heroes and heroines prove themselves their own worst enemies.”

Anne studied English literature in college, wanting to learn from great authors like Shakespeare and Dickens before attempting a novel of her own. “After all, they figured out all the hard stuff years and years ago!”

Anne is no stranger to fairy tales herself. While taking fencing lessons as research for Heartless, she met a “dashing young man,” and they were married seven months later. When she isn’t writing, Anne currently spends her time helping her husband domesticate wild kittens and enjoying the live music scene in Raleigh, North Carolina.
ISOLATED BECKON

Christy Award-winning author Tom Pawlik just released his third novel, Beckon (Tyndale House). “I can’t recall exactly where the idea of the book originated,” Tom says, “but it had been knocking around inside my head for several years. Isolated little towns with dark secrets always make for great stories. For me, this was a way to explore a little about what it means to be human, to be mortal, and the lengths to which we will go to avoid the inevitable.”

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/tom-pawlik

ANGEL CURIOUSITY

Book two in Karyn Henley’s The Angelaeon Circle Series, Eye of the Sword (WaterBrook Press) released in March 2012. Karyn had this to say: “I’m a curious soul. Fantasy sets me free to explore extremes: courage/fear, good/evil, life/death. To craft a story out of these extremes, I started with emotion—the gut twist of betrayal; added a fascinating setting—the ancient Mediterranean world; and included angels, because I had discovered angelic hierarchies invented by ancient dreamers. As my story grew, themes of courage, forgiveness and honesty emerged. In the end, I saw a world in chaos restored, because Melaia and Trevin remained faithful to their individual destinies, trusting that their love for each other would outlast even the realm of death.”

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/karyn-henley

DRAGON FIRE

March 2012 also brought the release of Scott Appleton’s third novel, Key of Living Fire (Living Ink), book three in The Sword of the Dragon series. “I started writing this series almost eight years ago, and the characters in the stories have become like old friends that I’m shepherding on their journeys. In Key Of Living Fire I bring the heroes face to face with the deadly dragon Valorian. Fans of my series will particularly enjoy Specter’s role in this story. Do not think this is the story’s end, however. There are still four more books to complete in The Sword Of The Dragon series!”

http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/scott-appleton
From romance stories to dark thrillers, Travis Thrasher’s books cover a wide range of genres in Christian fiction.

His latest series, The Solitary Tales, merges both ends of the spectrum while also entering a new area: young adult fiction. “I’ve wanted to write a teen series for some time now,” Travis says. “The Solitary Tales was an attempt to combine the two primary genres I’ve written in—a love story with a supernatural thriller.”

The series focuses on 16-year-old Chris Buckley, who moves with his mother to Solitary, North Carolina. He immediately falls for mysterious Jocelyn Evans, but the small town holds a dark secret that will change their lives forever.

“I’ve never had such an overwhelming response to any of my books,” Travis shares. “Perhaps it’s because it’s a series with unanswered questions. Maybe it’s because of the younger readership. But many of my readers have loved it and can’t wait until the next book.”

The third book in the series is Temptation (David C. Cook), with the fourth and final title, Hurt, coming out early 2013. Travis is also participating with six other authors in 7 Hours (Tyndale House), and writing a novelization of the upcoming movie Home Run.

Travis says he fills his novels with broken characters on journeys toward hope and redemption. “I take the questions and frustrations and joys from my life and somehow fit them into the story I’m working on.”

Currently, he balances being a full-time author and a father to his three young daughters. “Amid this very busy time, I’m trying to figure out how to be a good husband and father.”

Despite releasing more than 20 books and novellas—including Something I Can Never Have, a companion story to The Solitary Tales—Travis realizes his journey as an author is far from over. “I’m still learning and growing. Hopefully I always will be.”

