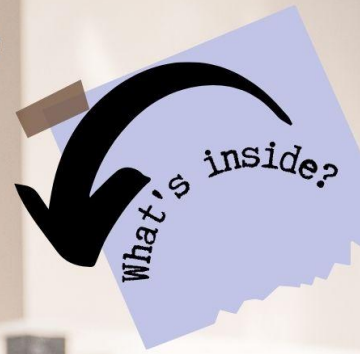
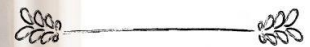


# The Book Nerds' Press

April 2021 edition



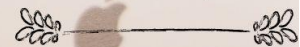
Our most-  
anticipated 2021  
releases p. 14



"More Than Just  
a Stone" Flash  
Fiction piece by  
Issabelle Perry  
p. 9



Interview with  
Amazon  
bestselling  
author Grace A.  
Johnson p. 5



"My Crazy  
Ideas" Article  
from Jane p. 16

## Table of Contents:

About the Book Nerds' Press -----	3
Featured Blog of the Month: Interview with Blogger and Author Grace A. Johnson -----	5
“More than Just a Stone” by Issabelle Perry -----	9
Our Most Anticipated 2021 Releases -----	14
My Crazy Ideas by Jane -----	16
Top Six Books of the Month -----	19
Events Page -----	22
Author Bios -----	25



## About the Book Nerds' Press

A reflection from Jane

*The Book Nerds' Press* is for the average, the avid, and the I-only-read-the-right-type-of-book reader. We're here to help you find great books and even greater authors. And trust me, (this is for the I-only-read-the-right-type-of-book- reader) there's ALWAYS a book out there that's gonna make you fangirl about it for years. I know from personal experience that you just have to keep looking and eventually you'll have all your friends rolling their eyes everytime you bring it up.

Let's see, I should probably say something about how we came up with the idea for *The Books Nerds Press*, or something official-looking. But I'm not really good at that sorta stuff so let's try something different. . .

I would say reading is almost all imagination, wouldn't you? I mean, when you read a good book and really get into it, it's like you're watching a movie in your mind. So TBNP is here to help you find those books.

Those books with the snarky characters we all know and love.

Those books with the epic plot twists that make you say "WHAT!?" when you read them.

Those books that make you tear up or even sob over the death of a character.

Books are proof that words have power! They can make you want to clobber the MC for some VERY poor choice they just made, they can make you cry your eyes out when your favorite character dies, they- well, I guess you probably get it by now. But the point is, we're here to give you the resources you need to find that perfect I'm-gonna-hug-the-author book.

And now that I've prattled on enough to give a slightly sufficient about-page, I think I can call it good. Hopefully. Because I can't think of anything else to put in it.

*Anyway*, enjoy the rest of this magazine! And go read a book! I promise you won't regret it!





## Featured Blog of the Month: Interview with Blogger and Author Grace A. Johnson

By Jane and Issabelle

The Book Nerds' Press had the privilege of interviewing the talented author and positive blogger, Grace A. Johnson, this month. We were so honored to be able to ask her a few questions about her favorite novels, blogging journey, and writing highlights. Grace A. Johnson is the teenage Amazon bestselling indie author of *Held Captive*, *Prisoner at Heart*, and multiple novellas and short stories. You can find her blog, Gabbing with Grace, at [graceajohnson.com](http://graceajohnson.com)

**Q. What's your favorite genre to read? Is it the same, or a different genre than you like to write in?**

A. It's the same! I absolutely *adore* historical romance, and I have a soft spot for a well-done fantasy. Both are pretty broad genres that can encompass an array of stories, and I like the variety as both a reader and a writer!

**Q. Who's your favorite author?**

A. Do I have to pick *one*? Haha! I think my top favorites are Julie Lessman, Roseanna M. White, Karen Witemeyer, Tamara Leigh, Sara Ella, and--a recent addition--Jane Austen!

