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## From the Editor

Hello and Happy Friday to you all!

There are lots of new releases right now. Congratulations to all the productive authors that are putting out new books. We're featuring two a week right now and have new releases scheduled into November. I think that's awesome. As a reader and lover of historical fiction – the more, the merrier!

Today's featured author, Chris Karlsen, goes to show that some of the best authors truly do 'write what you know'. With her many years' experience as a detective, and being the daughter of a history professor, she takes this knowledge and background, melds it all together and comes up with a fascinating array of books for us to read. Read on and see what Chris Karlsen has to say about how she's taken the past and put it into pages for our reading enjoyment.

If you were submitting a story for the short story contest, there's one more day. Deadline for entries is midnight, Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>. [Details in this issue.](#)

Stay tuned for future issues –In the weeks ahead we have author interviews scheduled with Joyce E.S. Pyka, Linda Ulleseit, Christina Baker Kline, Ruth Kozak, Renata Stankova, Tiffani Angus, and a lot more!

*Trisha*

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## New Releases

### The Falcon Queen

Johanna Wittenberg



Ninth-century Norway, the island of Tromøy.

Åsa has won back her father's kingdom, but can she hold it?

The evil shapeshifter Hrolf lurks in the hinterlands, plotting revenge. The powerful Danes threaten from across the Skagerrak Sea, demanding marriage in exchange for peace, while her only ally, Olaf, presses his own suit. Though she loves Olaf, Åsa refuses to sacrifice her position and her people's welfare to become any man's property.

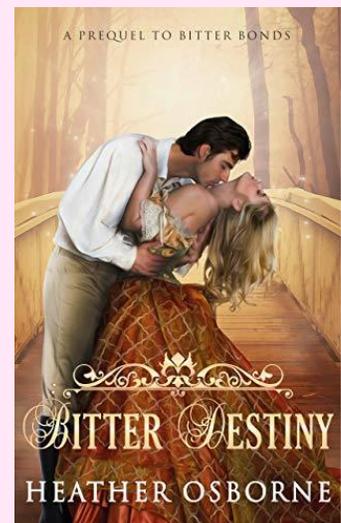
Then, across the snow-clad mountains comes Ragnhild, a runaway shield-maiden, seeking glory and gold. She seems to be the answer to Åsa's prayers, but Ragnhild's past catches up with her, bringing treachery and war.

### Bitter Destiny

Heather Osborne

Having fled tumultuous post-Revolution France, Arnaud and Marie du Grace are desperate to uncover fresh beginnings in the Louisiana territory. However, unbeknownst to them, someone is striving to do anything in his power to destroy their new-found fortune and happiness, and lay bare the secrets of their past.

Bitter Destiny is the prequel to Bitter Bonds and Divided Destiny, part of the Du Cormier Saga.



## Transportation via Horse

When I think of traveling by horse, a picture of a lone cowboy pops into my mind – riding off into the sunset, a dusty bedroll securely attached to the rear of his saddle.

Traveling by horse seems like a difficult mode of transportation, especially if you had to travel great distances. How could you carry your food, your eating utensils, a change of clothes? Me and my suitcase full of clothes that I take for a week's vacation wouldn't know how to travel by horse.

But, as hard as it is to envision, if I'm writing a story set during the days when people used that mode of transportation to get from one place to another, then I need to know at least a few minimal facts about it.

What I know about horses would fill a thimble. I know you put a bridle on their face (I think that's what that contraption is called), which is attached to the reins that you 'steer' them with. You control them with commands like 'giddy-up' to go and 'whoa' to stop. The horse wears a saddle that the rider sits on. You have to tighten it up (cinch?) and knee them in the belly so they let out the air they're holding – otherwise the saddle isn't tight enough and halfway down the path it all slips off to the side and down the rider goes. (Which could make for an interesting story in itself.)

And sometimes, on the way home, horses like to brush their riders off on whatever is handiest – like the nearest stop sign – and leave them laying in the street to they can run/trot/jog/canter and skedaddle home as fast as they can. While meanwhile, the poor displaced rider is in agonizing pain and on their way to the closest ER to check for broken bones. Oh, wait...that's a *current* day story (30 years ago doesn't count as historical, does it?) and it's truth, not fiction. Which is why *this* particular author doesn't travel by horse.

But, back to historical fiction. Writing. What we all came here to learn about today. If you're going to write a scene, a short story, or a novel that involves travel by horse, what do you need to know? (As recommended by an author that obviously doesn't write about traveling via this equestrian means.)

What is probably most important to know is how long it takes to get someplace. If your character is traveling from one town to another nearby town, it probably won't be an important factor. Unless it affects the story. Is the trip so long they wouldn't make it in one day? Do they need to either bunk with a friend, or spend the night on the trail?