MORE ABOUT TRAVIS THRASHER ONLINE
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/travis-thrasher
KATIE HART

REScue AND FREEDOM
Kathi Macias’ Freedom series has received a great deal of attention from ministries and organizations—including the Department of Homeland Security—devoted to rescuing victims of human trafficking and stopping this crime altogether. The second book is Special Delivery (New Hope). “Once again our young protagonists, Mara (now 20) and Lawan (10), struggle to survive and/or escape their modern-day slavery situations or recover from their long-term ordeals,” Kathi says. “Another teen girl named Francesca has been kidnapped from Juarez, Mexico, and sold into slavery as well. Now Mara must decide if she is willing to risk her own tenuous freedom to try to rescue Francesca.”
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/kathi-macias

FOREVER IN AFRICA?
Robin Jones Gunn concludes her Katie Weldon series with Finally & Forever (Zondervan). After finishing college, Katie is off to Africa to work with a ministry that digs wells in Kenya. But is the love she feels growing in her heart solely for Africa, or does it spread to her friend Eli? Robin shares, “I had the privilege of traveling to Nairobi three years ago and visiting the places described in Finally & Forever. Writing this story felt very real, as if Katie was a real person and she had gone to all the same places.”
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/robin-jones-gunn

CHEATING PEER PRESSURE
Melody Carlson’s new novel Trapped (NavPress) delves into the life of a grade-A student whose life spins out of control. When her grades start to suffer, she sees only one option—cheating. Melody says, “When I heard statistics reporting that 80 percent of the country’s best students have participated in academic cheating, I got curious. And naturally I wanted to write a story about it. I wanted answers to these questions: what happens when a student knows peers are cheating; what happens when a student gives in to cheating; and what happens when a student gets caught? To me those were the ingredients of a good teen novel. That’s how Trapped was conceived.”
http://www.familyfiction.com/authors/melody-carlson

NEW RELEASES
HALFLINGS (HALFLINGS SERIES #1)
HEATHER BURCH
(ZONDERVAN)
RAISING FAITH (FAITHGIRLZ! / GIRLS OF 622 HARBOR VIEW)
MELODY CARLSON
(ZONDERKIDZ)
SECRET ADMIRER (FAITHGIRLZ! / GIRLS OF 622 HARBOR VIEW)
MELODY CARLSON
(ZONDERKIDZ)
TAKE CHARGE (FAITHGIRLZ! / GIRLS OF 622 HARBOR VIEW)
MELODY CARLSON
(ZONDERKIDZ)
The Last Martin
JONATHAN FRIESEN
(ZONDERKIDZ)
FINALLY & FOREVER (KATIE WELDON SERIES)
ROBIN JONES GUNN
(ZONDERVAN)
Eye of the Sword: A Novel (Angelaeon Circle #2)
KARYN HENLEY
(WATERBROOK PRESS)
Wild Horse Spring (Sisters in All Seasons)
LISA WILLIAMS KLINE
(ZONDERKIDZ)
Prophet (Books of the Infinite)
R.J. LARSON
(BETHANY HOUSE)
First Date
KRISTA MCGEE
(THOMAS NELSON)

http://www.familyfiction.com/genres/young-adult/books/new-releases
Rusty Whitener calls himself sentimental, reflective and forgiven.

His first screenplay won several prestigious awards and has been turned into the novel A Season of Miracles (Kregel). He’s also an accomplished actor. “Our American culture revolves so tightly around story and image,” Rusty says. “Rather than curse our culture’s lack of respect for propositional truth, I feel God would have me engage in those things that have beautifully haunted me all my life.”

A veteran thespian who’s done dinner theater, living history and outdoor dramas, you’d never know Rusty used to struggle with stage fright. But when he auditioned on a whim and got the lead role in a school play, he discovered he actually liked acting. “I also discovered that stage fright was, for me anyway, a manifestation of pride. I cared too much how others evaluated my performance. When I focused on the simple calling to ‘act well your part,’ I didn’t have room for stage fright.”

Recently he landed a role opposite Christian music artist Natalie Grant in the movie Decision. “I play her father,” Rusty explains. “A tough, hardworking rancher-type who loves his daughter very much but wrestles with some things Natalie’s character did in years past that left him estranged from her in some ways. I end up helping her and her teenage son come to terms with the harshness of life, but also the sufficient grace and love of God.”

Whether he’s putting pen to paper writing his next book or memorizing lines for a role, Rusty’s desire is to reach people’s hearts. “Story has the power to do that,” he says. “I think Lewis and Tolkien were right in saying that ‘myth’ and ‘story’ can and should have more truth in them than our ordinary, walk-about lives.”

