

Final Cut

By
Lynn Ames

FINAL CUT

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This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, businesses, companies, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.

CREDITS

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: LINDA LORENZO

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Dedication

To the brightest light shining in the night sky, my beautiful sister of choice, Sandra Moran. Our loss is Heaven's gain. Keep shining that light, sister. You inspire me every day to live life to the fullest. Sending you so much love in Heaven.

Acknowledgments

There are two aspects of every book I find hardest to write—the first is the back cover blurb (the synopsis). If I could adequately describe the novel in two or three paragraphs, why would I write a 300-page book? The second hardest piece is the acknowledgments. And here we are.

Although novel-writing is a singularly solitary pursuit, it takes a village to accomplish the finished product. Once I settle upon the story I want to tell, I make a list of experts in order to ensure that every aspect of the plot is possible and plausible. In this particular instance, *Final Cut* required a lot of research and a bevy of extraordinary experts. I consulted hacking experts; government officials; Washington insiders; former CIA operatives; FBI agents; Hollywood producers, screenwriters, and editors; corporate private jet pilots; and accountants. I would name all of these individuals, but, for obvious reasons given the list, there are some who would prefer to remain anonymous. As a result, I won't name any of my experts. They know who they are, and I extend my deepest gratitude to each of them.

As I write, I have a closed group of trusted readers who provide me with critical feedback. Two of these readers are former editors, two are among my oldest and dearest friends. As always, my thanks to Laney Roberts, Ruta Skujins, Jenni Levy, and Dana Francis for coming along for the journey and for turning the pages around so quickly.

Behind every great writer is a better editor. I am so blessed to have the best editor in the business. To Linda Lorenzo, may you always look forward to receiving my manuscripts and improving my work.

Now we get to the creation of the physical product. My extra special thanks to Toni Whitaker for creating the e-book versions of my work and for taking care of my publisher website so that the reader can buy directly from me.

Finally, last but absolutely not least, if a book is only as good as its cover, then I am in great luck, because I have the most talented, best cover designer in the universe. To my fabulously talented little sister, Ann McMan, Famous Graphic Designer, I have run out of superlatives to describe you and your work. Beyond that, the friendship I share with you and your lovely wife, Salem West, means more to me than words can express. I love my North Carolina family. You make me rich beyond measure.

And to you, my readers. Thank you for your unwavering support. Thank you for clamoring for more, and for supporting me as I strive to tell stories that are entertaining, deep, intricate, and enlightening. You rock.

CHAPTER ONE

Hey, babe. Check this out.” Katherine Kyle folded her copy of *the New York Times Book Review* section in half and held it out to her wife. “You know I always love the way the photographer has you cock your head to the side for these publicity shots.”

“Yeah, well. It keeps me from squinting into the strobe lights and highlighting my wrinkles.”

“Jamison Parker, you don’t have any wrinkles.”

“Really? What do you call these, then?” Jay pulled at the sides of her eyes.

“Those are laugh lines. That’s different.”

“You say tomato—”

The flight attendant interrupted. “Ladies and gentlemen, please make sure your seatbelts are securely fastened and your tray tables are in the upright and locked position. We’ll be closing the doors shortly for departure.”

Jay laid the newspaper in her lap and buckled her seat belt. She picked it up again and studied the quarter-page ad.

“From the pen of *New York Times* best-selling author Jamison Parker comes a tale of government intrigue and corporate greed that will leave you breathless...”

“Did you know Black Quill was doing pre-release publicity for the book?” Kate asked. “Isn’t it a little early? The book isn’t due out for another ten months.”

“I didn’t. But then, I’m usually the last to know.”

“Nice cover art.” Kate fumbled for her phone as it buzzed. “Who the heck would be texting me now?” She swiped the screen and read. “Shit.”

“Shit? That’s eloquent.”

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Kate tilted the screen so that Jay could see it.

“The Frog is on the move. Code red.”

“What does that mean?” Jay asked.

“It means Sabastien is in trouble.” Kate put on her Bluetooth and dialed a number.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we are now closing the cabin doors. It’s time for you to turn off and stow all cell phones and large electronic devices for takeoff.”