For an example, while doing some early Texas research, I discovered that some of the early settlers that came to north Texas around the 1850s to 1860s, only met once a month for church. They also met all weekend, not just on Sunday. Because of the distance they had to travel and how long it took them to come by horse (or via covered wagon for whole families), there wasn't time to make the trek on a Sunday morning, meet for service, and return home the same day.

One of our friends, Penny C, lives in north Texas in her family home which has been gradually built around the old log cabin walls. Some of the improvements left the original walls open and visible. (Yes, I am so jealous!) One afternoon we were visiting, admiring the pieces of her families past that she lives with every day and she told us a family story that has been repeated through the years.

Back in Texas' early days, the families had driven their covered wagons in for the weekend to meet for church. The services went into the evening and the younger children fell asleep. Mothers placed the sleeping ones in their covered wagons. But some of the older ones played a prank. They

changed some of the sleeping children around. The families drove home late that night and it wasn't discovered until they returned home and found that the children they carried out of the covered wagons weren't their own.

If you're working on a story (one that doesn't involve misplaced children) and your character is traveling by horse, say from Texas to the California gold rush, you'd need to know how long he will be journeying. Can he make the trek in a week? A month? Three months?

The distance a horse can cover in a specified amount of time varies.

### **GAIT**

The speed they travel will affect the distance covered. A horse can walk 4 mph. You could have the rider traveling for eight hours a day, if walking they'd cover 32 miles. If you increase the gait, you'll increase the miles a rider goes.

Walk: 4 mph

Trot: 8-12 mph

Canter: 12-15 mph

Gallop 25-30 mph

### **OTHER FACTORS**

There are other factors to consider that will impact whether they can maintain those distances on a consistent basis.

Terrain and Footing – Are there steep hills? Is the terrain hard and rocky? Is it rainy and muddy? Are there sandy areas they're traveling through? All of these will slow down travel.

Weather Conditions: Is it extremely hot? Is it humid? Is it freezing? Rainy? These factors also will impact travel times.

Health and fitness: Is it a younger or older horse? Is it a younger or older traveler? Has traveling exhausted them? Any rattlesnake bites? Heat stroke? Do they come across enough water to keep the rider and horse hydrated?

It's not an exact science. Yet writing these tales from so long ago isn't an exact science either. But if you have to get a rider somewhere on a horse, this will give you a few things to think about and will help in planning your journey. No, your character isn't going to get from San Antonio, Texas, to San Francisco, California to pan for gold in one week.

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## Author Spotlight: Chris Karlsen

It's always fun connecting with new authors and talking historical fiction. Seeing what prompted them to write historical fiction, how researching plays a part in their stories, and discovering the tidbits that keep them writing that are never quite known to us as readers. This week's featured author is no different. It was a delight to 'chat' with Chris Karlsen and find out more about her books, those already published and some that's on the way. Join us today and come meet Chris Karlsen.



**Welcome Chris Karlsen! We're delighted to have you as our spotlighted author today. You have a variety of historical fiction books available, many with a thriller theme. I see that you're a retired police detective with twenty-five years in law enforcement. How did your career in law enforcement play into your novel writing?**

It has played into my work in several ways. The first time was in *Journey in Time*, which was book 2 in my *Knights in Time* series. Those are historical romances with a time travel element. There's part of the story where the heroine is being taken away by the villain without the hero knowing. I had her make mental notes of landmarks as she journeyed to the man's home. This was medieval London and normal street designations and landmarks weren't in existence. I thought of all the interviews of victims I had conducted and my questions to them about what they saw and heard. She is an attorney in her modern world and must put

on a prosecution case in front of the king against the villain who she has accused of violence against her. I used my experience in criminal trials sitting on the side of the prosecution and testifying for her to use in her case.

My experience is of great assistance in my **Bloodstone series**, which my new book, *A Venomous Love* is part of. My protagonist is a Victorian detective, Rudyard Bloodstone. I walk with him when he is at crime scenes. Due to the period, he has no science to help him and we both must rely on old fashioned police work to gather evidence and clues as his case progresses. I have to figure out the investigation they same old-fashioned way. I also like to include interaction with other police officers and Rudyard to color his world and to add information and often humor to a scene. That interaction is largely based on my own experience with officers and station house activity.