Rather than curse our culture’s lack of respect for propositional truth, I feel God would have me engage in those things that have beautifully haunted me all my life.

MORE ONLINE ABOUT CHRISTIAN AND/OR FAMILYFRIENDLY MOVIES
http://www.FamilyFiction.com/Movies
STARLIGHT, STAR BRIGHT
Pathlight Entertainment’s new film *Beyond the Farthest Star* is a faith-based, family drama that’s “fearless and unflinching” in its portrayal of marital discord, teen depression, the commanding influence of a father shaping the lives of his children, and the eternal question of what is beyond the farthest star. Producer/actor Benjamin Dane says, “It really is a revolutionary film, breaking the mold of typical faith-based movies and dealing with a broken family restored. It’s a drama, but it’s not your typical drama. There’s a danger element involved, and a little bit of humor.” Recently Brock and Bodie Thoene wrote the novelization of the film, published by Zondervan.
http://www.beyondthefartheststar.com

HOME RUN
Now on DVD, *One Hit From Home* is an interesting sports movie about a pro-baseball superstar who loses everything due to a knee injury. He heads back home to face his past, not knowing it’s where he’ll meet his future coaching a college team on the brink. Actor Dave Stone, who plays Jimmy, said in a recent blog, “This movie will inspire and encourage you and your family that there IS hope in the midst of broken dreams!” Dove Family Approved.
http://www.intriguefilms.com

SHUNNING SEQUEL
The much anticipated sequel to the blockbuster Hallmark Channel movie *The Shunning* (based on the Beverly Lewis novel) has begun production! *The Confession* continues the story of young Amish woman Katie Lapp, whose life was turned upside down when she discovered she was adopted, and was later shunned by her community for her “rebellious” ways. Director Michael Landon Jr. says of the script, “There are enough twists and turns and interesting plotting in the novel that we’re going to stay very true to the source material.” Filming will begin soon in North Carolina, and at press time it was confirmed that Sherry Stringfield will reprise her role as Laura Mayfield Bennett.
It's taken him more than three decades, but a cartoon theologian named Theo is finally making it to the small screen.

Mike Joens created Theo, a kindhearted theologian, in 1978. And, finally, the character is making his debut in a series of DVDs and curriculum. The debut DVD of the animated series is *Theo: God’s Love* (Whitestone Media).

When Joens got into the animation industry in the late 1970s, it just became so clear to him: “Kids love cartoons,” he says. “What a great platform cartoons are to communicate the word of God.”

But between that initial idea and its fulfillment, Joens had to, as he put it, “grow up as a Christian and grow up as a filmmaker.” He worked in all levels of animation during that time, and faced some hard times, but it all prepared him for Theo.

Finally, after years of waiting, the details fell into place. “Not only did God provide for us the funding,” Joens says, “he provided the talent—these top-tier guys who were just available for this time in history.” The “top-tier guys” he refers to are former Disney and Don Bluth animators who bring Theo and his mouse companions to life.

The series uses the humorous antics of two mice to introduce theological concepts like justification, suffering and sanctification—topics not usually associated with children’s media. Theo is then able to use the mice’s misadventures to help explain the concept.

“When kids understand this,” Joens says, “it gives them an anchor later in life.”

*Theo: God’s Love* includes three episodes teaching about faith, obedience and forgiveness. The bonus episode “The Good News” is a presentation of John 3:16. Joens says the bonus episode is on every DVD release. “I want to make sure everyone who picks up a DVD of ours will get a chance to see the Gospel.”

“Kids love cartoons. What a great platform cartoons are to communicate the word of God.”

Joens’ desire for children to understand the Gospel is also evident in the “Buy 1, Give 1” campaign: For every Theo DVD sold, Whitestone Media will also give a copy to a child in need, through Child Evangelism Fellowship’s Boxes of Books initiative.
THE ORIGINAL SUPERHERO
Luis Serrano wanted to tell the story of “the original superhero”—Samson. “His story, from beginning to end, is filled with incredible events,” Serrano says. In producing the comic book *Samson the Nazirite*, he and his team—co-writer Tiffany Serrano, penciler Nadir Balan, inker Mostafa Moussa, and colorist Liezl Buenaventura—have worked to create a comic with action and visuals on par with Marvel or DC.