**Q. What do you look for in a good book?**

A. I look for a lot of things, honestly, but one above all--strong characters. If I can connect with the character and get to know them on a deep level, I can overlook a lacking plot, poor grammar, and inconsistencies. What really defines a strong character, to me, is how realistic and relatable they are (regardless of our differences) and their voice. I strive to make each character unique and real in my books, and it delights my heart when I read characters with the same strength!

**Q. Do you have a book you're fangirling (that's totally a word) over right now?**

A. YES! I am always and evermore fangirling over Sara Ella's *Unblemished* trilogy--particularly the second book, *Unraveling*, and even more specifically, a certain character named Ky!

A more recent book would *definitely* be *Pride and Prejudice*. I was persuaded (that's an Austen pun, by the way) by my friends to give it a go, even though I've never considered myself an Austen fan. Y'ALL, P&P is SPECTACULAR! If you haven't read it yet, you *need* to as soon as possible! And Darcy? \*swoons\*

**Q. Do you have a favorite piece of fan art that you've made for a book? (Graphics, covers, drawings, etc.)**

A. Ooh...I'm not a very good artist, so I have yet to try my hand at any drawings or illustrations. However, I have done several covers for books I am super excited about! Some by request, others simply because I love the story so much! (I'm looking at you, *Heir to His Crown*!)

I *will* be making some graphics for *Unblemished* as soon as I acquire some of that ever elusive spare time!

**Q. How long does it take you to finish writing a novel on average?**

A. Average? Six months. Recently? Two years.

I have a pretty good track record--both *Held Captive* and *Prisoner at Heart* took me about six months to write, start to finish (they're 74k and 95k, respectively). My novella, *The Gift of Her Heart*, is 18k and took about two weeks. And I can write a short story in a day or two, depending on the exact length.

But my current novel, *Bound and Determined*, has been in the works for a little over a year, and I'm still not done! I hope to wrap up sometime this summer with a total of 195k, but only time will tell!

**Q. What has been your most memorable writing accomplishment?**

A. My most memorable? Oy, probably publishing *Held Captive* at the age of 13! Not to say that it's worth publishing, but it was definitely an amazing accomplishment! Or, to sum my career up as one accomplishment, self-publishing seven books in two years!

Next to that would be sticking with a book for 140k (the current word count of *Bound and Determined*) and making Amazon's bestseller's list for Christian historical romance! *Held Captive* was #6 for, like, two days, but it still counts!

**Q. Why did you start up your blog and have there been any challenges you've faced? If so, how did you overcome them?**

A. Well, my blog actually started on Goodreads, and I posted about my [favorite books of 2019](#). As time went on, whenever I thought of something interesting, I posted it there. Maybe once a month or every couple weeks, I guess, until I started a series about *Held Captive*'s writing process and, about a week later, decided to create a website.

Once I started up an "official" blog, I knew I had to start posting more, and so Gabbing with Grace just happened! I love sharing about my inner weirdness, favorite books, and writing progress!

Challenges? Hmm...probably being overwhelmed by making myself post three to five times a week! But that was all on me, and since then I've cleaned up my schedule and loosened up. Otherwise, it has been so much fun!

**Q. What's the last book you've read and what were your thoughts on it?**

A. The last book I read (as in, the first one I finished out of the seven I'm reading at once) was [When You Found Me](#) by Anna Augustine. A lot of my friends (or friends' friends) on Goodreads were saying amazing things about the novella collection, so I checked it out, saw that it was indie-published by a young Christian writer, and then downloaded it on KU!

It had a lot of spelling and grammar errors, but overall, I think the writing was really strong and the romances were so cute! I really enjoyed reading it!

**Q. What would you say is your interesting writing quirk?**

A. Hmm...I don't guess I've ever thought about that! I'm not sure what qualifies as a writing quirk, but I do know there is one thing I do differently from almost every writer.