“Enright.”

“Peter? It’s Kate.”

“I see you got the text.”

“Listen, Jay and I are en route to Los Angeles, and we’re just about to take off.”

“What’s in LA?”

“We’re honorary co-chairs for the GLAAD Media Awards. What’s going on?”

“You know, the usual. All hell is breaking loose.”

“Can you tell me in five seconds or less?”

“Let’s just say he’s wanted, and not in a good way.”

“For what?”

“Hacking into Homeland Security’s servers and leaking classified data.”

“What? Sabas... would never—”

“Ma’am, you’re going to have to turn off your cell phone now.”

Kate gave an exasperated nod to the flight attendant. “I’ve got to shut down. Quickly, what do they think he leaked? And to whom?”

“Our 1989 run-in with the Commission and all of the Hyland Commission Report, and to a reporter Jay knows well.”

Kate winced. “Oh, no.”

“Ma’am?”

“Peter, I’ve got to go. I’ll call you as soon as we land.”

“Fly safe.”

Kate ended the call, powered down her phone, and dropped it in her bag.

“What’s going on?” Jay asked.

“It doesn’t make any sense.”

“What doesn’t make any sense? And why are you suddenly so pale?”

Kate waited until the roar of the engines was at its peak. Then she leaned over and whispered in Jay’s ear. “Peter says Sabastien is wanted for treason for leaking classified documents from Homeland Security.”

“What?” Jay practically screamed it, then, remembering where they were, lowered her voice to match Kate’s whisper. “Why would he do that? He’s saved their butts hundreds of times from hackers trying to get into their systems. What would his motive be?”

“It gets worse.”

“How much worse can it get?”

Kate reached out and stroked Jay’s hand.

“Kate? How much worse?”

Kate closed her eyes. Surely this couldn’t be happening. She didn’t want to tell Jay, but she knew she must. “He’s accused of stealing the sealed materials from the Commission investigation and the plot against President Hyland.”

Jay practically jumped out of her seat. “No. No, no, no.” She shrugged off Kate’s touch, buried her head in her hands, and grabbed a fistful of hair.

“Jay.”

“Oh, Kate.” When Jay looked up again, her hair was standing out at odd angles. “Who was the recipient of the leak?”

“I don’t know for sure.”

“Kate.”

“I mean it. Peter didn’t give me a name.”

Jay studied her wife. “I know that look. There’s something you’re not telling me. What is it?”

“All Peter said was that it was a reporter you knew well.”

“Oh my God! Do you realize what this means?”

“Jay, we don’t know everything yet. Let’s just wait until we land, then we can call Peter back and get more details.”

“The book...” Jay looked down in her lap, where her face gazed up at her from the ad for her upcoming novel.

“Is a *fictional* account of something that only a dozen people know about,” Kate finished.

“Knew about, you mean,” Jay said, glumly.

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“We don’t know the extent of the leak, or what the reporter did with whatever information he got.”

“Come on, Kate. If it was minor, we probably wouldn’t even know about it. The FBI would have handled it, and it already would’ve been buried by now.”

Kate stared at Jay.

“What?”

“Who are you, and what have you done with my normally sunny, optimistic wife?”

Jay heaved a sigh. “I’m sorry. You’re right.” She sat back in her seat. “But I’ve worked so hard on this book.”

“I know you have, sweetheart.”

“It’s taken me twenty-seven years to bring myself to write about what happened.”

“I know.” Kate reached out again, this time intertwining their fingers. “How about if we wait until we know more before we jump to conclusions about what this means for the book?”

Jay glanced down at her lap one more time. She let go of Kate’s hand, grabbed the folded newspaper, and stuffed it in the seat pocket in front of her. “Let’s talk about something else.”

After a moment’s silence, Kate said, “Okay, what if we focus on tonight’s event? How exciting is it going to be to meet Dara Thomas and her wife, Rebecca?”

“Hollywood’s ‘it’ couple. Dara was so gutsy, coming out at the Oscars like she did.”

“She was. Then again, standing up there accepting the award for Best Actress makes you the hottest property in town. It’s the ideal time to do something bold if you’re going to do it.”