But their ultimate goal is to get “people to read the story and then to pick up their Bibles to read the actual biblical account,” Serrano says. “Then I hope they continue reading, and develop a passion for God’s word.”

http://www.samsonthenazirite.com

BRINGING A LEGEND TO LIFE
The legendary Robin Hood has been portrayed by many, from Douglas Fairbanks to Errol Flynn, from Kevin Costner to—Larry the Cucumber? Of course, this version doesn’t rob from the rich, he “fundraises” from them. But he still gives to the poor. The newest Veggietales DVD, *Robin Good and his Not-So-Merry Men* (Big Idea), offers a life lesson from Psalm 55:22: “Give your burdens to the Lord for He will take care of you.”

“The topic has been a top request of fans over the years,” says Big Idea’s Greg Fitz. “Helping children handle hurt and face disappointment is a challenge common to every family.”

http://veggietales.com

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE BIBLE
Salinas Slugger Studios is making the *Priscilla* comics free online through Issuu.com. Peter Gonzalez, creator and writer of the series, describes the title character as “just your average girl living in the real world who confronts problems and situations with a biblical view.”

Drawn by Jamie Cosley (with covers by Eric Merced), each story sees Priscilla apply lessons from the Bible to her own life. “At the end of the day,” Gonzalez says, “I want to create a fun biblical story that a kid will remember forever.”

http://crownjr.com

NEW RELEASES
*THE MOST SPECTACULAR STORIES EVER TOLD...FROM THE BIBLE*
Sheldon Mayer, Joe Kubert, Nestor Redondo
DC Comics

*THE BERENSTAIN BEARS: THE BEARS TEAM UP!*

*SERVING OTHERS (CHUCK SWINDOLL’S PAWS & TALES #7)*

*USING YOUR GOD-GIVEN GIFTS (CHUCK SWINDOLL’S PAWS & TALES #6)*

*DAVEY AND GOLIATH: VOLUME 9*

*EXILE AND RETURN: EZRA, NEHEMIAH & ESTHER (WHAT’S IN THE BIBLE #7)*

*HAPPINESS IS... PEANUTS: FRIENDS FOREVER*

*GOD’S LOVE (THEO #1)*

*VEGGIETALES: IF I SANG A SILLY SONG*

*VEGGIETALES: ROBIN GOOD AND HIS NOT-SO-MERRY MEN*
5 Questions: Lynette Eason

Readers have come to expect heart-stopping suspense and heart-pumping romance from author Lynette Eason. Her latest novel is When the Smoke Clears (Revell Books), the first volume in her Deadly Reunions series.

WHAT KIND OF RESEARCH DID YOU DO FOR WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS?

I did a lot of research—I used the internet, of course, but most importantly, I talked to a retired fire chief and I had my FBI agent buddy read it. I also had a cop read it. They all gave me feedback and I adjusted accordingly.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR FUTURE VOLUMES IN THE DEADLY REUNIONS SERIES?

Book two, When a Heart Stops, will release in October 2012. Then the third story will be out spring 2013.

ALL YOUR NOVELS INCLUDE ELEMENTS OF ROMANCE, SUSPENSE AND FAITH—WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF WRITING STORIES THAT TOUCH ON ALL THREE?

I would say the biggest challenge is finding the right balance, making sure I have just the right amount of everything in the story. I want to have the right amount of suspense to keep the readers on the edge of their seat or up until 2 a.m., even though they have to work the next day. It’s all about balance.

WHO ARE THE WRITERS THAT INSPIRE YOU AS A WRITER?

Dee Henderson was my biggest inspiration. I enjoy Brandilyn Collins, Terri Blackstock and Deb Raney, even though she doesn’t write suspense.

WHAT ARE YOU WRITING NOW?

I am working on the third story in the Deadly Reunions series. It’s due June 2—I think—and I’m about one-third of the way through it.