I don't draft. Like, at all. I started out knowing nothing about writing, so I didn't know drafting existed until, um, a year or two ago, maybe? So I've been writing all this time just *writing*. As a perfectionist, it's difficult for me to speed write and not pay close attention to every little detail, so I'm not complaining about my process. But it is definitely something that sets me apart. I don't really think I have any quirks, per se.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

*Grace A. Johnson is a teenage Christian fiction authoress, book reviewer, and avid reader. She lives in beautiful (but humid) South Georgia, surrounded by farmland and forestry, with her parents and six younger siblings. She has written four novels, three of which are published, and a smattering of short stories and novellas, which you can find on Amazon. She's also a homeschooler who loves learning about history, linguistics, art, and the world around her. You can find her on Goodreads, Pinterest, BookBub, or blogging on her website. Join her for a virtual cup of tea and a free short story when you sign up for her e-newsletter!*



## "More Than Just a Stone"

A flash fiction story by Issabelle M. Perry

I ran, ignoring the pleading of my throat for water. The heat of summer seeped into my skin. Though the wind was a relief, my bones ached and were ready to give out. But nothing on this earth could stop me. And nothing was fast enough to catch me.

Except my past.

I could still remember the day my dad gave me the item clutched tightly into my hand.

*"What is it?" I asked.*

*"Something I acquired on my travels."*

There was a fallen tree in the path I raced down, trying to prevent me from my trek. Too much determination pulsed through me that it wouldn't allow anything to hinder my path and mission. Scampering over the log, I continued my dash through the forest. Low tree branches slapped my face, but my feet kept moving. One in front of the other.

*"Jackie, when I first found this, I didn't know what to think of it or the legend that followed."* Dad's strong voice broke through my hazy memory of that day.

Tears pushed past my eyes where they had been safely hidden for the past year. A year I spent searching for the answer to Dad's legend.

*"What is the legend?" I questioned.*

His gaze had faded off to another day, another life. For years, I wanted to know what filled his thoughts. What did he keep from me? But that was until I understood there was always a reason for someone's secrets.



*"It is said there would be one who would rise up and find what was lost. This object will guide them."*

Dad's words made no sense then, and I was yet to discover its meaning now. Still I pressed forward. Bursting through a clearing, I realized how far I had come. My home and former life was so far away, even the memory felt ancient.

I found myself on the edge of a cliff and peered at the waters below. The rushing waves resounded through my mind and rang through my eardrums. The wind weaved out every past thought of legends and mysterious clues.

It was only an illusion.

*"I'll be back in a year, just keep searching for the answer." The urgency in Dad's eyes at the time made my heart race. "When I'm back, we can share what we've found."*

But his promise was broken. Dad didn't come back -- he never would. My world felt like it was twisting and turning upside down. I couldn't stop it and wanted to yell just to hear my own voice. If my throat wasn't so dry and the salty air wasn't suffocating me, I might've done just that.

However, I felt the weight of the item Dad had given me gripped in my fist. And the reminder of the task I had to complete weighed heavy on my shoulders. Slowly, I uncurled my fingers and the item glared at me. It was just a blueish rock. Yet it was the most important thing my hands had ever held.

Mom told me to forget the legend when she thought I was stressing because I hadn't found anything. It was really because I had found something.

And then there were Dad's final words to me. *"Anytime a mountain falls onto your path, find a way to climb it."*

The mountain the stone brought was unclimbable. I wanted it gone from me. As far as the horizon rolling out before me.

Leave it alone, it's nothing, my mind shouted.



The  
item Dad had given me  
was still gripped in my  
fist. It was just a  
blueish rock.

Yet it was the most  
important thing my  
hands had ever  
held.

I shut my eyes and tried to push the memories, the questions, the worries from my thoughts. A scream burst from my lips, and without another thought, I hurled the rock over the cliff. A faint plop reached my ears as the rock hit the emerald waters. My mind raced in circles as the realization of what I

had done hit me. Sweat gathered on my palms and at the nape of my neck.

My heart sank. What had I done? I thought of my dad and how I had failed him. So quickly. In just a moment, I had made the biggest mistake of my life.

But then a greenish light escaped from the waters for a brief second, and I realized it was worse than I had thought.

There was only one choice left for me to make. The cliff wasn't so high, the water looked deep enough. Without another thought, I raced forward until my feet failed to find land. As my body tumbled to the roaring ocean below, I knew I was ready for the next page in my journey.

2ND IMAGE CREDIT: Graphic image designed by [Mahitha](#).