“True. But you’ve got to give her props. She could’ve lost millions in salary and some major movie roles.”

“She could have,” Kate acknowledged. “But to me, the coolest thing is that she didn’t.”

“No, she didn’t. She went right back into production for the second Constance Darrow adaptation without batting an eyelash.”

“Good for the studio for standing by her. What’s the name of the new film again?”

“*Love Above All Else*,” Jay said. “The book was exquisite. I can’t wait to see the movie. It opens in theaters next week.”

"I'm always leery of adaptations. Somehow, they're never as good as the books on which they're based."

"Normally, I'd agree with you. But the movie version of *On the Wings of Angels* was amazing. Then again, Rebecca wrote the script. She's the world's preeminent Constance Darrow scholar. That's how she and Dara met, isn't it, on the set?"

"I think so. You know I don't pay any attention to the gossip rags."

"But it's such a beautiful love story. It's like something straight out of a romance novel."

Kate laughed. "You're a hopeless romantic."

"Takes one to know one." Jay leaned over and kissed Kate on the cheek. "Thanks."

"For what?"

"For pulling me back from the brink. That was an excellent deflection."

"Any time." Kate reclined her seat. "It's going to be a long night. How about we try to get some sleep?"



"Honey? Have you seen my black strapless bra? I could've sworn it was in this drawer."

"No need to shout," a warm, mellifluous voice hummed in Rebecca Minton Thomas's ear, as strong arms wrapped around her naked torso. "I'm right here."

Heat flowed through Rebecca's body as she responded to her wife's touch. "Mmm."

"Did you say you were looking for this?" Dara nuzzled Rebecca's neck.

Rebecca tipped her head back. "No. But it's a nice appetizer."

"Mm-hmm."

"And if you keep it up, we'll be late." Rebecca reluctantly broke the embrace.

"Spoil sport." Dara closed the open dresser drawer. "Your strapless bras and sexy panties belong in your 'high fashion' lingerie drawer." She made a show of removing the bra in

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question, along with a pair of black lace panties, from the next drawer down.

Rebecca raised an eyebrow. “I have a ‘high fashion’ lingerie drawer?” She took the bra and panties from Dara, put them on, and walked to the closet where her dress was hanging.

“You do. We have so many formal functions to attend, it only made sense to give these specialty items their own space.”

“You know that’s a little OCD, right?” Rebecca laughed and removed the little black dress from the hangar and stepped into it. “Zip me up?”

“You say OCD, I say efficient,” Dara said as she complied, then spun Rebecca around and held her at arm’s length.

“What?” Even though they’d been married for almost a year, Rebecca still marveled at the raw hunger in Dara’s eyes.

“You’re gorgeous, that’s what.”

Rebecca swallowed hard. “I bet you say that to all the girls.”

“Nope. Only to the one who owns my heart.” Dara ran her thumb over Rebecca’s bottom lip. “I love you.”

“I love you too.”

The kiss was long and lingering. By the time they separated, Rebecca was completely breathless.

Dara glanced at her watch. “Oh my God! We’ve got to get going.”

“I tried to tell you,” Rebecca said. She gave herself a last once-over in the full-length mirror. In the reflection of the glass, she watched Dara slip into her shoes. The electric blue Oscar de la Renta dress hugged her in all the right places. She blushed as Dara turned and held her gaze in the mirror.

“Why are you embarrassed?”

Rebecca shrugged. “I guess I still fret sometimes that you’ll feel like I’m objectifying you.”

Dara came over and took Rebecca’s hands. “Sweetheart, you’re the one person in the world I never worry about that with. I hope you always, always look at me just like that.”

“That’s a given.” Rebecca risked one more kiss. “Okay. Let’s go before we don’t.”

“Right.”

Together, they headed for the front door.



The limo sped down Wilshire Boulevard on its way to the Beverly Hilton. Kate and Jay had barely had time to check into their hotel and change for the awards gala before meeting the driver downstairs.

“Kate? Please.”

After almost three decades together, Kate understood the shorthand request without the need for further elaboration. She closed the privacy partition between them and the driver, affixed her Bluetooth to her ear, and called Peter. “Is he safe?” Beside her, Jay sat rigidly with a knee bobbing up and down and her hands clenched tightly in her lap. Kate reached out and put a hand on Jay’s leg to still the nervous motion, then let go.