**Your books vary over a wide range of time. The Bloodstone series books are Victorian detective thriller novels set in Jack the Ripper London times and Knights in Time is a mix of current times intermixed with medieval 14<sup>th</sup> century England. Then you have a standalone, *Moonlight Serenade*, about a US Marine set in 1945. How did you end up covering such a wide range of time in your writing, and out of these different eras, is any your favorite?**

I'd like to clarify that all my books are stand alones. My father was a history professor, so I grew up with a love of history. I found there were certain eras that I was especially interested in and use those for my settings. I had just finished writing *A Snifter of Death*, which is book 2 in the **Bloodstone series** and thought I'd like to do something different before starting *A Venomous Love*. Two of my favorite television series are Band of Brothers and The Pacific. My dad was a Marine in WW2 and fought several battles in the Pacific. He did have leave in Melbourne, Australia after fighting in Guadalcanal. He really liked Melbourne and being a man of his time was a huge fan of big band music. I thought it would be fun to write a romance that had some of those elements. The Marine in *Moonlight Serenade* falls in love with a big band singer in Melbourne. I'm currently working on a second novella that is a historical romance set in England during WW2. It's called *The Ack-Ack Girl*. The heroine is an ack-ack girl. They were English civilian women who worked with anti-aircraft units. My girl falls in love with an RAF pilot. I hope to have it out early next year.

If I had to choose a favorite era that I've written about I think it would be the Victorian timeframe with my detective. Rudyard is my favorite character to write so that plays into my choice. He is closest to my heart as we are/were both detectives.

**How did being the daughter of a history professor affect your desire and decision to write historical fiction?**

History was such a strong part of my life growing up and my father was a remarkable storyteller of events. He had a way of bringing history to life as we'd talk over dinner or watch a movie. My mother was a voracious reader and she'd talk about books she enjoyed set in different times. We traveled a great deal as well and there were certain places that I felt a connection with. When I decided to write, after I'd retired from law enforcement, writing historical fiction seemed like a natural choice for me.

**In your writing, what differences have you noticed between writing contemporary fiction as compared to historical fiction?**

The language is easier in contemporary fiction. When my characters in the Knights in Time series are in modern England, there are words and phrases that are common usage to us. But common to us is vastly different to medieval England. When writing the Bloodstone series, I am constantly checking verbiage to make sure it isn't an Americanism or in usage post 1890's. For those series and the WW2 romances, I also am always checking little everyday things to make sure they were in use at the time, that includes music, movies, toiletries, clothing details and other cultural aspects.

**While Pages of the Past celebrates and features historical fiction, two of your books are set in contemporary days. Yet I have to ask about them, because they still pertain to the past. (And sound fascinating!) *Golden Chariot* and *Byzantine Gold* feature Charlotte Dashiell as the main character, an archeologist. *Golden Chariot* deals with the danger surrounding her as she excavates a sunken ship from the Trojan War, while *Byzantine Gold* has her in peril coming as she excavates a sunken warship from the Byzantine Era. I have visions of watching Josh Gates in *Expedition Unknown* as Charlotte goes about her work. How did the idea for these two books evolve?**

I've been to Turkey several times. It is a fascinating country. You can't throw a rock and not hit something historical. I had read an article about the oldest ship ever recovered off the coast of Turkey by divers from the Institute of Nautical Archaeology. While visiting Turkey I made a few trips to Bodrum where INA

(Institute of Nautical Archeology) is headquartered. I had a personal tour and the opportunity to interview staff and a senior diver who was part of that ship's excavation. I have a passing interest in the Trojan War and while walking the walls of ancient Troy the idea for ***Golden Chariot***, a story incorporating both the war and the ship came to me. I don't know how else to describe it.

For ***Byzantine Gold*** I wanted another setting in Turkey with the beautiful Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean as the settings. Those seas are loaded with shipwrecks. Istanbul has a rich Byzantine history and I thought that era provided a good base for the story.

**Out of these different eras, did you find that any of them were more difficult to research than others?**

I would say both ***Golden Chariot*** and ***Byzantine Gold*** were the hardest. There's so much involved in recovering a shipwreck. I had to search how different materials were brought up to the surface, what equipment is used, the way divers must execute their actions underwater. Beside the actual handling of the ship parts, there is a ton of specialized equipment for the divers. After that technical research, there was the research for the historical era and what the ships might contain. Written language in the time of Troy was similar to hieroglyphics in that it was cuneiform (pictographs) so tablets with cargo lists etc. would be in that form. The Byzantine era shipping suffered pirate attacks from all around. The weapons used to defend, and attack had to be looked into along with the common storage used for cargo and the most common contents.