# WE BOOK NERDS HAVE TO STICK TOGETHER





## Our most anticipated 2021 releases

By Jane and Issabelle

Books are awesome no matter what year they came out, but there's just something special about walking to the mailbox and seeing that book-sized package with that book you've been waiting for. And that feeling when you open the box and see the shiny new cover? That's one of the best feelings in the world. So here are some of our books we're anticipating for this year. Enjoy!

Jane's most anticipated books:

- Keeper Of The Lost Cities Unknown by Shannon Messenger (book nine in the KOTLC Series)- **November, 2021** (no official date yet.)
- The Shattered Castle by Jennifer A. Nielsen (book five of the Ascendance Series)- **October 19, 2021**
- Bear Bottom by Stuart Gibbs (book seven in the FunJungle Series)- **May 11, 2021**
- Spy School At Sea by Stuart Gibbs (book nine in the Spy School Series)- **August 31, 2021**
- The Spy Master's Scheme: Glass And Steel by C. J. Archer (book eleven in the Glass And Steele Series) - **September 7, 2021**

- Eyes Of The Forest by April Henry- **August 24, 2021**



Issabelle's most anticipated books:

- The Shattered Castle by Jennifer A. Nielsen (book five of the Ascendance Series) - **October 19, 2021** (Yes, I know that book has already been mentioned, but this series is really good and we both HIGHLY recommend it!)
- Castle of Refuge by Melanie Dickerson (book two in A Dericott Tale) - **June 1, 2021**
- Bound and Determined by Grace A. Johnson - **no release date set yet**
- Sunkissed by Kasie West - **May 4, 2021**
- Cabin Girl by E. G. Bella - **early 2021**
- The Existence of Bea Pearl by Candice Marley Conner - **June 15, 2021** (Note: I don't know the content yet in this book since this is the author's debut, so don't assume that it is clean or if I will ever read it. It's one I'd like to read, but I'll have to wait until more after the release date to know what kind of content there might be before deciding if I will read it.)



## My Crazy Writing Ideas

By Jane

As an Author and avid reader, I have a very overactive imagination. And with an overactive imagination comes some pretty crazy ideas so I have a notebook to keep track of all of them. (Not sure it really helps, but hey, at least they're not all trapped in my head, right?)



So for today I thought I would go through my “Story Idea” notebook and share with you some of the most ridiculous ones and the inspiration behind them.

Buckle in and I hope you enjoy it!!

### **Idea 1.**

The first one in the notebook, (and the first one in this list) was about a flamingo named Perry. Here's what's written on the page:

“A flamingo named Perry has to cross the salt flat but gets side tracked with some friends and they go on a daring adventure”

Yeah, so there's not much to that one and I never did any in depth plotting for it. (which, let's be honest, was probably for the best)

The inspiration was from a documentary I was watching on Netflix about birds and I thought that it would be neat to make a story about. I still might, But maybe without the whole the-main-characters-are-flamingos thing.

### **Idea 2.**

This is the fifth idea in the notebook and I'm still kinda experimenting with the idea, but it needs some serious work.

**"Librarians vs. authors**

**The librarians have a secret code and are actually a spy agency**

**The authors are the villains."**

Like I said, it needs some serious work, and the ending of that "The authors are the villains" was just, wow. I don't think I could have possibly gotten any more creative with that. In the notebook the writing kind of trails off so I'm guessing I had something else to add but didn't.

The inspiration for this one was that me and Issabelle were talking about how authors can do some pretty evil things to our characters and that made me think, "what if the authors actually were the bad guys?" I mean, we're always coming up with these evil plots so what's to say we wouldn't come up with one that actually worked?

### **Idea 3.**

Book idea fifteen is a relatively recent one, and. . . well, I'll let you read it yourself.



"Its bring-your-child-to-work-day and a boy doesn't like his dad's job but has to sit through it anyway. His dad paints the lines on the road. He's been watching it for twenty minutes but it feels like an hour, when all-of-a-sudden the paint changes from yellow to blue."