“He’s left the building.”

“Was that an answer?”

“It’s what I have right now.”

Kate didn’t like how tense Peter sounded. It wasn’t the cryptic nature of the conversation. She was well used to his insistence on secrecy. No, there was something different in his tone, something she couldn’t quite identify. Yet.

“Does that mean you don’t know where he is?”

“How was the flight?”

Kate accepted the change in topic for what it was—either Peter didn’t have any idea where Sabastien was, or he wasn’t comfortable giving the information over the phone. It also occurred to Kate that, depending on the details of the situation, she might be better off not knowing the answer.

“The flight was smooth. Jay didn’t get much shuteye though. She’s a little preoccupied.” Again, Kate put a hand on Jay’s thigh. “Surely there must be something more you can tell me?”

“The hack was catastrophic and surgical. That’s why the Feds immediately focused on our guy. Whoever got in there was that good.”

“Does Sabas... the Frog know who did it, or how?”

“No, and it’s eating him up.”

“I can just imagine.” Kate pictured Sabastien, his fingers flying across a keyboard, smashing through virtual back doors to gain

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access to highly protected information, tracing every keystroke that preceded his. “Peter?”

“Hmm?”

“Who was the reporter?”

“I was wondering when you were going to get around to asking that. It was Niles.”

“Niles Masterson?”

Jay gasped. “That was who the hacker sent the files to? Niles? Any word—”

Kate held up a hand. “Do you know what Niles did with the information?”

“I don’t know everything yet. I’m still trying to get a handle on it, but I can tell you this much—he called the former First Lady to verify that her husband was asthmatic and that his inhaler was tampered with.”

“He called Mimi Hyland? Oh no.”

“Oh yes.”

“Niles called—”

“Give me a second, honey,” Kate said to Jay. To Peter, she said, “And you know this because...?”

“Because, after she alerted the Secret Service about a reporter for *Time* magazine knowing details of the incident that were never made public, Mrs. Hyland decided she should check with me to see if I had any idea what was going on.”

“I didn’t realize you’d remained in contact with her.”

“Do you remember last June, at President Hyland’s funeral, when she asked me to stay behind for a minute?”

“Yes.”

“She told me she wanted to let go of the former President’s Secret Service detail. She didn’t feel comfortable with the taxpayers footing the bill for her safety. So she asked me if she could keep in touch with me. She asked if I would watch out for her. She said that she trusted me because her husband trusted me and because we had a history.”

“That’s nice.”

“We don’t talk often, but when something comes up and she thinks I can be helpful, she calls.”

“Is that the reason that our guy managed to stay a step ahead?”

“Katherine Kyle, I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Of course you don’t. Anything else you want to share?”

“That’s all I’ve got right now.”

“You’ll keep us posted?”

“Of course.”

“Thanks. See you when we get back.” Just as Kate ended the call, Jay’s cell phone rang.

“Oh my God! Not already.”

“Who is it?”

“My editor at Black Quill.” Jay answered the call. “Jamison Parker.” She listened for a minute.

“Yes, I know who Niles is. He was my fact-checking intern at *Time* before I left. I was the one who got him a job on staff as a reporter.” Jay listened some more.

“He’s asking you to verify that the details of my plot are based on real incidents that are still classified?” After another second, Jay asked, “What did you tell him?” Jay went pale underneath her makeup. “No, I understand. Thanks for the heads up.” She cleared her throat. “Well, I’m in Los Angeles right now at a function. I can sit down with you and the publisher when I get back in a few days.”

Jay turned away to stare out the window. “Yes. Two o’clock Thursday afternoon. I’ll be there. Bye.” She put the phone down on the seat and faced Kate. “That didn’t take long.”

“What did he say?”

“In light of the questions being asked, the publisher is being advised by counsel to put the book on hold until they can do more fact gathering to ensure that I haven’t revealed any state secrets.”

“You’re kidding me?”

“I wish.” Jay opened her clutch and stuffed the phone inside. “What did Peter say?”

