

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Fiction Romance

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I was working on my dissertation for my doctorate degree in finance when in the winter of 2016 things were not going the way planned. It was a frustrating time and a friend told me about the Nanowrimo challenge. I thought she was crazy and myself even crazier for agreeing to do it. I was shocked and amazed when at the end of the month I had the first draft written on a fiction novel. I found an editor and next thing I knew I was publishing my first romantic suspense book *The Love of a Centaur*. I talked to my husband and we decided that there was no harm in taking this leap of faith. By March of 2017 I had published the second book *The Ghosts of a Centaur*. It seemed so easy and I dove right into the third book. Then a complicated pregnancy derailed my new career goals. Everything ended up on hold until we delivered baby number seven safely into the world. Then it was back full force into my career goals. This year I have finished the third book in the Centaur Agency four book series, *The Making of a Centaur*. I have also managed to make it to Belfast, Ireland for a book signing at the Titanic Museum and published a sci-fi novella that looks at the futuristic extreme of trademarking common words. I will admit it has not been an easy journey since my last pregnancy. However, I would not change anything about this journey. I even had my proud moment when I was awarded the 2018 Top Female Author of the Year in Romance award for my book *The Ghosts of a Centaur*. I think I happy danced for days on cloud nine.

The following is an excerpt from *The Making of a Centaur*, Centaur Agency Book 3

Nathaniel was about to head into the stables when he looked over and saw her. She was standing on the back deck of the main house. Turning away from the stables, he made his way toward her. He had not had a chance to meet her yet and now was his chance. This woman held the answers to who had killed his grandparents and his stepmother. He wasn't about to wait for Matt or his mother to decide when to tell him who had killed them. He was going to get those answers himself.

Reaching the deck, it shocked him how young this woman looked. If he didn't know better, he would have thought she was a teenager and not a woman who worked in a strip club. The bruises on her face and arms pulled at something deep inside him. No woman should ever endure what this one had endured. He knew that no matter how old he got, he would never understand how men could lay their hands on a woman.

"Hi. I'm Nathaniel, Stella's son," he said as he made his way up the stairs.

"I'm Lucky. Or, at least that is what Analise keeps calling me." She gave him a weak smile that never reached her eyes.

"So, what is your real name?" He watched as the breeze ruffled through her blonde hair.

"That is the burning question of the day. I have no clue. The doctors say I have amnesia. Asad ran my prints but nothing came back under any name but Lucky."

"Wow. That has to be tough on you." Disappointment shot through him. How was he supposed to find out who killed the people he loved if the only living witness had amnesia?

"I am not sure I want to remember who I am. Analise said I worked in a gentlemen's club. Asad said I had an arrest record for prostitution. Not something I want to remember." She stood at the railing, crossed her arms over her chest and stared off into the distance.

"I am sure there are other aspects of your life that you would want to remember." He raised one eyebrow.

"I don't know. They tell me I did these things and it just feels off. Like there is no way that I could have done those things. And I can't place why I feel that way. Then there is the fact that I feel like there is something hugely important that I must remember." Taking a deep breath, she shook her head.

Moving to stand next to her at the railing, he reached out and patted the back of her hand. Instantly she jerked her hand back and her whole body went stiff.

"Sorry, I was just trying to offer comfort. I didn't mean to offend you . . ."

“No, it is not you. I seem to have this uncomfortable feeling around the men I have met today. Again, I don’t know why I feel this way. I don’t feel this way around any of the women.” Shaking her head again, she turned her face to look at him. “It is so damn frustrating.”

“I can promise you that none of the men here on the ranch would ever hurt you. I promise you are safe here. Just take your time, recover, and let your brain heal. The memories will come back in time.”

“Thank you.” She reached out and placed her hand on his chest. Her hand trembled against his chest. She snatched her hand back as if burned.

“I am going to head to the stables now. I need to get to work. I will see you around, Lucky.” Turning, he made his way down the stairs and headed for the stables.

Once inside the stables, Nathaniel stood staring into space. He tried to analyze his encounter with Lucky. If he was honest with himself, he would admit that when she touched him, he felt something.

There was something about her that made him take notice. That something was stronger when her hand touched him. She was a victim of something and in no position to be pursued by some undercover agent slash ranch hand. He knew he needed to keep his distance and planned to use the bunk house and stables to make sure he didn’t spend too much time with her.