That's supposed to go on to say that the paint on the roads have been changing color all over the world and it's connected to a world domination plot. I never figured out who the protagonist would be though so I don't know where I really would have gone with this story.

The inspiration for this one kind of came from *Go Teen Writers: Write Your Novel*. I was reading a chapter in it called "how many story ideas can you come up with in a week?" and it said to just look around and try to find inspiration from ANYTHING. And since we were driving to go get groceries, I was looking at the lines on the road and the idea started piecing together.

And I think that pretty much wraps this up! I hope you enjoyed reading through some of my crazy ideas. I had a lot of fun going down memory lane and getting to go through my notebook.



## Top Six Books of the Month

by Jane and Issabelle

As any avid reader knows, choosing ONE favorite book is *impossible*. So we decided to have six book picks for every month. (Because otherwise we would be here for a VERY long time.) We've also decided to make this a game. We have each chosen three of the books you're about to see. Your job is to figure out who chose what book. Good Luck!

### 1. *The Girl Of Fire And Thorns* by Rae Carson

Eisa is the chosen one but she's not sure why. At sixteen years of age she's married to a dashing king who doesn't want to announce the marriage to his people. And with a war brewing with invierne, the next door neighbor, Elisa is expected to help with her GodStone. But she doesn't know how. This book is filled with so many good plot twists and engaging characters. It was very well written and will have you reading for hours. Once you pick the book up you'll never want to put it down.

### 2. *Rebel Spy* by Veronica Rossi

Frannie Tasker has always felt at home in Grand Bahama Island. But when her mother dies and her stepfather shows his true colors, she knows she must escape. And when that opportunity arrives, Frannie knows she won't hesitate to take it.

But when it finally does, in the shape of a dead woman floating in the water after a storm, Frannie makes split second decisions and becomes Miss Emmeline Coates whose father was killed in the

shipwreck from the night before. Frannie will have you wrapped up in this adventure that I say is one of the best historical fiction books ever.

3. *Cloak Of The Light* by Chuck Black

Drew Carter's whole life is filled with tragedy, but things only get worse when an accident happens that leaves Drew Carter blind. However, one day he miraculously regains his sight except now he can see invaders that no one else can. This book (and the series to follow) was so good. I loved how Black weaves elements of the spiritual battle in an amazing, action-packed story. Drew and Sydeny were so relatable and fun to read about. I was rooting for Drew from the moment I read chapter one. I've always been a fan of anything Chuck Black writes and this series does not disappoint!

4. *The Watchmaker's Daughter* by C. J. Archer

India Steele is good with watches. Just as her father was. But when her father dies, the shop that should have been left to her, is taken by her doublecrossing fiancé. She needs to find work. But all the other watchmakers won't take her on. So when the American Mr. Glass hires her to help him find a certain watchmaker, she jumps at the chance. But soon she thinks she might have jumped too fast. There is an American outlaw in London calling himself the Dark Rider. Is the Dark Rider Mr. Glass? Should she report him to the police? But can she betray him after he saved her life. This jaw dropping mystery will have you following leads and making a list of possible suspects. Follow India Steele on this great adventure and find the answer to the questions.

5. *Words On Fire* by Jennifer A. Nielsen

Audra is living in Russian-occupied Lithuania in 1893 when her parents are one day arrested for being involved in something Audra doesn't know. To have any hope of rescuing her parents, Audra must join the book smugglers and embark on dangerous and unknown paths. This book was so beautiful. I read it in three days and when I had finished, I just wanted to sit and think about all that had happened. The plot was very well paced and kept me clinging for the next word, sentence, and chapter. However, my favorite parts were the characters, Audra especially. Her character arc was so real, raw, and beautiful it warmed my heart and made me want to go through whatever journeys she faced. And the ending was just amazing and almost made me cry happy



tears. I love it when a story clings to my heart and makes me want to cry, but it's even better when I want to cry because I am so happy. Those are the kind of stories that stay with you.