“He said that Niles called Mimi Hyland to ask about the asthma inhaler. And that Mrs. Hyland called the Secret Service to report it. Then she called Peter to ask him about it. That’s how Sabastien managed to disappear before the Feds showed up at his door.”

“Peter alerted him.”

“Yes. We all know Sabastien didn’t do this. But someone with a similar skill set did.”

“And Sabastien is our best hope to figure out who that someone is.”

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“Exactly.”

“And he can’t do that if he’s locked up somewhere.” Jay shook her head. “Kate, what am I going to do?”

Just as she was about to answer, the limo pulled up in front of the Beverly Hilton. Reporters and television cameras lined a red carpet. Kate took Jay’s hand. “For right now, you’re going to smile for the cameras and we’re going to get through tonight.”

“What if someone asks me a question on the way in?”

Kate considered. “I doubt word would’ve spread that quickly. But if someone does ask something, just act like you don’t hear the question and keep moving.”

The limo driver opened the door and Kate squeezed Jay’s hand. “We’ve got this, sweetheart.” She looked deeply into her wife’s eyes. “Ready?”

“As I’ll ever be.”

About the Author

Lynn Ames is the best-selling author of *The Price of Fame*, *The Cost of Commitment*, *The Value of Valor*, *One ~ Love*, *Heartsong*, *Eyes on the Stars*, *Beyond Instinct*, *Above Reproach*, *All That Lies Within*, *Bright Lights of Summer*, *Final Cut*, and one of five authors of the collection *Outsiders*. She also is the writer/director/producer of the history-making documentary, “Extra Innings: The Real Story Behind the Bright Lights of Summer.” This historically important documentary chronicles, for the first time ever in her own words, the real-life story of Hall-of-Famer Dot Wilkinson and the heyday of women’s softball.

Lynn’s fiction has garnered her a multitude of awards and honors, including four Goldie awards, the coveted Ann Bannon Popular Fiction Award (for *All That Lies Within*), and the Arizona Book Award for Best Gay/Lesbian book. In addition to the Ann Bannon Award, her contemporary romance *All That Lies Within*, was a Lambda Literary Award (Lammy) Finalist and winner of a Rainbow Award for Lesbian Romance and was additionally honored as one of the top ten lesbian books overall of 2013.

Ms. Ames is the founder of Phoenix Rising Press (www.phoenixrisingpress.com). She is also a former press secretary to the New York state senate minority leader and spokesperson for the nation’s third-largest prison system. For more than half a decade, she was an award-winning broadcast journalist. She has been editor of a critically acclaimed national magazine and is a nationally recognized speaker and public relations professional with a particular expertise in image, crisis communications planning, and crisis management.

For additional information please visit her website at www.lynnames.com, or e-mail her at lynnames@lynnames.com.

Other Books in Print by Lynn Ames

Stand-Alone Romances

Bright Lights of Summer

ISBN: 978-1-936429-10-3

It's March, 1941. Captain America appears in a comic book for the very first time. New York City receives 18.1 inches of snow, its 3rd largest snowfall in history. In Holland, the Nazi occupiers forbid Jews to own businesses. In Poland, Heinrich Himmler inspects Auschwitz. World War II is raging in Europe, but America has yet to enter the fray.

And in Phoenix, Arizona, a 16-year-old scrap of a girl named Theodora "Dizzy" Hosler, takes the field to try out for the World Champion P.B.S.W. Ramblers softball team.

Set against the backdrop of perhaps the most dramatic time in US history, comes the story of Diz and Frannie, two women fueled by an unquenchable passion for the game of softball and feelings for each other that go far beyond the bounds of friendship. Will their love for the game bring them closer together or tear them apart?

All That Lies Within

ISBN: 978-1-936429-06-6

How far would you go to hide who you really are inside? And what do you do when you find the one person from whom hiding your true self isn't an option?

Glamorous movie star Dara Thomas has it all—an Oscar nomination, dozens of magazine covers proclaiming her the sexiest woman alive, and people of both sexes clamoring for her attention. She also has a carefully guarded secret life. As Constance Darrow, Dara writes Pulitzer Prize-winning fiction, an outlet that allows her to be so much more than just a pretty face.