**Do you have any other historical fiction works in progress? Can you give us a little teaser and let us know when we can look for it?**

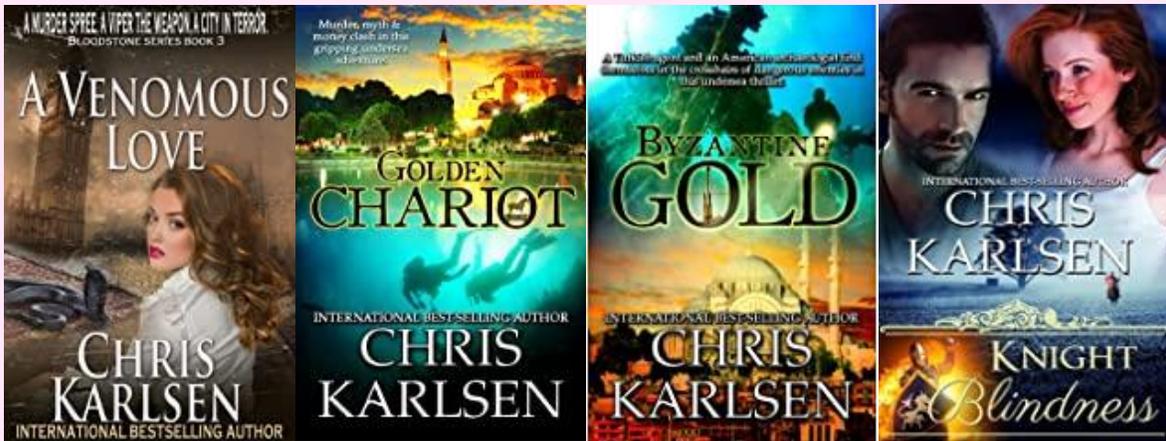
I am writing a novella romance set in WW2 England. I mentioned it in an earlier answer. It is called ***The Ack-Ack Girl***. The hero is a RAF pilot and the heroine is an Ack-Ack girl. Like America with our Rosie the Riveter teams, England used civilian women to help with the war effort in a variety of ways. One way was assisting in anti-aircraft units. The women in those units were referred to as Ack-Ack girls as the sound the guns make is an ack-ack noise. Both the airfield her pilot flies out of and her anti-aircraft unit are located in Kent (southeast England). That particular area saw a lot of German bomb attacks and the danger to the pilot and heroine is a powerful element in the story. I hope to release the story after the holidays.

**Is there anything you'd like to share with us that I didn't ask you about?**

I like to create a rich environment for the protagonist(s) in my stories. I really enjoy filling their world with a wide variety of characters. I also like to use the setting as another character. Including the culture, architecture, entertainment, food, and attitudes of the different time adds extra color, IMO.

Just FYI: *A Venomous Love* will be available in audio shortly. I just finished listening to the narration.

**Thank you for joining us today, Chris. We appreciate your time. Please leave a few links where our readers can find you and your books and we'll go follow and friend you.**



You can find Chris Karlsen's books here:

[Amazon: Venomous Love – Bloodstone Book](#)

[Apple Books](#)

[Kobo](#)

[Barnes & Noble](#)

[Scribd](#)

[Vivlio](#)

You can find Chris Karlsen here:

[Facebook](#)

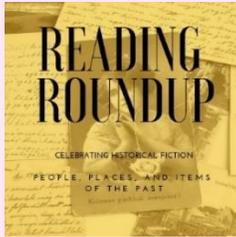
[Web site](#)

[Twitter](#)

Author Bio: I was raised in Chicago. My father, a history professor, and my mother, a voracious reader passed on a love of history and books along with a love of travel.

I am a retired police detective. After twenty-five years in law enforcement I decided to pursue my dream of writing. I write a historical-time travel romance series called Knights in Time and a historical suspense called The Bloodstone Series.

I am also working on a world war two series of novella romances. The first is Moonlight Serenade and currently available. The second is my work in progress at the moment and will be titled, The Ack-Ack Girl.

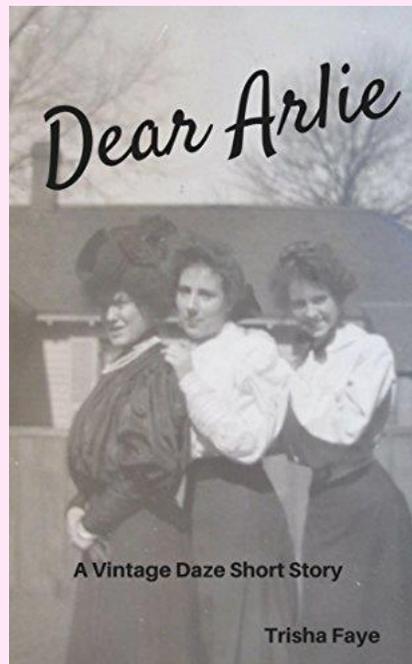


## The 1900s/1910s

### Dear Arlie

(ebook only)

Trisha Faye



Arlie Shinkle is turning 20. She enjoys spending time with her friends - but George is what's really on her mind. Step back to 1911 as we peek in on Arlie's life to see if she does indeed get the man she has her eye on.

This Vintage Daze Short Story is inspired from a collection of real-life postcards sent from Pauline Washburn to Arlie Shinkle, along with photographs from Pauline's scrapbook.

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