

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Romance

Author: Franny Armstrong

When I was ten years old, I started my career by writing plays for the neighborhood kids, and acting them out. I charged them a nickel to join me in the garage, and enjoy my tales. My first character was named 'Toby', and he went on such an amazing adventure, that I fell in love with him.

Becoming a published author was easy for me, though at the time, in 2002, I couldn't talk, my memory was almost non-existent, and I slept twenty hours a day. I'd had a severe nervous breakdown, and couldn't even ask for a cup of tea. I used to read book after book, unable to do anything else. I'm one of the lucky ones, and have a family who supports me through thick and thin. During this time, I was diagnosed with Bipolar II Disorder, and fell into severe depression. Writing helped me through that rough time.

With three small children, I had to try to function through all this, and I'll admit that I was sorely lacking the ability to do so. One of my children, as an adult, told me that if I hadn't been so incapacitated, they wouldn't have grown up to be such strong people. They learned how to take care of, not only themselves, but of me as well.

Bipolar II Disorder is such a difficult illness to deal with. It took away so much from me, but now I'm on medication, and see my doctor on a regular basis. I began writing when my daughter's friend said to me, ""You read so many romance books, why don't you write them instead?""

That began me on a journey that never gets old. It gave me a voice. I started with a book called Spoiler Alert, but I've never published that one. It was so raw, allowing me to write out my feelings and purge a painful time in my life. I doubt it will ever be published, as it was all over the map. The tale took my characters through many trials, and the hero was based on my beloved brother, who died when he was twenty in an air force crash. On a search and rescue mission to find a downed helicopter in northern Quebec, Bill gave his life that others may live. He inspired me to use my imagination, and give my characters challenges to overcome that kept them on their toes.

Eventually, I began writing about the paranormal, where the heroes and heroines had special psychic abilities that they used to overcome every crisis. Some of them are cops, or private investigators, but regardless of their jobs, they succeed through all odds. The romance between the characters is so passionate that I blushed through the first few books, and wrote about loves that never die.

I once went to a romance book conference, and 'pitched' my second story, Authors Beware. The person interviewing me asked me what genre I'd like to write if I could only have one, and that got me thinking. It took me a while to learn to stick to one, but I did it! I chose paranormal romances with psychics. I love getting lost in their worlds, giving the villains an impossible story where they both battle to the end.

My heroines have a wacky sense of humor, and are powerful women who take on whatever challenges they meet with a strong mind, and a 'never give up' attitude. They might get down, but they get up again, no matter what. Who says the hero is the only one who can solve a case? My females sometimes save the males, showing that they will fight to the end for love.

Sometimes I have characters who are anywhere from the homeless to millionaires, but they still need the heroes and heroines to help them or save them. My stories always have heart where people find their purpose in life, whereas I couldn't at the time.

Over the years, I began to heal slowly. Each day was good, though I had to take it one day at a time. I ended up having two more breakdowns where I stayed in hospital, unable to function. More medicine adjustments and patience on the part of my family gave me the strength to keep on going. I now have fifteen books self-published as I've been through three publishers, who all went out of business. Never say die, is my motto now. I took the leap, and did it myself.

I'll admit that there were times I wondered why I kept writing, but I never stopped. I can't tell you the number of times I edited my own works, over, and over again. I've still found small errors or places in the story that needed more 'oomph' after numerous edits. I don't believe any story is perfect, and continue to work on some of my older tales to this day.

The book I recently finished is called HEAVEN SCENT about dog trainer, Sapphire Kavanagh, and her hunky hero, Constable Scully O'Callaghan, who meet during a takedown. Sapphire's 'borrowed' Great Dane is a 'sniffer', who can find drugs or people, and shares his love with her unconditionally. She wants to prove that Duke can be a K9 cop, and trains him for the job. Scully is hard pressed to keep his frustration in check as she and Duke work with him against his wishes. Sapphire keeps him on his toes, showing up in the worst possible places, and tackling the challenges, while Scully fights to protect her.

Sapphire has a sixth sense about things, and battles to keep Scully safe as she falls in love with him. She has a secret, and he needs to find out what it is in order to protect Duke. Scully soon learns that he can't do without her, and finds he must help her through the issues she faces.

It's a love story that keeps you on the edge of your seat, while filling your heart with undying love for the characters. I've even cried through some scenes, and continued to do so after editing it again.

Living as an author has opened up a whole world of healing for me. Now I write because I love it! There is no other joy like sitting in my chair using my laptop to create worlds. I live to write, and never quit, whether it's for my health, or my joy.

Thank you for reading.

Franny Armstrong