Rebecca Minton is a professor of American Literature in love with the work of the mysterious, reclusive author Constance Darrow, with whom she strikes up a correspondence. A chance phrase in a letter leads her to a startling conclusion about the author.

What happens next will change the course of both of their lives forever.

Eyes on the Stars

ISBN: 978-1-936429-00-4

Jessie Keaton and Claudia Sherwood were as different as night and day. But when their nation needed experienced female pilots, their reactions were identical: heed the call. In early 1943, the two women joined the Women Airforce Service Pilots—WASP—and reported to Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas, where they promptly fell head-over-heels in love.

The life of a WASP was often perilous by definition. Being two women in love added another layer of complication entirely, leading to ostracism and worse. Like many others, Jessie and Claudia hid their relationship, going on dates with men to avert suspicion. The ruse worked well until one seemingly innocent afternoon ruined everything.

Two lives tragically altered. Two hearts ripped apart. And a second chance more than fifty years in the making.

From the airfields of World War II, to the East Room of the Obama White House, follow the lives of two extraordinary women whose love transcends time and place.

Heartsong

ISBN: 978-0-9840521-3-4

After three years spent mourning the death of her partner in a tragic climbing accident, Danica Warren has re-emerged in the public eye. With a best-selling memoir, a blockbuster movie about her heroic efforts to save three other climbers, and a successful career on the motivational speaking circuit, Danica has convinced herself that her life can be full without love.

When Chase Crosley walks into Danica's field of vision everything changes. Danica is suddenly faced with questions she's never pondered.

Is there really one love that transcends all concepts of space and time? One great love that joins two hearts so that they beat as one? One moment of recognition when twin flames join and burn together?

Will Danica and Chase be able to overcome the barriers standing between them and find forever? And can that love be sustained, even in the face of cruel circumstances and fate?

One ~ Love, (formerly The Flip Side of Desire)

ISBN: 978-0-9840521-2-7

Trystan Lightfoot allowed herself to love once in her life; the experience broke her heart and strengthened her resolve never to fall in love again. At forty, however, she still longs for the comfort of a woman's arms. She finds temporary solace in meaningless, albeit adventuresome encounters, burying her pain and her emotions deep inside where no one can reach. No one, that is, until she meets C.J. Winslow.

C.J. Winslow is the model-pretty-but-aging professional tennis star the Women's Tennis Federation is counting on to dispel the image that all great female tennis players are lesbians. And her lesbianism isn't the only secret she's hiding. A traumatic event from her childhood is taking its toll both on and off the court.

Together Trystan and C.J. must find a way beyond their pasts to discover lasting love.

The Kate and Jay Series

The Price of Fame

ISBN: 978-0-9840521-4-1

When local television news anchor Katherine Kyle is thrust into the national spotlight, it sets in motion a chain of events that will change her life forever. Jamison "Jay" Parker is an intensely career-driven *Time* magazine reporter. The first time she saw Kate, she fell in love. The last time she saw her, Kate was rescuing her. That was five years ago, and she never expected to see her again. Then circumstances and an assignment bring them back together.

Kate and Jay's lives intertwine, leading them on a journey to love and happiness, until fate and fame threaten to tear them apart. What is the price of fame? For Kate, the cost just might be everything. For Jay, it could be the other half of her soul.

The Cost of Commitment

ISBN: 978-0-9840521-5-8

Kate and Jay want nothing more than to focus on their love. But as Kate settles into a new profession, she and Jay are caught in the middle of a deadly scheme and find themselves pawns in a larger game in which the stakes are nothing less than control of the country.

In her novel of corruption, greed, romance, and danger, Lynn Ames takes us on an unforgettable journey of harrowing conspiracy—and establishes herself as a mistress of suspense.

The Cost of Commitment—it could be everything...

The Value of Valor

ISBN: 978-0-9840521-6-5

Katherine Kyle is the press secretary to the president of the United States. Her lover, Jamison Parker, is a respected writer for Time magazine. Separated by unthinkable tragedy, the two must struggle to survive against impossible odds...