## 6. *Fawkes* by Nadine Brandes

Thomas Fawkes has caught the Stone Plague spreading through 17th century England and is turning to stone. Now his only hope is to join his father in a treasonous plot to blow up parliament. I, in one word, adore this story. The characters, plot, message, world, everything was so gorgeous and well developed. This story just grabbed my heart and I couldn't help but soak in every single word. And Thomas' character arc was just so well-done. This story was amazing and left me in awe and wonder days after ending it. I recommend it to anyone who is looking for a story to tug at their heart or maybe wanting a fantastical take on the Gunpowder Plot of 1605!



Answers,

Janes books: 4, 5, 1

Issabelles books: 0, 2, 3



## Events Page

By Jane and Issabelle

One of the best places to get writing advice is from an author. The kind of author who's been-there-done-that. So here are some of our favorite authors who are doing webinars and get together with other authors. Enjoy!!

### Webinars

1. “Epic Book Chat- Jennifer A. Nielsen and Joanne Levy” on 4/15/21 The link below should take you to a blog post explaining the details.
2. Teen Author Boot Camp has a monthly webinar on the first Wednesday of each month with a different author/authors. Even though it's already passed for this month, we can still look forward to the next one. The link below will take you to where you can watch it.

<https://jennielsen.com/archives/3733>

<https://www.teenauthorbootcamp.net/webinar-series>

### Writing Contests

1. Reedsy has a weekly short story writing contest where it'll put out five prompts every Friday. Jane has participated in this one a few times, and she's really enjoyed it. We would totally recommend it. The link below will take you to the weekly prompts.

[https://blog.reedsy.com/creative-writing-prompts/?utm\\_source=blog&utm\\_medium=contests&utm\\_campaign=writingcontests](https://blog.reedsy.com/creative-writing-prompts/?utm_source=blog&utm_medium=contests&utm_campaign=writingcontests)

2. This one sounded super neat and like it would be something new. So if you're looking for a twist on writing contests we definitely recommend this one.

<https://gohavok.com/submission-guidelines/upcoming-themes/>

3. This is Jane's resource for finding writing contests. So if you're wanting to find a writing contest that's just right for you check out this list.

<https://blog.reedsy.com/writing-contests/>



(Quote taken from *The Captive Kingdom* by Jennifer A. Nielsen. Made by Jane.)

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

**Jane** is a lover of music, reading, and writing. When she's not diving into a new book or trying out new music, she likes to go on walks in the trees with her dog Milly and hoping she'll find a mythical creature while on the walk. Her current fangirl books are *Keeper Of The Lost Cities* by Shannon Messenger, And *The Mapmaker's Apprentice* by C. J. Archer. (Books she definitely recommends to anyone needing an exciting read.) Jane loves doing anything with friends or family and prefers working in a group to working alone, unless it's writing, then she prefers silence. She has submitted a short story to a magazine and is waiting on pins and needles to hear back if she won or not. She is usually introverted, but if you get her in her comfort zone she could talk to you for hours. She's never completed a novel yet, but she's hoping to change that soon with her new idea that's going to remain a mystery for now. You know, just for the sake of having you wonder about what it is.

**Issabelle Perry** is an ENFP, slightly crazy, published teen author of YA fantasy. On the rare occasion when she's not pursuing her next novel, she enjoys reading, blogging, drawing, and searching for Narnia in her wardrobe. She is a die-hard fan of *The Lord of the Rings* by J. R. R. Tolkien, *The False Prince* by Jennifer A. Nielsen, and really anything that has snarky, mysterious characters in it. Issabelle is a co-founder of Teen Writers' Nook, a website devoted to motivating and supporting teen authors, and *The Book Nerds' Press*, an online magazine focused on all things bookish! Her short story, "Fairly Impish," was featured in Owl Hollow Press's *Change the World: All-Teen Anthology*. What she's probably doing right now is either fangirling about her favorite books to random people or scanning the pantries for chocolate. You can find her online at [teenwritersnook.com](http://teenwritersnook.com) or on her personal site, [intomywritingjourney.wordpress.com](http://intomywritingjourney.wordpress.com).

Credit: Unless otherwise stated all images were found through Pexels.

Do not use or reproduce any of The Book Nerd's Press articles unless given specific permission from the author(s).