A powerful, shadowy organization wants to advance its own global agenda. To succeed, the president must be eliminated. Only one person knows the truth and can put a stop to the scheme.

It will take every ounce of courage and strength Kate possesses to stay alive long enough to expose the plot. Meanwhile, Jay must cheat death and race across continents to be by her lover's side...

This hair-raising thriller will grip you from the start and won't let you go until the ride is over.

The Value of Valor—it's priceless.

The Mission: Classified Series

Beyond Instinct – Book One in the Mission: Classified Series

ISBN: 978-1-936429-02-8

Vaughn Elliott is a member of the State Department's Diplomatic Security Force. Someone high up in the United States government has pulled rank, hand-selecting her to oversee security for a visit by congressional VIPs to the West African nation of Mali. The question is, who picked her for the job and why?

Sage McNally, a career diplomat, is the political officer at the US Embassy in Mali. As control officer for the congressional visit, she is tasked to brief Vaughn regarding the political climate in the region.

The two women are instantly attracted to each other and share a wild night of passion. The next morning, Sage disappears while running, leaving behind signs of a scuffle. Why was Sage taken and by whom? Where is she being held?

Vaughn's attempts to get answers are thwarted at every turn. Even Sage does not know why she's been targeted.

Independently, Sage and Vaughn struggle to make sense of the seemingly senseless. By the time each of them figures it out, it could be too late for Sage.

As the clock ticks inexorably toward the congressional visit, the stakes get even higher, and Vaughn is faced with unspeakable choices. Her decisions will make the difference between life and death. Will she choose duty or her own code of honor?

Above Reproach – Book Two in the Mission: Classified Series

ISBN: 978-1-936429-04-2

Sedona Ramos is a dedicated public servant. Fluent in three languages, with looks that allow her to pass for Hispanic, Native American, or Middle Eastern, she is a valuable asset to the super-secret National Security Agency. When she accidentally stumbles upon a mysterious series of satellite images revealing activity at a shuttered nuclear facility in war-torn Iraq, somebody wants her dead.

With danger lurking at every turn and not knowing who among her colleagues might be involved, Sedona risks her life to get the information to the one person she can trust—the president.

The implications of Sedona's discovery are clear and quite possibly catastrophic. Potential suspects include foreign terrorists, high-ranking Cabinet members, and assorted others. Whomever the president picks for this mission must be above reproach.

Vaughn Elliott is enjoying her self-imposed isolation on a remote island, content to live in quiet anonymity. But when old friend Katherine Kyle brings an urgent SOS from the president of the United States, duty trumps comfort.

Time is of the essence. Vaughn, Sedona, and a hand-picked team of ex-operatives and specialists must figure out what's really going on outside Baghdad, stop it, and unmask the forces behind the plot. If they fail at any point along the way, it could mean the loss of millions of lives.

Will Vaughn and company unravel the mysteries in time? The trail of clues stretches from the Middle East to Washington. The list of people who want to kill them is long. And the stakes have never been higher...

Anthology Collections

Outsiders

ISBN: 978-0-979-92545-0

What happens when you take five beloved, powerhouse authors, each with a unique voice and style, give them one word to work with, and put them between the sheets together, no holds barred?

Magic!!

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Specialty Books - Humor

Digging For Home, By Parker & Dixie Ames (discoverable under Lynn Ames because these canine kids are too young to cash a royalty check)

ISBN: 978-1-936429-08-0

We've all done it—sat there and wondered what our canine companions were thinking while staring at the television with us during a ball game. Ponder no more! Irrepressible golden retrievers Parker and Dixie Ames have made it their mission to take you inside the dugout for a dog's-eye view of the innings and outings of the great game of softball. Assisted by their Siberian husky pal Lucy McMan-West, an obliging cast of canine cohorts, a chicken, a turtle, and a llama named LaRue, the dynamic duo reminds us that softball is not about winning or losing—it's about finding the shortest route to the concession stand.

Filled with quirky explanations and colorful photo illustrations, *Digging for Home* is a tasty ballpark treat that's packed with heart, hilarity, and plenty of doggone good fun.

All Lynn Ames books are available through www.lynnames.com, from your favorite local bookstore, or through other online venues.

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